



**PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE
DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GEORGIA, MR. LASHA DARSALIA**

Delivered by Chargé d'Affaires a.i. Henning Hj. Johansen at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 18 July 2019

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

I join others in welcoming the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, Mr. Lasha Darsalia, to the Permanent Council.

Our region has for many years suffered from several unresolved conflicts. In this respect, Georgia's principled, yet constructive approach to negotiations is noted with great appreciation. We still regret the closing of the OSCE mission to Georgia, as we believe that an OSCE presence would be able to contribute to peace and reconciliation as well as capacity building in your country.

The conflict understandably becomes a prism for much of Georgian foreign policy. Still, Georgia has much to contribute and we appreciate the opportunity to cooperate on a wide range of issues of interest for both our countries, including in the context of the OSCE.

Norway and Georgia have close and good bilateral relations. This was most recently demonstrated last week, when our deputy minister of foreign affairs, Mr. Audun Halvorsen, visited Georgia where he met with you, Mr. Darsalia, in Batumi. We hope that our embassy in Tbilisi, which opened on July 1st, will contribute to strengthening

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these relations even further. Norway is, and will continue to be, a strong supporter of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

Thank you