



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE
CO-CHAIRS OF THE GENEVA INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Delivered by Ambassador Steffen Kongstad at the Permanent Council
Vienna, 14 November 2019

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

Norway welcomes the Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions to the Permanent Council and thank them for their update.

We recognise the value of continued discussions, especially in a period of increased tensions in the affected regions. We would, however, have liked to see more results from the discussions, leading to concrete progress for the people living in the areas.

Norway is concerned about the recent developments and increased tensions along the Administrative Boundary Lines, in particular in the areas Gugutiantkari and Tsnelisi-Chorchana. The intensification of the borderisation leads to even more severe limitations on the freedom of movement of the population living around the ABLs, and has a negative effect on basic human rights, such as the right to health and education.

Furthermore, these negative effects are exacerbated by the frequent and unpredictable closings of crossing points on the Administrative Boundary Lines, which recently has resulted in death and worsening health conditions for several individuals. Borderisation and the closing of crossing points must cease, and already closed crossing points must reopen.

We urge the parties to re-engage in the IRPM meetings facilitated by OSCE and the EU Monitoring Mission. These de-escalating mechanisms are crucial, especially in situations of increased tensions.

Norway reaffirms its unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders. We call for efficient and unimpeded access for international human rights actors and providers of humanitarian assistance to South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

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Thank you.