



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

**STATEMENT IN SECURITY DIALOGUE ON PRISONERS OF WAR:
OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

As delivered by Ambassador Ellen Svendsen at the 98th Joint Meeting of the
Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Cooperation

Vienna, 25th February 2026

Chairs,

At the outset, allow me to thank you for putting this highly relevant topic on today's Security Dialogue agenda. I would also like to thank the three panelists for interesting briefings.

We have now entered the fifth year of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, and the twelfth year of the illegal occupation of Eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Throughout this illegal war and occupation, numerous reports, including recent Moscow Mechanisms, document a pattern of systematic and widespread Russian breaches of international humanitarian law.

A blatant violation of the Russian Federation is the insistence on not recognizing detained Ukrainian military personnel as POWs. Russia continues to disregard its obligations towards both POWs and civilian detainees. Obligations that Russia voluntarily entered. Norway recalls that the proper designation of POWs is essential, and that all detainees regardless of their designation have the right to protection and proper treatment.

Reports from OHCHR and the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine display torture, ill-treatment, inhumane conditions of internment, forced labor, and a lack of access to independent monitors. They further show that Ukrainian POWs and other detainees are being subjected to unlawful prosecutions, tortured to obtain confessions, and denied even the most basic guarantees of fair trials.

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Norway takes a firm stance on the treatment of prisoners of war and adherence to a strict code of conduct. The OSCE Code of Conduct is a fundamental and unique OSCE document providing normative, ethical and political standards to guide all participating states.

We also call on Russia to facilitate internationally recognized monitoring bodies, including the ICRC, full and unfettered access to all facilities where POWs are held.

Norway supports the establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, and the Register of Damage. International law guarantees the right to truth, justice and reparation, including compensation, rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition. Ukrainian POWs must be included in the frameworks for reparation.

We encourage participating states to continue to support the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to gather evidence on Russia's illegal war against Ukraine, in line with the recommendations of the Moscow Mechanism of 2025.

Thank you, Chairs