



STATEMENT BY NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO H.E. THE MINISTER  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, Mr. SERGEI  
LAVROV

Permanent Council, Vienna  
May 23, 2007

Norway warmly welcomes H.E. Foreign Minister Lavrov to the joint FSC/PC meeting. We have listened with great interest to the Minister's address.

It clearly is our common goal to make the most out of our cooperation in the OSCE. Our goal is a Europe "whole and free", without dividing lines and at peace with itself. A vibrant political dialogue based on our common values and commitments and supported by concrete work on the ground, is the trademark of the Organization. Our endeavour through the OSCE is a solid investment in a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future.

Last year we adopted some important decisions on strengthening the effectiveness of the OSCE. It is now time to redirect our energy to the OSCE's core purpose.

The Organization's comprehensive approach to security is a great strength. Globalisation, increasing interdependence and the emergence of new threats to security, including from non-state actors, underscores the need for a cross-dimensional approach. Norway believes the OSCE has adapted well to the evolving security architecture and new challenges, one example being next week's conference on public-private partnership to combat terrorism.

Furthermore, Norway highly values the work of the OSCE institutions and its field operations. Our cooperation within the human dimension, not least with regard to elections is of utmost importance.

The OSCE has a well-earned reputation for dealing with the politico-military aspects of security. The Organisation's work in disarmament and arms control should remain an important integral component of the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security.

Unresolved conflicts still remain in the OSCE area, in Georgia, Moldova and in Nagorno-Karabakh. The conflicts impede social and economic development and represent potential threats to regional security and stability. We strongly support OSCE's endeavours to achieve peaceful settlements of the conflicts and reiterate our call for political will to find the necessary compromises.

Norway favours a stronger involvement of the OSCE in Central Asia, inter alia in the politico-military dimension. At the same time the Organization still has substantial work to do in the Western Balkans. In particular we foresee an important role for the OSCE in implementing a status settlement for Kosovo, based on UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari's thorough settlement proposal.

In closing, Norway thanks once again H.E. Foreign Minister Lavrov for addressing this meeting. We look forward to continuing our constructive cooperation with the Russian Federation in the OSCE.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman