



MISSION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO H.E. FRANK WALTER STEINMEIER,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF GERMANY**

**OSCE Permanent Council
Vienna, 18 January 2007**

Norway joins others in warmly welcoming H.E. Frank Walter Steinmeier to the Permanent Council. We have listened with great interest to your substantive statement.

Although different in structure and purpose the EU and the OSCE share the same principles and values. There are numerous examples of constructive co-operation in the field, especially in the Western Balkans. Thematically the EU and the OSCE can work even closer i.a. in fighting terrorism, trafficking and intolerance.

An overall goal must be to further strengthen the co-operation between the two organizations so that they can complement each other to ensure regional security and stability. Effective multilateralism is a key.

Mr. Chairman,

The European Neighbourhood Policy is important in promoting stability and democracy, and is in line with OSCE's core values and functions. Norway is pleased to note Germany's plans to submit concrete proposals to develop the Neighbourhood Policy further.

We are also pleased to learn that the German Presidency will pay particular attention to Central Asia. Norway hopes that the EU, the OSCE and the Central Asian countries can work closely together with the aim of achieving security, democracy and prosperity.

Norway highly values and supports the Presidency's commitment to stabilizing the Western Balkans, including by launching the largest civilian ESDP mission to date in Kosovo. The OSCE, on its part, has unique field experience and expertise in capacity building in the Western Balkans. We look forward to the two organizations working together to ensure a peaceful implementation of the future status settlement in Kosovo.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway supports a strengthened European role in security and defence in cooperation with NATO. A particular priority for the EU Presidency should be to bring this cooperation forward. We stand ready to continue participating in EU-led crisis management, including the current Althea operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and, building on our good bilateral cooperation with Germany, the possible police mission in Afghanistan.

From the perspective of Norway's cooperation with the EU, our participation in the Nordic Battle Group is of particular importance. The EU battle groups will, in our view, increase the overall ability of the international community to prevent, contain and resolve upcoming crises.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway wants to be an active and constructive partner in Europe. We highly appreciate the political dialogue with the European Union through the European Economic Area (EEA) cooperation and the bilateral dialogue. Furthermore, we highly value the consultations we have with the EU here in Vienna. In closing, Norway wishes Germany all possible success for its EU presidency.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman