



PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT BY NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR
ALEXANDRE KELTCHEWSKY, HEAD OF THE OSCE CENTRE IN
ASTANA

As delivered by Deputy Permanent Representative, Mr Asbjørn Brandsrud
to the Permanent Council, Vienna 13 November 2008

Mr. Chairman,

The Norwegian Delegation warmly welcomes Ambassador Alexandre Keltchewsky for the first time to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his excellent report, which provides us with a comprehensive overview of the developments in Kazakhstan as well of the Centre's activities since February 2008. Norway is pleased to note that the Centre enjoys excellent relations with the Kazakh Authorities and the civil society.

We appreciate that the Centre continues to devote special attention to further expanding its activities, and welcome the efforts of the Centre in rising awareness of the work of this organisation through a broad outreach to the civil society. We have positively noted that coherence, coordination, continuity and regionality are guiding principles for the implementation of the Centre's activities, on which Ambassador Keltchewsky elaborated in details some few minutes ago. In the regional context, we have also observed the very valuable work of the Almaty Liason Office, and the many benefits stemming from the work of the Office.

Norway continues to support the Centre's activities in all three dimensions. We appreciate the Centre's focus on further promoting confidence and security-building measures in the politico-military dimension with a special emphasis on regional cooperation. We are pleased with the Centre's work in promoting good governance and its activities related to environmental security. In the human

dimension we highly value its assistance in promoting rule of law and legal reforms and with regard to gender issues.

Mr. Chairman,

Norway has duly noted that President Nazarbayev has outlined the need to continue the process of political reforms, thus providing new impetus to the ongoing legislative process. We encourage Kazakhstan to continue its dedicated work to vigorously implement its programme for democratic reforms and its OSCE commitments in all three dimensions. The preparations for the 2010 Chairmanship of the OSCE should provide a strong catalyst and a further impetus for Kazakhstan to continue to adopt and implement new legislation, in particular with regard to issues that come under the human dimension. We welcome the Government's recent adoption of amendments to the media and election laws, on procedures for registration of political parties, and on local state administration and self-government. Further progress in these areas and strengthening of the rule of law will advance Kazakhstan's regional and international role. We are convinced that Kazakhstan when taking on the Chairmanship of the OSCE as the first Central Asian participating State, will exemplify the values and standards of the Organization.

Kazakhstan's programme "Path to Europe" also contains a number of priorities for the Chairmanship, including further enhancement of democratic institutions in the OSCE area, development of the transit-transport potential of the OSCE participating States, focus on solutions of environmental problems, strengthening confidence-building measures and regional security, and addressing non-military aspects of security in the OSCE area. Norway is looking forward to the further shaping of Kazakhstan's priorities for its Chairmanship.

Norway is pleased that a training programme for Kazakh diplomats recently took place in Oslo, in close cooperation with the Kazakh Authorities and the OSCE Secretariat, as a part of Kazakhstan's preparations for the Chairmanship. We are looking forward to the continuation of this cooperation next spring.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, let me commend Ambassador Kelthchewsky and his team for their dedicated work and assure them of our continued support in their future endeavours.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.