



PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

CLOSING STATEMENT BY NORWAY

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile,  
at the 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council,  
Basel, 4-5 December 2014

Mr Chairman,

At this Ministerial Meeting discussions have been dominated by one issue: the crisis in and around Ukraine.

In our statement yesterday, we said that the Russian Federation bears a clear responsibility for this crisis.

We said that Russia must return to the principles of Helsinki and respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other states.

But we also say that a predictable and co-operative relationship with Russia remains essential for the security and stability of Europe.

In times of crisis we need more, not less dialogue.

In times of crisis, we need to continue developing the OSCE. We need to give the OSCE a stronger foundation.

We have made only limited progress in the Helsinki + 40 process this year. But we are not ready to give it up.

Mr Chairman,

Adding to our commitments is an important part of the strengthening of our organization, in all three dimensions and across them.

We appreciate that we have reached agreement on new commitments in our fight against terrorism and on small arms and light weapons.

We appreciate that we have reached agreement on strengthening our work against corruption and on anti-Semitism.

We had hoped for more on gender equality and on violence against women. Still, these two decisions provide us with a basis for further work.

We regret that no consensus could be reached on fundamental freedoms and on a stronger involvement of civil society in our organization. However, we appreciate their engagement and are thankful for their recommendations.

We are disappointed that no agreement was reached on the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, in spite of the efforts of the Swiss Chairmanship.

All 57 OSCE participating States are parties to the Convention Against Torture. We therefore thought that all 57 would support the Chairmanship's proposal to reinforce our organization's engagement in this area. Regrettably, we were proven wrong.

On other issues, different approaches and diverging priorities resulted in watered-down decisions.

This should motivate us to use the OSCE as a platform for intensified dialogue on all the organization's issues – in particular on the issues that divide us.

Mr Chairman,

I applaud the way you have chaired the OSCE through a difficult year. Thank you for your warm and generous hospitality in Basel and for having organized our meeting so well.

To Minister Dačić I will repeat the words of my Minister yesterday: You can count on our full support as you assume the Chairmanship.

Thank you.