



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO MR. ALEXANDER GRUSHKO
DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik
to the joint meeting of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security
Cooperation, Vienna
18 February 2009

Madame Chairwoman, Mr. Chairman,

The Norwegian delegation would like to welcome Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Grushko to the Permanent Council and to thank him for his elaboration on Russia's initiative on European security, launched by President Medvedev last year. Let me also welcome this joint meeting of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Cooperation, as the first major follow-up to the very promising discussion at the Helsinki Ministerial meeting, which was so ably summed up in Minister Stubb's eight points.

Madame Chairwoman, Mr. Chairman,

Norway remains convinced that security and stability can only be achieved through a comprehensive security concept, where democracy, rule of law and human rights, economic and environmental development and politico-military factors are integrated parts. Experience tells us that so-called "hard" security alone cannot safeguard security and stability. Security challenges are multidimensional by nature, and we have a framework in the OSCE that allows all stakeholders in the Euro-Atlantic space to take part on an equal footing. Trans-Atlantic cooperation is vital to European security, and the OSCE has both the right participation and the

right mandate and experience for a broad discussion on how we best can address common security challenges.

Madame Chairwoman, Mr. Chairman,

Norway is of the view that a discussion on European security should build on existing security structures and arrangements. These have served us well in the past and have successfully adapted to face new challenges. They should accordingly be preserved and further developed.

It is also important that a discussion on possible new instruments and structures must not in any way detract from the full and timely implementation of existing commitments. We would in this context like to emphasise the need for continued efforts towards lasting solutions to the remaining protracted conflicts in the OSCE area, in parallel with a broad dialogue on the future of European security.

We look forward to pursuing this dialogue in the months ahead, recognizing that we will need some time for reflection, and for consultation with partners and allies. Accordingly, we should not rush to schedule high-level meetings before the issues have matured and the preparations are sufficiently advanced to allow for a positive outcome.

In the meantime, we should use every opportunity to rebuild confidence and improve the general climate for co-operation, which suffered a severe setback with the conflict in Georgia in August. There are several pressing unresolved issues, relating e.g. to protracted conflicts and to resumption and revitalisation of the work on arms control and Confidence and Security Building Measures, notably the CFE regime, where some much needed progress would also enhance the prospects for a constructive dialogue on other broad issues of European security.

A particularly urgent issue in our OSCE context is the still unresolved question of the OSCE's future presence in Georgia. We appeal to the Russian Federation to show flexibility and a constructive approach in the discussions on this matter.

By way of conclusion, let me stress that we will approach the upcoming dialogue in an open and positive spirit and contribute as best we can to achieve concrete and significant improvements in the broad area of European security, so important to all of us.

Thank you, Madame Chairwoman, Mr. Chairman.

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