



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE GENERAL FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT  
FOR PEACE IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 26 November 2020

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chair,

Let me join others in thanking the chairmanship for giving us the opportunity to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Peace Agreement in Dayton. The agreement laid the foundation for a new state in a multi-ethnic place after years of war and human suffering. I also want to use the occasion to commemorate the Srebrenica genocide and honor the memory of the victims. We must fully acknowledge the past if we are to heal the wounds and build a future based on truth and reconciliation.

Significant progress has been achieved in building a lasting peace, as Bosnia-Herzegovina continues its transition towards a reform-oriented, democratic European country. However, continued reforms are necessary to secure stability and welfare for the people. This is a prerequisite for further European integration. Reform in the area of rule of law remains a fundamental challenge that needs to be addressed. A vibrant civil society and an independent press are keys to continued democratic and economic development.

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina has played, and continues to play, an important role in supporting the country's reform efforts. We encourage all parties to strive for the implementation of comprehensive reforms in a manner that benefits all

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citizens and hope for a continued good cooperation between our organisation's presence and the host country's authorities.

2020 also marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325. We encourage Bosnia and Herzegovina to use this as an inspiration to implement the National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security.

Norway congratulates Bosnia and Herzegovina on the peaceful and orderly conduct of the 2020 local elections. A welcome development, is that for the first time since 2008, elections will also take place in the city of Mostar, on 20 December. We are however, concerned about use of divisive rhetoric and cases of hate speech. We appeal to all parties to strengthen reconciliation processes and do more for long-term stability and development. To ensure progress over time, political will and strong leadership are essential.

Norway will remain an active partner for Bosnia-Hercegovina, both bilaterally and within the OSCE. We will continue to support reforms that increases stability and security in Bosnia-Hercegovina, the Balkans and in Europe. These will as a result also contribute to further Euro-Atlantic integration of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Thank you