



## STATEMENT ON THE 11 MAY PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN SERBIA

As delivered by Ambassador Guttorm Vik  
to the Permanent Council,  
Vienna, May 15 2008

Mr. Chairman,

Like others, Norway was following the parliamentary elections held in Serbia on 11 May with great interest. We welcome the assessment by the international observers that the elections have been free and fair and conducted in line with OSCE and Council of Europe commitments for democratic elections. Let me also note with satisfaction the good cooperation between the various teams of election observers on this occasion, and the well-considered and coherent presentations of their findings.

The high turnout and active participation of voters confirm once again a high level of public interest in the elections and is at the same time another testimony to the strong foundation for democracy in Serbia. We salute the pluralistic and open campaign environment witnessed by international observers, but regret that the campaign to some extent was overshadowed by death threats against senior politicians. We welcome the Public Prosecutor's decision to investigate this issue.

As regards the election results, it will now be up to the new Serbian Parliament and to Serbian parties and other political institutions to draw the appropriate political consequences. The election confirmed the basic pro-European orientation of the Serbian people. At the same time the results indicate that there is still a considerable divide in the Serbian people. We hope to see the establishment of a strong and effective government, capable of continuing democratic reforms, bridging societal and political divides and uniting the Serbian people in their further chosen path towards European integration. We look forward to continuing and further enhancing our good co-operation with Serbia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.