



STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON
“RESPONSE TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF AFGHANISTAN FOR THE OSCE
REGION”

As delivered by Ambassador Anne-Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council
Vienna 25 July 2024

Thank you, Madam Chair,

Norway has aligned with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would, however, like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Secretary General, thank you for this report and for your dedication in ensuring a proper response by the OSCE to the challenges our region saw after the Taliban take-over in Afghanistan.

The stark reduction in the protection of human rights in Afghanistan, the humanitarian crisis affecting more than a third of the population, and the lack of inclusiveness in the Afghan government are sad realities for the Afghan population. It is however also a challenge for the rest of the world, and particularly the Central Asian countries.

We are concerned about the large number of Afghan refugees, the increased risk of trafficking of both small arms and light weapons as well as drugs, the deterioration of shared water resources, and the continuing threat of terror spreading from the country.

Norway greatly values the work of the Secretariat to coordinate a comprehensive OSCE response, together with the OSCE field missions and offices in Central Asia. Norway supports a range of ExB projects under the Afghanistan repository program, viewing it as a critical framework for mitigating the risks, addressing the vulnerabilities, and pursuing opportunities in response to the implications of the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan for the OSCE region.

We will, as you know, continue to grant ExB funding to the OSCE structures, trying not to attach earmarking to these funds.

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The only cross-dimensional priority is that we would like to see the funds spent on project with a good gender equality profile. We believe this approach to be valuable also for the repository program, not least as we see women as the greatest losers/victims of the developments in Afghanistan. Having this in mind, we would also like to commend the work of the Afghan delegation here in Vienna and their tireless advocacy on behalf of all women and girls in Afghanistan.

Thank you.