



PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 27 March 2014

Mr Chairman,

Norway remains deeply concerned by the ongoing situation in Ukraine, following the Russian Federation's illegal annexation of the Ukrainian Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

Mr Chairman,

Ukraine was an important topic in the Norwegian Foreign Minister's annual report to Parliament earlier this week. I would like to draw the attention of the Permanent Council to some of the points he made, and I quote:

“For the first time since the Second World War, a European state has forcibly annexed part of a neighbouring country.

Like our allies and partners in NATO and the EU, Norway has condemned Russia's actions.

Under international law, no state has the right to intervene in the affairs of another state, through the use of armed force, coercion or any other form of unwarranted interference. This is the case regardless of whether a state takes action itself or provides support to local actors.

Russia justifies its actions by the need to protect Russian-speakers outside its borders. It also refers to historical rights.

There are no independent reports of abuse of Russian-speaking minorities in Crimea or in eastern Ukraine. If Russia really believes that such abuse is widespread, it should have made use of the mechanisms that have been established to deal with such situations, within the framework of the UN, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Russia has not done this.”

Mr Chairman,

In his report to Parliament, my Foreign Minister also made the following points, and I quote:

“The UN Charter prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. It also prohibits intervention in the internal affairs of another state. We need to be clear here. The situation in Ukraine has not justified any departure from these two points.

Over the past few weeks, the international community has tried to engage Russia in a dialogue on a peaceful resolution to the conflict. It has also been clearly communicated to Russia that actions that are in violation of international law will have consequences.

There must be no doubt as to our position on the illegal annexation by a large country of parts of a smaller country’s territory.”

Mr Chairman,

The last point I would like to quote from my Minister’s report is the following:

“In a situation where a major power challenges the established world order, it is vital that we protect our common values. We must learn from the lessons of the 20th century, not only from its disasters, but also from its hard-earned achievements. Today, in the 21st century, the world is characterised more than ever before by mutual dependence and vulnerability.

In the long run, no state that disregards international law can safeguard the welfare of its own citizens or secure its long-term interests. This is why states today formulate their foreign policy and promote their interests on the basis of international cooperation and coordination.”
End of quote.

Mr Chairman,

Norway welcomes the adoption of the mandate for an OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine and we commend the Conflict Prevention Center for the swift deployment of personnel.

We call on all OSCE participating states to support the Monitoring Mission, including by providing personnel as well as funding.

Mr Chairman,

My government has decided to second personnel. We will also provide funding.

My distinguished Canadian colleague announced in her statement a contribution of 500,000 Euros. Norway will match this amount.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.