



STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE  
REPORT OF THE MISSION TO SKOPJE

Delivered by Ambassador Anne- Kirsti Karlsen at the Permanent Council  
Vienna, 20 April 2023

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Thank you, Mr. Chair,

I welcome ambassador Wahl to the Permanent Council and thank him for his presentation as well as for the Mission's written report. We appreciate the Mission's support to the Chairpersonship. We also use this opportunity to thank them for organizing a very informative visit for a group of colleagues from Vienna in February.

The mere fact that North Macedonia is now chairing this organisation, is proof of how far the country has come. We can only applaud your efforts for us all in this particularly difficult year for the OSCE.

Norway fully supports the reform processes of North Macedonia. Further efforts must be expected in the implementation of the reform agenda, especially in the areas of good governance, judicial reform, and the fight against corruption. It is also important to continue efforts to resolve the outstanding bilateral issues with Bulgaria.

Mr. Chair,

We commend the Mission for its efficiency despite the obvious challenges imposed on it by the lacking budget agreement both last year and, so far, this year.

Norway attaches great importance to gender mainstreaming across dimensions and activities of the field operations. We appreciate the Mission's broad approach and clear reporting on its efforts to include gender aspects in many of its activities.

Norway contributes funding to three extra-budgetary projects identified and prioritized by the Mission itself. These support the Mission's efforts to decrease the risk of weapon proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, strengthen security sector governance and

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increase social cohesion – three very important areas. Norway will continue to support reforms that increase stability and security in the region, and OSCE activities contributing to this end.

Colleagues,

Donors to the OSCE field operations have a responsibility and duty to ensure that the field operations can carry out their work effectively. Providing a sufficient budget is a cornerstone. But field operations are also subjected to the diverging, and often inconsistent, priorities of participating States. This could lead to fragmentation of the project portfolio, which is uncondusive to the work of a field operation.

As participating States, we must take this challenge seriously, and provide the space required for the field operations to work more efficiently, with long-term impact on the ground as their goal.

We commend the Mission in Skopje with a well balanced portfolio in its programmatic activities. I wish ambassador Wahl the best of luck with advancing the work of the Mission, and hope he will bring our thanks back to his able team.

Thank you.