



**PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CIO ON TOLERANCE AND NON-
DISCRIMINATION**

As delivered by ambassador Ellen Svendsen at the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 12 December 2024

Thank you, Madam Chair.

I wish to thank the Personal Representatives Rabbi Andrew Baker, Dr. Regina Polak and Evren Dağdelen Akgün for their insightful reports and sobering introductions, and to welcome you to the Permanent Council.

The deeply worrisome developments highlighted in your reports, with increases in hate speech, hate crime, xenophobia and physical and online attacks on religious and belief communities and minorities in the OSCE region, illustrate the importance of your mandate and your cooperation with ODIHR on combatting intolerance and discrimination.

The broader trend of decreased recognition of the human rights of religious, ethnic, cultural and other minorities and communities in the OSCE region as identified by Dr. Polak in her report is a stark reminder that all OSCE states must work together to protect vulnerable groups.

Chair,

A country is not truly free and democratic unless it guarantees the fundamental human rights of its citizens to be who they are and to live free, independent lives, regardless of sexual orientations, beliefs and background. Societies are stronger and more secure when they are inclusive.

The Norwegian government is committed to combat all forms of discrimination. Last year, the government released a National Action Plan against racism and discrimination for the period 2024-2027.

Tomorrow we will launch a new action-plan to combat hatred against Muslims, which is part of a continued effort to prevent and deter racism and discrimination against

Muslims in our society. An upward trend in attacks on Muslims and their places of worship, and examples of anti-muslim hatred and prejudice in the OSCE region is another grave concern. The discrimination faced by Muslim women, and the need for social inclusion and empowerment of young people are important issues in this regard, as raised by Ambassador Akgün in her report.

Chair,

Allow me to reference the visit to Norway in September last year by dr. Polak and Rabbi Baker, where they engaged with key governmental and civil society actors, providing valuable input to how we best can approach combating intolerance and discrimination against all religious and non-religious communities in our country. Let me also thank Jan Haukaas for his tireless efforts to promote this important agenda.

The significant rise in antisemitic incidents and violent attacks on Jewish communities across the OSCE region over the past year, as presented in Rabbi Baker's report, continue to be a grave concern and priority for Norway. The Jewish community in Norway comprises some 1 500 people. For many Jewish people, the situation in the world today is very challenging. War and conflict in the Middle East have heightened antisemitism in Norway. There has been an increase in threats, hate speech and discrimination, and the threat level towards Jewish institutions has been raised. This is not acceptable.

We are committed to strengthening our efforts in combating antisemitism. A new National Action Plan against antisemitism for the period of 2025-2030 was presented last month, and the Norwegian government released a National Action Plan against racism and discrimination for the period of 2024 to 2027 last year.

Let me in conclusion thank you for your tireless efforts, and wish you success in your further important endeavours.

Thank you.