



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION'S ONGOING AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

As delivered by Foreign Minister Anniken Huitfeldt at the
Reinforced Permanent Council, Vienna, 24 February 2023

Colleagues,

Mr. Chair,

We all recall last year's meeting, hours after Russia had launched its full-scale attack on Ukraine.

At that time, Dmytro, we did not know your whereabouts.

But the Ukrainian leadership did not abandon its country. No helicopter left the capital in the middle of the night.

We recall President Zelensky's powerful message from the streets of Kyiv that night. "My tut". "We are still here". And yes, you are very much still here.

This past year, the Ukrainian people has impressed us with its courage and ability to defend its freedom.

Before Russia chose to start its illegal war of aggression, the OSCE extended a hand, proposing a Renewed European Security Dialogue.

Regrettably, Russia rejected the invitation.

Still, it is not too late for Russia to do the right thing: To respect its international obligations and commitments. To withdraw its troops from Ukraine, and to work for peace through dialogue and diplomatic efforts.

The war has not turned out the way Russia expected.

Military and economic support to Ukraine is increasing and will continue to increase.

Last year, Norway provided over 1 billion euro in civilian and military support.

Two weeks ago, we adopted a five-year support plan for Ukraine, amounting to 7 billion euro.

By committing our support for a five-year period, we provide predictability for the Ukrainian government. And partners engaged in support and reconstruction.

Our message is clear: Norway will stand by Ukraine for as long as it takes.

Norway welcomes that the OSCE has found ways to continue its activities in Ukraine.

We are proud to support the donor-funded support program.

It strengthens important work in all dimensions of comprehensive security.

Such as humanitarian demining and combatting human trafficking.

Colleagues,

Today, disarmament agreements that have made the world safer are being suspended.

It is worth recalling that Ukraine gave up its nuclear arsenal – the world's third largest at the time.

Through the Budapest memorandum signed at this organization's meeting in December 1994, Ukraine was given additional reassurances for its sovereignty and internationally recognized borders.

It is worth recalling that Russia also signed that agreement.

All states that want to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should stand with Ukraine.

Norway reiterates our unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty. And Ukraine's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and territorial waters.

Thank you.