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STATEMENT ON THE SAMI PEOPLE'S DAY 6TH FEBRUARY

As delivered by ambassador Ellen Svendsen,

Vienna, 5th February 2026

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Tomorrow, February 6th, we celebrate Sami People's Day. The Sami people are the indigenous people which lives in Sápmi - cross-border Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. February 6th marks the anniversary of the first Sami National Congress, held in Norway in 1917. Today, Sami People's Day is first and foremost a celebration, but also a reminder of past injustices.

Reconciliation processes require both time and commitment. Norway continues to actively follow up on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report from 2023, the 17 resolutions adopted by the Norwegian Parliament in 2024, and the national action plan to combat harassment and discrimination of the Sami for the period 2025–2030.

The Sami Parliament is the representative political body for the Sami in Norway. We congratulate the Parliament on a successful election this past fall, with an overall voter turnout of 74 percent. The Sami Parliament raises awareness and understanding of Sami issues and is an important dialogue partner for the authorities. The Sami Act states the Sami Parliament, and other representatives of Sami interests, right to be consulted in cases that may directly affect Sami interests.

Allow me to highlight the example of the Sami Pathfinders. The Pathfinders play an important role in increasing knowledge and awareness about the Sami among youth, by sharing their culture and experiences as young Sami in Norway today.

Mr. Chair,

The celebration of Sami People's Day reminds us of the ongoing work needed to safeguard the rights of the Sami people. Norway remains committed to strengthening indigenous cultures and languages, in line with our obligations under the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. In conclusion, let me recall the OSCE toolbox, which

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can assist participating States in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination. We encourage all States to make use of these tools and to combat prejudice wherever it appears.

Thank you.