



**PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY
TO THE OSCE**

STATEMENT ON THE SAMI PEOPLE'S DAY 6 FEBRUARY

As delivered by chargé d'affaires a.i. Knut-Are Okstad at the Permanent Council Vienna,
6 February 2025

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Today, we celebrate Sami People's Day, honoring the indigenous Sami people of Sápmi, which lives cross-border in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia's Kola Peninsula. February 6th is marking the first Sami international meeting in 1917—an event driven by growing opposition to Norway's assimilation policies.

In June 2023, Norway's Truth and Reconciliation Commission presented its report to Parliament, shedding light on the lasting effects of Norwegianization. It revealed how this history remains largely unknown to most Norwegians and continues to impact Sami language and culture. Reconciliation requires time and commitment. On November 12, 2024, the Parliament adopted 17 resolutions regarding among other things the languages and cultures of the Sami, Kven/Norwegian Finns, and Forest Finns. These resolutions will be actively followed up by the Government.

On January 14, 2025, the Government presented a national action plan against harassment and discrimination of Sami, containing 32 measures for implementation from 2025–2030. Developed in close dialogue with the Sami Parliament and civil society, the plan aims to reduce harassment and discrimination against Sami in Norway.

Mr. Chair,

Sami People's Day raises awareness about Sami presence and culture in Norway.

Norway remains committed to the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL 2022–2032) and advancing indigenous language rights.

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As we celebrate, let us also acknowledge past injustices and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring they are never repeated. OSCE has a toolbox which can assist us as participating States in promoting tolerance and non-discrimination. Let this occasion encourage us to use our organization and fight prejudices wherever we may find them.

Thank you.