



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO H.E. AMBASSADOR HEIDI TAGLIAVINI, DIPLOMAT
IN RESIDENCE AT THE GENEVA CENTRE FOR SECURITY POLICY**

As delivered by Deputy Permanent Representative Mr. Asbjørn Brandsrud
to the Permanent Council
Vienna, 27 May 2010

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me first join previous speakers in welcoming Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini to the Permanent Council, and in thanking her for her exceptionally interesting and informative report.

Secondly, I must commend the European Union for taking the laudable initiative to establish the hard facts of the tragic events in Georgia in August 2008, and for entrusting the task to an internationally renowned diplomat of undisputed integrity, and equipped her with the necessary resources to discharge that daunting task. It is of paramount importance, in such a situation of very conflicting claims and interpretations, to have a thorough, unbiased and reliable picture of what really happened.

Thirdly, I must pay a very sincere tribute to Ambassador Tagliavini and her team for having succeeded so admirably in this difficult undertaking. The contents of her report are in full conformity with the information and impressions we have from other sources, and also bring in a lot of new, well-documented information, leading to well-founded conclusions. The best proof of the validity of the conclusions of the report is probably the fact that neither side in the conflict has dismissed it, nor has anyone else seriously tried to contest the facts laid out in the report, to our knowledge.

Ambassador Tagliavini, we concur fully with your remark that one has to address not only the political, legal and military aspects, but that it is also a matter of

change of minds and reorientation of perceptions. Your report is a very valuable contribution and could serve as a helpful tool for the parties in a most needed process of reconciliation.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is now very important to start looking forward. The Geneva talks must play their full role in alleviating the hardships suffered by the affected populations, and we call on all parties to participate in a constructive manner in the upcoming round of talks, set for 8 June. It is also necessary to reestablish as soon as possible a viable OSCE presence throughout Georgia, to assist the country in developing its democratic institutions as well as its economy, and we join the European Union in encouraging the OSCE chairmanship to intensify its efforts on this matter. We also believe the recommendations laid down in the 27 November 2008 report prepared by ODIHR, in cooperation with the High Commissioner on National Minorities, on the human rights situation should be followed up.

Norway agrees with the European Union that the situation in Georgia, including its Abkhaz and South Ossetian regions, remains of concern to us all, and we call again for full implementation of the 12 August and 8 September 2008 agreements. I wish also to once again reiterate Norway's commitment to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, within her internationally recognized borders.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.