



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

**16th Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,
General committee on Political Affairs and Security**

**Presentation by the chair of the OSCE Security Committee
Ambassador Steffen Kongstad, Permanent Representative of Norway to the OSCE**

Mr Chair, distinguished members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly,

Thank you for this opportunity to inform the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security of the priorities and work of the OSCE Security Committee this year.

As you are well aware, the Security Committee deals, with non-military aspects of the OSCE's politico-military dimension of security, – meaning transnational threats and how to improve our security sectors to tackle such threats.

Despite the current political and security circumstances in and around the OSCE area, the work of the Security Committee continues to be constructive and fruitful. This has been demonstrated not least through the adoption of important declarations and decisions in recent Ministerial Councils, after constructive deliberations in the Security Committee.

There seems to be general agreement that we must work together to intensify international cooperation *to prevent and counter terrorism and transnational organised crime, to manage our borders, to ensure effective and accountable law enforcement and justice sectors, and to promote peace and security in cyberspace.*

There is also general agreement that the OSCE has an important role to play in this area. Let me mention three aspects of the OSCE's added value in countering transnational threats:

First, the comprehensive approach to security allows us to tackle not only the symptoms – such as terrorist attacks – but also the underlying causes – the marginalisation, intolerance

and discrimination that leads to radicalisation and violent extremism. A human rights based approach is crucial for an effective response.

Second, the secretariat and the autonomous institutions has built up impressive cross-dimensional expertise on various transnational threats, ensuring high quality programmatic activity.

And third, the local presence and expertise of the field operations make the OSCE into a highly cost-effective project implementer, with the ability to tailor projects to *local* needs, and the necessary and longstanding relationships with *host governments* and other partners on the ground to ensure *local ownership*.

That being said, the OSCE is a small organisation with limited resources. We should not overstretch, but rather focus our efforts, and avoid duplicating the work of other actors, such as the relevant UN organisations.

Let me now turn to the topics on the agenda of the Security Committee in 2017. The topics chosen for the monthly meetings reflect the priorities of the Austrian OSCE chairmanship. We have also received input from participating States, and we have attempted to base the work programme on what topics there is interest for, and agreement on, discussing among participating States. Recent Ministerial Council decisions and declarations have been important for guiding our work.

The Austrian OSCE chairmanship's key priority for the first dimension is Violent Extremism and Radicalization that lead to Terrorism. This is consequently one of our main priorities in the Security Committee. We devoted our first thematic meeting on 20 February to a "whole of society" approach to preventing and countering radicalisation and violent extremism. Professor Peter Neumann, the CiO's newly appointed Special Representative on the Fight Against Radicalisation, was one of the speakers, and informed us of his plans to issue a report with recommendations and best practices towards the end of the year.

We believe Security Sector Governance and Reform generally receives less attention than it deserves. The OSCE has valuable expertise and is well placed to help ensure that the security sector in all participating States is effective and accountable. We hope discussions in the Security Committee this year will contribute to this end.

We will also continue the important work on cyber security, in close cooperation with the newly appointed Hungarian Chair of the Informal Working Group, Ambassador Károly Dán. In addition, there will be meetings on Border Management and Security, Community Policing, as well as on the links between organised crime, trafficking in illicit drugs and human beings, and financing of terrorism.

Together with the Economic and Environmental Committee and the Human Dimension Committee, we will have a joint meeting on Trafficking in human beings and modern slavery. In a separate joint meeting with the Human Dimension Committee, we will discuss civilian aspects of Women, Peace and Security.

Gender will be a cross cutting priority throughout the year. We will seek to promote gender equality and incorporate a gender perspective in all meetings. In addition, we will have a meeting especially devoted to gender and Violent Extremism and Radicalisation Leading to Terrorism, and we will as already mentioned have a joint meeting with the Human Dimension Committee on women, peace and security.

The Security Committee is a forum for dialogue among participating States as well as between participating States and the OSCE executive structures. We aim to make this dialogue as practically oriented as possible, focusing on practical measures, to help further improve the good work our organisation is already doing on the ground, and to support participating States in implementing their OSCE commitments – through exchange of best practices and voluntary reporting.

Thank you, Mr Chair