

Political platform

for a government formed by the Conservative Party and the Progress Party
Sundvollen, 7 October 2013

16 – Foreign and development policy

Foreign policy

The Government will pursue a realistic foreign policy based on clear priorities, founded on liberal values and with the main purpose of safeguarding our main national interests. Foreign policy must achieve tangible results for the Norwegian people and contribute to international détente, security and stability, lasting peace, the highest possible degree of free trade, economic development and respect for fundamental human rights. Norway should be an active contributor to efforts to preserve and strengthen a predictable international legal order.

Norway's development, security and welfare are strongly influenced by processes and actors beyond Norway's borders, and there is a relationship of mutual dependency between neighbouring countries, allies and trading partners. Norway's efforts as an active and predictable cooperation partner and ally shall be irreproachable.

The main features of Norwegian foreign policy remain unaltered. The Government will base its policies on commitment to international cooperation. Norway shall be an active contributor to the UN, NATO and other international organizations.

Norway's primary community of interests and values will remain in the Atlantic, European and Nordic realms. The Government will actively pursue cooperation with new partners and seek global involvement. At the same time, changes in the balance of political, economic and military of power require a reinforced attachment to the Western community of neighbours, allies and trading partners in terms of values and political orientation.

The Government will promote a modernized, strong and more efficient United Nations. Norwegian efforts and financial engagement shall be shifted to those parts of the organization that deliver good results and operate in line with Norwegian priorities. The Government will be a reform-oriented and constructively demanding contributor and partner to the UN.

The Government will promote democracy, human rights, the rule of law and freedom of speech through Norwegian foreign policy, and devote more attention to civil and political rights, including in countries close to us, cf. the Cooperation Agreement.

To a greater extent than today, the Norwegian foreign service will serve as an instrument to promote the interests of Norwegian industry abroad. It is essential for Norwegian industry to have the appropriate conditions for participating in global trade with emerging economies, such as the BRICS countries. The foreign representation must be proportionate to Norwegian interests in each particular country, and assist Norwegian industry and citizens. The Government will bring energy issues more to the fore in Norwegian foreign policy.

The policies for peace and reconciliation will be maintained, and their scope and thrust will be reviewed to prioritize processes and countries for which Norway possesses the resources and competencies required to achieve results. Norwegian efforts should be undertaken in cooperation with close allies and key multilateral actors. Disarmament and non-proliferation will be important areas for the Government's international engagement.

The Government will assume a balanced position with regard to the conflict in the Middle East, and actively support the goal of achieving a negotiated solution, entailing that Israel and Palestine, as two states, can exist in peace within secure borders that enjoy international recognition.

Europe

The European countries are Norway's close neighbours, friends and key trading partners. Norwegian foreign policy must therefore start in Europe.

The Government will pursue more active policies to safeguard Norwegian interests in relation to the EU, including through the EEA Agreement, cf. the Cooperation Agreement. The Government will regard the EEA Agreement and the other agreements with the EU as the framework for its European policies. The agreed framework ensures market access and predictability for Norwegian industry, and is of fundamental economic importance. The daily follow-up of the agreed framework is largely of a domestic-policy nature.

Nordic collaboration is of especially great importance. The Government will help strengthen parliamentary cooperation through the Nordic Council and assume an active role in The Nordic Council of Ministers, cf. the Cooperation Agreement.

The Government will:

- Pursue proactive policies to safeguard Norwegian interests by engaging in processes and policy design in the EU at an earlier stage.
- Seek to deepen bilateral relations with key European countries.
- Strengthen coordination of the overall handling of European matters in government administration to ensure efficient casework and improved Norwegian participation.
- Give priority to participation in those informal and formal European forums to which the EEA Agreement grants us access.
- Involve the Storting in the clarification of key EEA processes at an early stage.
- Seek to clarify the position of welfare schemes in the EEA Agreement and help increase the sustainability of the principle of free movement.

Development

The goal of development policy is to promote democratization, realization of human rights and the ability of people to work their way out of poverty permanently. The Government will continue supporting democratic, economic and social development. Support will be provided to processes that are optimally effective and produce permanent change, and that reinforce the ability of individuals to care for themselves, their families and their communities.

The Government will base its policies on the view that all people have universal rights irrespective of where in the world they may live, such as freedom of speech, freedom of belief and protection of private property, cf. the Cooperation Agreement. The Government will seek to disseminate knowledge about human rights and prevent violence and oppression, including female genital mutilation, forced marriages, human trafficking and sexual abuse of children. The Government will devote particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as women, children, religious minorities, disabled people and sexual minorities.

The Government will base its policies on social responsibility and international solidarity, cf. the Cooperation Agreement.

The Government will work to raise people out of poverty, in Norway as well as in poor countries. The Government will give priority to girls' education in poor countries.

The Government will maintain Norwegian development aid at a high level. Active efforts by national governments and political ownership of national development are preconditions for Norwegian aid.