



## EUROPEAN UNION

### **OSCE Joint Meeting Permanent Council and Forum for Security Co-operation N° 77 Vienna, 20 May 2020**

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#### **EU Statement on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325**

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The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the distinguished Speakers to this joint Forum for Security Cooperation and Permanent Council and thank them for their insightful presentations. We commend the Ukrainian FSC Chairmanship and the Albanian Chairmanship in Office for dedicating this joint meeting, for the first time, to the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and for their commitment to its implementation.

The realization of gender equality is a fundamental value of the EU and we remain a frontrunner in the global arena in engaging, empowering, protecting, and supporting women and girls to achieve peace and security. The WPS Agenda, consisting of UNSCR 1325 and its follow-up UNSC Resolutions, broadens the scope of traditional security by highlighting the importance of the gender dimension in peace and security. It focuses on women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace and security related decision-making processes, including crisis prevention, peace processes and relief and recovery, as well as on protection from conflict-related violence. The Agenda stresses that gender equality is embedded in peace and security issues, and that gender perspectives are integral to peace and security. In addition, it states that addressing the gender-related root causes of violence is critical for conflict prevention. In fact, as stressed by the UN Secretary General's reports, when women are meaningfully included in peace

processes, the chances that peace agreements are implemented over a two-year period increase by 20 % and over 15 years by 25 %.

It is of greatest importance that the OSCE continues to enable and stand up for women's meaningful, effective and equal participation in all forms of conflict prevention, not just those related to women or gender-related matters. Through its WPS Action Plan, the EU recognizes gender equality and women's empowerment as a prerequisite for dealing effectively with the conflict cycle, including conflict resolution, mediation, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction, including demobilization, disarmament, reintegration and security sector reform.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact many aspects of our lives. In this context, we underline the importance of gender-sensitive crisis response mechanisms. We call on all to support and monitor the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women, including through digital tools, in ongoing ceasefire and peace negotiations, political transitions, the implementation of peace agreements, and crisis recovery decision-making, in line with the WPS Agenda. We also encourage participating States to contribute emergency funding for regional and local women's organizations, particularly in conflict-affected countries. We would also like to draw attention to the plight of refugees and IDP, many of whom are women and girls.

Women's leadership in all areas of policy related to peace and security is crucial. The EU is committed to ensuring that women and girls participate equally and substantially in preventing and resolving conflicts, and in the prevention and protection of conflict-related violence, including all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. The EU also reiterates the importance of the engagement of men and boys as positive agents for change, addressing gender stereotypes and societal exclusion mechanisms.

We call on the OSCE to continue its efforts to ensure equal representation of women at all levels with the aim to achieve a gender balance, especially at senior and decision-making levels, in all the OSCE structures and field missions. We must all continue our efforts to identify and remove all barriers to women and men's equal participation in the sector of peace and security. Equal opportunity and

representation are a matter of democracy and inclusive security. The EU further underlines the role of the participating States in this matter in relation to the seconded positions in the OSCE. The EU also commends all the initiatives, including informal networks, that support the implementation of the WPS Agenda within the OSCE, such as the recently launched Women in the First Dimension Network and their efforts to develop the mentoring programme.

The EU recognizes the added value of the annual questionnaire of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security that allows participating States to provide voluntary information on Women, Peace and Security. We encourage all participating States to do so. Better information and data will strengthen the OSCE in its capacity-building efforts and training as well as support with monitoring, evaluation and reporting procedures, that all are crucial parts of closing the implementation gap.

Although we all, the OSCE and the participating States, have made efforts to implement UNSCR 1325 and have seen several success stories, there is still much work to be done: continued and robust engagement at the OSCE senior level, enhancing women's meaningful participation in these processes and the systematic integration of the gender perspective throughout all policy areas. For example, the ambition of establishing an OSCE wide Regional Action Plan that addresses our specific regional dimensions of the WPS Agenda and its implementation, is not yet realized.

The EU remains convinced that a strengthened commitment to WPS and women's participation in all OSCE activities would contribute to the OSCE comprehensive security approach and thereby strengthen the organization. Neglecting to carry out gender analysis and to integrate a gender perspective would negatively impact the ability to achieve peace and security and thus on the OSCE's role as a regional security organization.

We stress the need for continued close engagement and cooperation between the participating States, partners for cooperation, the OSCE Secretariat, the field missions and the autonomous institutions, at all stages of the implementation of the WPS agenda and throughout the realization process. We further encourage strengthening the ties to, and working closer with civil society, local, regional and

international civil society organizations, grassroots activists, women human rights defenders and women's rights organizations.

In conclusion, the EU calls on the OSCE and the participating States to amplify our efforts on the implementation of the WPS agenda. After 20 years it is high time that we close the implementation gap.

Mr. Chairman, I kindly request this statement be attached to the Journal of the Day.

The Candidate Countries the REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, SERBIA\* and ALBANIA\*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

\*The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.