

Austrian Delegation

## **The Austrian Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security**

The Austrian Action Plan on implementing Resolution 1325 was adopted by the Austrian Government on 8 August 2007. The Plan foresees actions to be taken by the Austrian authorities at the national, regional and international levels. All relevant actors were included in the development of the plan: the Ministries for Defense, the Interior, Justice, Women's Affairs, Youth; the Agency for Development Cooperation; as well as civil society.

**Developing** the 1<sup>st</sup> national Action Plan led to considerable awareness raising as it was the first time that emphasis was put onto a gender perspective in the Austrian contributions to international peace-keeping missions. Great consideration was given to maintaining close cooperation among the partner authorities throughout the development process; this helped to create a sense of responsibility. Also, the input of NGOs and scholars was highly informative and extremely valuable.

The Austrian Action Plan is designed as a **living document** to be **reviewed** annually. Civil society is to be involved in the revision process and an annual review report will be transmitted to the Council of Ministers and Parliament. In order to make the Plan easily readable and precise, we highlighted in it the status quo, the concrete follow-up measures to be taken, the authorities responsible for taking these measures and the specific deadlines. Two categories of measures are to be taken: national and international ones.

**Measures** to be taken on the **national level** include the following:

- Ministries are requested to offer incentives to increase the percentage of women in Austrian contributions to peace missions;
- Training programmes for Austrian personnel in peacebuilding missions and development cooperation will be complemented by gender-mainstreaming

checklists, that clarify the standards of gender-related conduct and outline policies to be carried out in the field;

- In order to prevent gender-specific violence by outgoing peacebuilding personnel, creating awareness of the zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse and prostitution will be an integral part of all training before missions, and enforcement of this policy will be strengthened.

On the **international and regional level**, the Plan stipulates a commitment to lobby for implementation of SCR 1325 in regional and international institutions, such as OSCE, EU, and UN, and to intensify gender-specific development cooperation activities.

- Lobbying efforts aim for instance at increasing the number of women in international diplomatic peacemaking initiatives. As of today, there are still no women among EU and UN representatives for conflict regions;
- The Plan also requires high-ranking Austrian officials to call for the inclusion of women in peacebuilding efforts in their bilateral contacts, and to meet regularly with womens' groups from conflict situations;
- Moreover, the Austrian Development Cooperation will actively support the reintegration of women and girls affected by conflicts, and rule-of-law reforms as well as awareness raising efforts on violence against women.

Since the Austrian Action Plan was adopted only recently, we cannot give a comprehensive assessment of its impact on policy and practice yet. As stated, we noticed a considerable rise in awareness of the involved authorities already during the process of development. The adoption of the Plan by the government also increased awareness at the highest political level and – being widely reported on by the media – among the public. Our expectation is, therefore, that a National Action Plan on Resolution 1325, when followed by regular follow-up activities, will be a highly effective tool for developing, streamlining, and enforcing gender-mainstreaming approaches in foreign policy and peacebuilding efforts.