

## OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2014

### Statement by the Republic of Bulgaria on Tolerance and non-discrimination I

#### Working session 7: Equality of opportunity for women and men

The Bulgarian delegation aligns itself with the statement of Finland on behalf of the European Union.

Bulgaria welcomes OSCE's efforts for progress on gender equality, through different programmes and mechanisms.

Bulgaria fully shares the concept that the right of women and the equality between women and men are inseparable part of the whole complex of Human Rights.

Equality before the law is a constitutional principle in our country. The Bulgarian legislation warrants full equality between women and men and treats them equally in all spheres of legally regulated social relations. UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women constitutes a part of the national legislation and is integrated in all strategic documents and policies.

The national policy in the field of equality and non-discrimination by gender is a horizontal policy, coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. A sustainable model of cooperation among institutions, social partners and the civil society has been achieved through their participation in the National Council on Gender Equality to the Council of Ministers. The minister of labour and social policy is the chairperson of the Council.

The strategic document of the Bulgarian government setting out the policy framework is the National Strategy for Gender Equality Promotion for the period 2009 – 2015, which was adopted in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Europe, the strategic documents of the European Union and the principles underlying the UN conventions on human rights and women's rights. The strategy sets out the specific objectives to be

achieved in order to remove all obstacles to effective gender equality in the country.

The State policy in the field of gender equality is focused on increasing the role of women in the society and in the decision-making process. In recent years Bulgaria has seen a steady trend towards more meaningful participation of women in the political life. An expression of the active civic and political position of the Bulgarian women is the increasing number of women members of the National Assembly. Women actively participate in the local governance. Two-thirds of judges in all national courts, at all levels, are women.

Considering the fact that gender equality is essential to achieving the objectives of the European Strategy “Europe 2020” and the European strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015, and is a measure of democratic development of the society, Bulgaria will continue to develop and improve its national legislation in order to ensure equal opportunities for women and men.

Thank you.