



Delegation of Canada
to the OSCE

Délégation du Canada
auprès de l'OSCE

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOCELYN KINNEAR
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OSCE GENDER ACTION PLAN
1383rd MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 July 2022

Mr. Chair,

We thank the Secretary General for her report and for her presentation today. We support the emphasis she has placed at the outset on the devastating impact that Russia's war against Ukraine has had on the safety, security and well-being of Ukrainian women and girls.

Secretary General,

We welcome the progress towards gender equality in 2021 that you have laid out in your report. I agree wholeheartedly with your comment that the OSCE has ability to facilitate tremendous progress for both women and men.

The commitment to advance women's participation in decision-making is exemplified by the launch of the OSCE Networking Platform for Women Leaders, which brings together women mediators and peacebuilders across the OSCE region. We look forward to hearing about the program's successes in promoting dialogue and the inclusion of diverse women's perspectives in peace and security discussions, especially in Ukraine, Afghanistan and neighbouring countries impacted by these conflicts.

In the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, we particularly welcome the Secretariat's work to support Ukrainian women's contributions to peace and security. One important example is the Gender Issues Programme's capacity building of Ukrainian women civil society leaders engaged in peacebuilding across the country, which helped strengthen their resilience before Russia's recent invasion. The SMM, through thematic reports, also drew attention to the contributions women had made to decrease tensions and promote peace before Russia's most recent aggression. These peacebuilding efforts will be crucial in the months ahead, and lay the ground to support Ukraine as it rebuilds its society – in a fair, just, and gender-equal manner – as part of its path towards European integration.

We commend the strong support of OSCE staff and structures for gender equality and gender mainstreaming across OSCE programs and projects, including in particular through the excellent work of the Field Missions. We welcome introduction of 12 new tailored training courses on gender mainstreaming and gender equality, and encourage all OSCE staff to take advantage of these development opportunities. We also support the multidimensional approach to working on violence against women and girls through the development of internal Strategic Guidance. These are all important measures to create a more strategic approach to preventing and responding to gender-based violence, a key ongoing security concern in the OSCE region. We encourage the Secretariat and the Field Missions to continue this important work.

Secretary General,

And as you have noted, there is of course – as always – more work still to be done. We welcome your organized, focused, and transparent approach on this, and we fully support the clear and concrete actions you have laid out to improve our organization’s gender equality efforts, including: developing and implementing minimum standards for working on eliminating violence against women; building staff capacity; and achieving gender parity in recruitment and promotion processes.

Beyond this, we would note that the Secretariat can work to strengthen further the level of gender-mainstreaming in the politico-military and economic and environmental dimensions, where only one-third of projects are fully gender-mainstreamed or dedicated to gender equality. We see strong value in ensuring that a gender perspective is integrated into each and every project and activity. This ensures that each project is responding most effectively to the needs of the diverse populations it is aiming to support. We would love to see the OCEEA, FSC, and CPC be at the forefront of gender-mainstreaming in your 2022 report.

Canada will continue to seek balance when nominating candidates, and we recognize that we could do better when it comes to providing candidates. We hope other participating States will make the same commitment to seeking quality women candidates, especially for senior posts.

Finally, we welcome your entreaty to better acknowledge women and girls as agents of positive change in climate security, and we hope to see further recognition of the leadership role that women can naturally play across the OSCE region when supportive structures and policies are in place. We hope all participating States recognize this reality and work towards gender equity for the good of their own societies and economies. We very much appreciate your unwavering dedication and leadership in this respect. Rest assured that you will always have a staunch ally in Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.