



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Symposium & Launch of the Publication:
Bringing Security Home: Combating Violence against Women in the OSCE
Region
A Compilation of Good Practices

Panel Remarks, Ambassador Renatas Norkus
Chairperson of the Human Dimension Committee

8 June 2009, Ratsaal

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

As the Chair of this Human Dimension Committee, I am very gratified to see in attendance today representatives of the executive structures of the OSCE, including the Secretariat, ODIHR and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and some Gender Focal Points and representatives from the field united in supporting the participating States to combat violence against women.

As it was stressed this morning, implementing OSCE MC Decision 15/05 on “Preventing and Combating Violence against Women” is a priority area and, of course, a key topic in the work of the Human Dimension Committee.

The Human Dimension Committee and the Chairmanship have planned to focus this year’s work on reviewing achievements in implementing the provisions of the this MC. Dec as well identifying the significant challenges that stand in the way of full implementation.

The compilation of good practices presented today is precisely the sort of tool that will enable the participating States and the OSCE Institutions and field operations to review and improve relevant national legislative and policy

measures for the prevention, protection and prosecution of violence against women. I look forward to have a close look at this resource myself and hope that all of you will find it useful as well.

I would also like to remind all of us that a life free of violence is an inalienable and fundamental right. It is at the heart of our concerns in the Human dimension committee but it goes beyond it: it's a cross-cutting issue affecting the life of millions and touching upon all three dimensions of the OSCE's work and values. As we heard this morning, women in conflict situations experience high levels of violence. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons both during and after conflicts creates a situation in which violence against women usually increases in intensity. Policing strategies also play an important role in addressing violence in the community.

Gender based violence also touches upon the economic dimension. The direct and indirect costs of such violence place huge financial burdens on countries, States, civil society and international donors. The human costs to women, children and their families are even more considerable.

Thus, we can see clearly that the broad problem of violence against women can be tackled only by comprehensive and integrated responses by all actors across all sectors. As outlined in the commitments expounded in MC. Dec 14/05 and in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, it is one of the urgencies that deserve not only our common, determinate engagement, it calls for our fullest energy and intensive action to bring security in our homes and in our States.

Today's presentations, the compilation itself and the discussions will certainly enrich the upcoming Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on "Gender Equality, with a Special Focus on Combating Violence against Women" to be held this year, 5-6 November, in Vienna.

I look forward to see many of the messages and a number of the lessons learned captured in the publication launched today, in the middle of the debates ahead of us.

Thank you.