



Norwegian Statement on Women, Peace and Security
As delivered by Military Adviser Arne H. Knapskog at the 1072nd Forum for Security
Cooperation
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you,

Mr Chair,

We would like to thank the panelists for their excellent contribution to this security dialogue. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Cypriot chairpersonship for bringing the Women, Peace and Security issue to the FSC agenda.

Dear colleagues,

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. This Action Plan is a testament to the inherent connection between the full, equal and meaningful participation by women in all phases of the conflict cycle, and the comprehensive security of our region. It reiterates the fact that women have a place wherever security decisions are made, as positive and competent agents on equal terms as men.

Mr Chair,

War and conflict exacerbate already present inequalities in the given society. This has been evident in the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine. Women in the occupied areas are exposed to an increased risk of being subject to gender-based violence, trafficking, or other forms of exploitation.

Simultaneously, Ukrainian women have played a key role on the frontlines, as first-responders, as human rights defenders, as peacebuilders, and much more. They continue to play a crucial part in sustaining an active civil society amidst the war. We support the women of Ukraine in all their efforts to defend their country. We underline the importance of their full, equal and meaningful participation in the process of ending the war in Ukraine, and in its post-conflict recovery.

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Mr Chair,

Last year, Norway launched its fifth national action plan on Women, Peace and Security. It reflects our priorities to include women in all aspects of security, from peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements, via security policy and operations, to comprehensive humanitarian efforts, the protection of civilians and protection of human rights. Furthermore, it embodies our position that women are willing, able and entitled to a full, equal and meaningful participation in political and military affairs.

In this context, it is important to acknowledge the barriers to women's full participation in the armed forces. In recent years, the Norwegian Military has taken several steps to mitigate the occurrence of sexual harassment and gender discrimination in its ranks. Our experience with gender advisors has demonstrated the importance of addressing the issue for both men and women in service. We are determined to offer safe and effective reporting mechanisms, as well as address negative workplace culture and thereby remove one barrier for women's participation in this sector.

Mr Chair,

The OSCE, with its comprehensive approach to security, serves as an excellent platform to champion these issues. For example, we encourage all participating States to respond to the Women, Peace and Security questionnaire in their reporting under the OSCE Code of Conduct. This way, cooperation and best practices can be developed further for substantial results in our region.

Crucial to these efforts is the OSCE Field Missions' work to mainstream gender in their work on conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict reconciliation. It truly is the only way to succeed.

Dear colleagues,

We have learned that taking a gender perspective into the OSCE's work in the first dimension is not only a moral imperative, it is a strategic one. Let therefore this 20th anniversary be a reminder for what we have accomplished, and an inspiration for what we can achieve moving forward.

I thank you.