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Statement by Ambassador Mariin Ratnik on Women, Peace and Security

Honoured Chair, Dear Colleagues,

Recently world leaders from 129 countries joined in their commitment to tackle sexual violence in conflicts in a global summit in London. Estonia warmly commends the determination by the UK and especially by the Foreign Secretary William Hague to enforce the process, both politically and practically, to find implementable ways to put an end to sexual violence and help those women and girls, as well as men and boys, who have already become the victims of sexual violence.

Regarding UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), we have seven texts at our disposal today. It is gratifying to see that the latest – resolution 2122, from October 18, 2013 - comprehensively recognizes the need to address the full scope of women, peace and security issues.

As a security organization, also the OSCE has to take every measure at its disposal to take greater systematic attention to the implementation of WPS commitments, as well as to tackle the ongoing crises and to prevent future ones from happening. For the foremost – our success depends on political determination by high-level leadership combined with effective action on the ground.

OSCE possesses remarkable toolbox to reach the WPS goals. To date, 43 countries world-wide have launched their National Action Plans. Out of those, 27 are OSCE countries, including Estonia. The study on existing strategies to implement UNSCR 1325 in the OSCE region, launched by the OSCE Gender Section together with the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO) as an implementing partner, identified best practices, strategies for implementation and tools for action and serves as an important lessons-learned cornerstone for our policies and future action.

10 years ago we adopted the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality aiming to mainstream gender within our organization and its action. The Gender Equality Review Conference, taking place in Vienna on July 10-11, will provide an excellent opportunity to mark the tenth anniversary of the OSCE Gender Action Plan. It also serves as a platform to raise awareness on the important contribution that the inclusion of a gender perspective makes towards achieving comprehensive security. This Conference will provide the participants with the opportunity to critically assess the progress made and to discuss new initiatives proposed in this area, such as the draft OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, co-sponsored by Austria, Finland, Kazakhstan and Turkey.

Mr. Chairman,

OSCE shall continue with the current comprehensive approach to WPS which includes education, media, mediation, migration, women's economic empowerment, security and other relevant aspects. I am especially delighted to recognize the strong commitment by the men on the

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topic through the MenEngage Network. Here I would like to commend the remarkable inputs by Mrs. Miroslava Beham, Senior Advisor on Gender Issues which are exemplary.

Dear Colleagues,

Allow me to conclude with some thoughts how we could proceed with Women, Peace and Security issues.

- We have to continue with our regular discussions on daily topical WPS-related issues, including in the FSC fora.
- We have to enhance the training of OSCE staff, with special focus on capacity-building for and in field operations, for example together with Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations as our partner in that.
- Closer cooperation with other actors in the field, especially with relevant international organizations should be in our focus, and special attention should be drawn towards the Mediterranean and Asian partners in this regard.
- The cooperation must become more structured and result-oriented.

To sum up, there is no other solution than to be committed and to stay committed and to make sure that words are being followed by concrete steps.

Thank you for your attention!