



United States Mission to the OSCE

Response to the Report by the Secretary General on the Implementation of the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Gary Robbins
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 28, 2013

The United States thanks the Secretary General for this comprehensive report. The United States supports efforts to integrate a gender perspective into policies, programs, projects, and activities in all three OSCE dimensions. We concur with the Secretary General's assessment that addressing gender equality as a security issue is a prerequisite for the implementation of the OSCE's cooperative and comprehensive approach to security. As we look ahead to the 10th Anniversary of the 2004 Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality, we should recommit ourselves as participating States and as an Organization to the Plan's call for concrete progress in gender mainstreaming.

Unfortunately, each year the Secretary General's report describes the disappointing reality that women hold few positions of leadership in OSCE participating States. We are confident that qualified female candidates exist across the OSCE space. We urge participating States to examine whether their recruiting strategies prioritize diversity and inclusion – including gender balance.

In 2013, we benefited from a number of meetings facilitated by the Ukrainian Chairmanship in coordination with the Gender Section and ODIHR, which addressed critical questions about diversity in leadership and management and identified the various obstacles women face across cultural lines and professional sectors. We need to translate these lessons into actions.

We appreciate the work of OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, Ambassador Miroslava Beham, and of the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairmanship on Gender issues, June Zeitlin. We look forward to June Zeitlin's statement to the Permanent Council on December 12. Her reports from country visits highlight the work that remains for OSCE participating States, including enhancing women's political and economic participation and the prevention of and response to violence against women. Strong domestic violence laws, effective implementation of such laws, and enhanced opportunities for economic and political empowerment are critical in advancing gender equality and the advancement of women's rights.

As with the current Chairmanship, we have high expectations that the forthcoming Chairmanships of Switzerland and Serbia will continue to advance discussion of and encourage concrete actions to promote of the equality of women across the OSCE space.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.