

**Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna**

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Chairmanship: Ukraine

**Statement by
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*77th Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation
and the Permanent Council
20 May 2020*

Security Dialogue: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

***Mr. Chairman!
Dear colleagues and experts!
Ladies and Gentlemen!***

It is a great honor for me to take part in such a highly respected meeting today. Firstly, because Ukraine, as a full member of the organization, cannot stay away from global transformation processes in the security sector. Ukraine clearly and consistently follows the policy of European and Euro-Atlantic integration and focuses on best European practices.

On the other hand, we all live in a changing world which offers new challenges. That is why we must be united to find answers and develop a common position to respond to and overcome new threats. In this difficult time, not only for Ukraine, we feel support of the OSCE participating States and thank them for the position of zero tolerance for the act of aggression and disrespect for international law, OSCE principles and commitments. We also value our partners' contribution to Ukraine's security and defence sector. It is important in shaping the stability of our state under the conditions of countering foreign aggression against Ukraine.

This year marks the **20th anniversary** of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Ukraine takes pride in the fact that it was among the authors of this resolution as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council back in 2000.

Today we can share best practices in the implementation of the gender policy and identify the weak points that have to be improved. Our discussion could pave the way to a comprehensive overview of the progress reached and the way ahead in implementing our commitments during the **3rd Gender Equality Review Conference** later this year. We are looking forward to this event.

The OSCE has an important role in promoting and strengthening the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda across the region. Through the **Forum for Security Co-operation**, the participating States have a unique opportunity to promote the meaningful inclusion and participation of women within all layers of the politico-military dimension, in particular in the decision-making process. The Forum has a number of tools to this end. They are, inter alia, recently developed **Guidance Note on Assistance Projects** devoted to mainstreaming gender across all phases of OSCE assistance projects, voluntary information exchange on matters related to UNSCR 1325, through the OSCE questionnaire on the **Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security**, and the **OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security**. We strongly support the adoption of the **OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security**, which should give further impetus to the implementation of relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

Ukraine values OSCE 's practical assistance in this sphere, such as the project by the **OSCE Project Coordinator to organize a training course** for trainers on gender issues for the officials from the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine. We will also benefit from the **OSCE expertise in drafting a guide on equal rights** and opportunities for women and men in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Ukraine is committed to implement key international instruments for gender equality. The country adopted the **Sustainable Development Goals**, joined the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the 4th World Women Conference (1995)**, ratified key human rights treaties, including the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1980)** and its Optional Protocol. The **Association Agreement** between Ukraine and the EU, signed in 2014, provides for guaranteeing equal opportunities for women and men in the fields of employment, education, training, economy, society and decision-making. Issues of gender equality are reflected in the Constitution of Ukraine.

The new **State Social Program for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men** for the period up to 2021 is aimed at strengthening institutional mechanisms for ensuring gender equality and providing comprehensive approach. Ukraine's gender equality legislation also includes the **Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan** adopted in 2015.

In 2018, a section on equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the security and defence sector was for the first time included in the **Annual National Program under the auspices of the NATO-Ukraine Commission**.

Ukraine still **faces challenges** that affect equal rights and opportunities.

The **ongoing international armed conflict** in my country, as well as the security, social, economic and political crisis, are the factors which exacerbated existing gender inequalities and created new challenges for the protection and realization of women's rights in Ukraine. The latest threat of a **pandemic** should be added to this list. It has affected every country and its consequences, I am sure, will be felt for a long time.

The escalation of the armed conflict in the eastern Ukraine and large-scale flows of internally displaced persons led to the new **gender challenges** which include the increased risk of gender-based violence, the creation of preconditions for mass discrimination of vulnerable populations, the lack of opportunities for employment, the

growing need for social services, and the growing number of post-traumatic stress disorders among servicemen and servicewomen, ex-servicemen and ex-servicewomen, domestic violence and gender stereotypes.

Considering these factors, gender equality issues are of particular importance today, and I am pleased that more and more attention is being paid to this issue at all levels of the government.

In order to ensure the implementation of its obligations, the Government of Ukraine approved the **National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women. Peace. Security” for the period up to 2020**. With the adoption of the National Action Plan, gender equality became a part of the reform of the security and defence sector, and has been integrated into government policy priorities. We believe that NAPs serve as important tools for governments, multilateral organizations and civil society organizations to support the translation of UNSCR 1325 into practical action and to strengthen women’s roles in conflict prevention, peace building and security processes.

A special national feature of the resolution’s implementation in Ukraine is the adoption of **regional plans** (*7 regions*) which are important in terms of decentralization.

According to the results of the National Plan implementation analysis in 2019, we can say that Ukraine has made significant **progress** in fulfilling its obligations.

In particular, the **new Electoral Code**, adopted in December 2019, introduces a 40% gender quota for all party lists (at least two out of the five candidates on party lists must be women or men at both national and regional levels).

We can specify the **positive dynamics** of women's representation in **Parliament**: in the current Parliament, the number of women deputies is 20.5% (in the Verkhovna Rada of the previous convocation it was 12%) .

According to the new **Law on Recognition of Veteran Volunteers who took part in the Anti-Terrorist Operation** (Law № 2045-1 of 29.10.2019), women volunteers and volunteers who participated in the Joint Forces Operation in the east of Ukraine will now be able to be officially recognized veterans and will be entitled to social guarantees and benefits.

A **draft National Strategy for the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict until 2030** has been drafted.

The **guidelines** for the prevention of gender-based violence by participants in the anti-terrorist operation and the Joint Forces operation have been developed.

Starting from December 2019, the Ministry of Justice is authorized to carry out **gender legal examination of normative** legal acts.

The **Strategy for Gender Equality for 2019-2021** has been approved.

Criminal liability for domestic violence has been introduced in Ukraine, the **Unified Register of Domestic Violence** and Gender-Based Violence has been introduced; the project **POLINA** - police against violence - has been launched.

Since 2015, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine has been undergoing a global transformation from a post-Soviet ministry of militia to a law enforcement agency of a European model. Today it is a powerful system capable to form policy in the field of internal security, migration, protection of citizens' rights and freedoms and

crime prevention. The system includes the National Police, the State Migration Service, the State Border Service, the State Emergency Service and the National Guard.

In 2017, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine was one of the first to approve a **Ministerial Action Plan for the implementation of the National Action Plan** on "Women, Peace, Security" for the period up to 2020.

In the Ministry of Internal Affairs as well as in its subordinated agencies one of the deputy heads of each agency has been appointed as a **coordinator** responsible for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men. **Gender advisers** have been also appointed and **specialized gender units** have been established. Gender advisers are also appointed in all **7 higher education institutions** under the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Since the beginning of 2018, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has integrated the gender aspect into the process of collecting personnel statistics.

Over the two years of gender policy implementation, we can see the positive dynamics of the increase in the **number of women** in the National Police of Ukraine and the National Guard by more than 1% and the State Emergency Service - by 5%.

The same positive dynamics is observed in the increase of women in senior positions: in the National Police and the State Emergency Service of Ukraine by more than 4%, in the State Migration Service by 2%, in the National Guard of Ukraine by 1.5%, the State Border Service of Ukraine by 3%.

The **standards for admission to higher police education institutions** (7 higher education institutions under the Ministry of Internal Affairs) were revised, taking into account physiology and to ensure equal access to education for girls and boys. As of December 2019, 37,147 people were studying at higher education institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, of which 21,023 (**56%**) **are men** and 16,200 (**44%**) **are women**.

Requirements were also amended for candidates to enter the **National Police** of Ukraine.

In order to ensure gender equality, the **National Guard** of Ukraine:

- Removed legal restrictions on the participation of female military personnel in competitions to which they were not previously admitted;
- Women are given the right to take **qualifying exams for the right to wear the Beret with honour**, which was previously prohibited;
- Internal investigations are conducted with the involvement of gender integration experts in the military authorities to avoid gender discrimination;
- **new specialties** were opened for women.

In 2019 the **new order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs "On the participation of national personnel in international peacekeeping and security operations"** was approved, which gives equal possibilities for women to participate in peacekeeping operations. The selection of candidates is based on the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women and men. Before being sent to peacekeeping missions all personnel are trained at the Special Peacekeeping Center of the National Academy of Internal Affairs which has a UN Certificate.

Currently, 38 representatives of the national staff of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are serving in international peacekeeping operations, including 31 police officers (**3 women**) and 7 servicemen (National Guard).

Since 2014, the Ukrainian women have been playing the unprecedented role in defending Ukraine's freedom and territorial integrity in an international armed conflict taking place on the territory of my country.

58 thousand women serve and work in the Armed Forces of Ukraine which makes up 23% of its personnel. More than 28 thousand of them are servicewomen. That is 11% of the overall army strength. Every third woman is a sergeant or an officer. Almost half of them serve in combat troops.

To inform employees of the ministry and members of society on the implementation of gender policy:

- Since 2017, **the section "Equal rights and opportunities" has been created on the official website of the Ministry.**

- Every year the **Ministry of Internal Affairs**, with the support of international partners, **conducts information campaigns** and training courses.

With the support of the UN Women, a study is being conducted "**Understanding of masculinity in the security sector of Ukraine**". This is based on a unique methodology - the International Men and Gender Equality Study (IMAGES). I would like to emphasize that this study is being conducted for the **first time in Ukraine as well as in the security sector in general.**

In 2019, a research study was conducted "**Legislative regulation for combating discrimination on the grounds of sex and sexual harassment in the security sector**". **This study** laid a basis for amendments to **General Rules of Ethical Conduct** for civil servants and local government officials and **Disciplinary statutes.**

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is actively involved **in the project to integrate the gender component into the programs of individual educational institutions** of Ukrainian security and defence sector. **10 higher education institutions were selected to participate in the pilot project, 6 of which belong to the sphere of management of the MIA.**

With the support of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine jointly with the Ministry of Social Policy and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine **a training course "Women. Peace. Security" was developed**, as well as **a textbook on gender aspects of conflicts** which have been successfully integrated into the programs of higher educational institutions under the Ministry.

"Guidelines for the integration of gender approaches into the training system in the security and defence sector of Ukraine" have been developed and should become a map for all higher education institutions of the security and defence sector to implement a gender approach in the educational process.

Currently we are focused on:

- **increasing the number of specialists on gender equality** in the security sector;
- **allocating in the budget expenditures for the implementation of gender policy;**

- wider use of **gender budgeting** during the development of budget programs passports;

- improving legislation on preventing and combating conflict-related sexual violence and sexual harassment in the workplace;
- improving logistics to meet the needs of women and men;
- raising awareness on gender issues by both managers and employees at all levels.

Our plans for the nearest future:

1. Continue conducting trainings in order **to create a core of gender competencies** that will be a guideline for the further development of the security sector.
2. **Improve mechanisms** for the prevention and combating sexual violence related with conflict. A part of this being the introduction into legislation the definition of violence related to conflict and sexual violence related to conflict.
3. Adapt and use **UN indicators for early prevention of sexual violence** related to conflict.
4. **Conduct information campaigns** to raise awareness on gender equality, break gender stereotypes.
5. Conduct a **gender audit** in the Ministry and its agencies to assess the implementation of various aspects of gender policy.
6. **Adopt the passports of budget programs** in accordance with the principles of gender budgeting. In early 2020, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and the consortium "NIRAS" SwedenAB (project "Gender Budgeting in Ukraine") signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on gender mainstreaming in the budget process and approved an action plan. The training is ongoing.

Conclusions

Ukraine confidently continues building the security sector in which an important driving force are women. We believe that if women want to serve in the security sector the door should be open for them. If the role of women in peacekeeping processes is growing, they should join them without unnecessary obstacles and prejudices. If women's professional qualifications allow them to hold leadership positions in the security and defence sector, they should have that opportunity.

Gender policy has become the one of our priorities today and not only in the framework of the implementation of the National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325. We are not just talking about the need to develop the principle of equal rights for women and men, but we are also filling this work with real meaning.

This year we begin drafting a new plan. **The new National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 will be developed according to the results-based management** methodology. We will take all necessary measures to continue the implementation of the chosen course, as strong institutions are a precondition for strengthening our security. And the security of the Central European region is the key to a strong and prosperous Europe. Ukraine aspires to become a full member of the European community and therefore stands ready to make efforts and a significant contribution to ensuring peace and stability in Europe.

Thank you for your attention!