



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement at the Security Dialogue on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and the Women Peace and Security Agenda

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the distinguished Speakers to the Forum and thank them for their insightful presentations here today as well as for their personal contributions to a more inclusive approach to peace and security. We appreciate that the Bulgarian FSC Chair has dedicated today's Security Dialogue on UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda to the specific and relevant topic of "Women's leadership in times of conflict and war and their role in the armed forces, diplomacy and beyond".

Russia's illegal and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine has highlighted the importance of the WPS agenda. We see the leadership of the Ukrainian women who, in all their diversity as soldiers, diplomats, journalists, civil society representatives or politicians are proactively engaging in an all of society response – under war-time conditions. The growing evidence of sexual and gender-based violence, including as a tactic of war by the Russian forces, is immensely alarming. We will do our utmost, including within the OSCE context, to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and victims provided with support and justice. We congratulate Ukraine on the adoption of an updated National Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

We recall the commitments made in Istanbul 1999 and stress the important role that the OSCE plays in promoting and supporting the regional implementation of the WPS agenda. We reiterate our call for the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls in conflict prevention and resolution, throughout the conflict cycle and in recovery and reconstruction. Our approach to the women, peace

and security agenda is comprehensive. For us, women's participation is not a separate pillar of the agenda, it is a cross cutting priority.

A substantial increase in women's leadership and participation in all aspects of peace and security is necessary not only as a matter of human rights and gender equality, inclusive governance and social cohesion, but also for the sustainable and effective resolution of conflicts and crises.

As the largest regional security organization in the world and a key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, the OSCE can make a strong contribution to the regional implementation of the WPS agenda.

Implementing UNSCR 1325 is not a complementary aspect of OSCE's work. It is part of our commitments and consensus-based decisions. These decisions include the Gender Action Plan from 2004, MC decision 3/11 on the conflict cycle, MC 7/09 that calls for equal opportunities within the security services, including the armed forces, and MC decision 14/05 that acknowledges the need for concrete action by the OSCE to integrate women into all phases of the conflict cycle, including crisis management. The OSCE Secretariat, ODIHR and many field missions are further contributing to the implementation of the WPS agenda. For example, ODIHR's project promoting a "Human Rights Compliant and Gender Responsive Security Sector", their CHANGE project and the Secretariat's WIN project include WPS components, and interventions like the Women's Resource Centre in Dushanbe and the Bishkek Academy carry out important 1325-related activities. The Women Leadership Platform established by the Secretariat deserves also to be highlighted at today's meeting. Furthermore, different OSCE tools have been developed aiming at strengthening gender equality and promoting the WPS agenda, for example the 2019 toolkit "Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes", the 2020 Gender and Security toolkit, and ODIHR's Practical Guide on Addressing Sexual Violence in the Armed Forces.

However, notwithstanding the efforts and progress already made within the OSCE region, much more can and must be done to strengthen our efforts to identify and remove all gender-related barriers to equal opportunities and participation.

The EU underlines the importance of a strong cooperation between key stakeholder and civil society organisations in implementing gender equality and WPS commitments. Civil society organisations, women-led organisations, women human rights defenders and women peacebuilders play a vital role as agents of change.

We also recall our unwavering support for an OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and support the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and its follow-up resolutions. Along this line, the EU and its 27 Member States have endorsed the update of the guidance on voluntary reporting on WPS under the Code of Conduct, which helps to improve the exchange of data and best practices amongst participating States.

The EU policy framework on Women, Peace and Security sets forth forward-looking, bold and timely objectives and actions to integrate gender equality across European Foreign and Security policy. It constitutes our common vision and mind-set. We stand ready to work tirelessly within the Union and with our international partners to turn this vision into reality.

More than two decades have passed since the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was adopted by the Security Council. We need to continue moving the debate from why to how to improve the implementation of commitments stemming from the WPS agenda. Much more can still be done – and we must all play our part in creating a more just and peaceful future.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, ALBANIA*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, and BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA*, the Potential Candidate Country GEORGIA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and LIECHTENSTEIN, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.