



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on Human Rights of Armed Forces Personnel

The European Union and its Member States would like to warmly welcome to the FSC Ms Francoise Gaudin, senior civil servant for equality of rights, and Mr Michael Georg Link, Director of ODIHR, and thank them for their interesting presentations.

Our deliberations on matters relating to gender equality at the FSC are particularly timely, as this year marks the 10th anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality as well as the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. We believe this provides us with an excellent opportunity to actively seek ways to further strengthen our work towards achieving gender equality, especially with regard to Human Rights in Armed Forces.

We recall that the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality highlights the importance of implementing the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and related resolutions, which remain highly relevant. We are convinced that the UNSCR 1325 needs to be implemented in a holistic and comprehensive manner. As a regional security organisation, the OSCE has a major part to play in this. We wish to thank the current and incoming Chairmanships-in-Office for underscoring this important issue in their conclusions of the Gender Equality Conference held in July this year.

We firmly believe that the FSC has a role in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 which has also been demonstrated today by the statements of Ms Gaudin and Mr Link. The FSC should now redouble its efforts to this effect. As we have consistently stated, one of the focus areas for this work should be the voluntary reporting on the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 as part of the information exchange on the Code

of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security. All EU Member States have voluntarily committed to enhanced reporting on Women, Peace and Security in the Code of Conduct and we call on participating States to consider acceptance and concrete implementation of this initiative.

In addition to the reporting on the implementation of the UNSCR 1325, we consider it beneficial to discuss the information that has been provided with a view of lessons learned and possible good practices for the national implementation.

For our part, the European Union has developed, since 2008, a comprehensive approach to the implementation of UNSCR 1325 as reinforced by UNSCR 1820, especially in the context of our Common Security and Defence Policy. We would be ready therefore to share relevant experience, in particular on the concrete implementation follow up tools that have been adopted by the EU Council during the last years.

The Member States of the European Union would like to take this occasion to reiterate our unwavering commitment to and strong support for the full implementation of the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and, in particular, for its role in promoting and upholding human rights of armed forces personnel.

We commend the very successful and informative conference on "*Conditions of Service and the Human Rights of Members of the Armed Forces*" organised by ODIHR on 17 July this year and look forward to further such meetings in the future.

We would like to reconfirm our consistent position in favour of enhanced and strengthened implementation of the Code of Conduct and UNSCR 1325 and call upon all OSCE participating States to seize every opportunity in this regard, including in the preparations of the Basel Ministerial Council.

In conclusion, let us thank once again the speakers and the FSC Chairmanship for allowing us to continue discussions on topics pertaining to the core of the OSCE commitments.

The candidate countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA^{*}, MONTENEGRO, ICELAND^{**} SERBIA and ALBANIA, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, ARMENIA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

^{*} The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

^{**} Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.