

Check against delivery



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Statement by Ms Blaženka Babić

**Division for Human Rights and Regional International Organisations and Initiatives
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs**

OSCE 2012 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Working session 9: Tolerance and non-discrimination I:

Equality of opportunity for women and men

Implementation of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality

Prevention of violence against women

Warsaw, 28 September 2012

Mr Chairman, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour to speak in this session on behalf of the Republic of Croatia.

My country greatly values the work of the OSCE in the promotion of gender equality, equal opportunities and prevention of violence against women.

Croatia faces the same problems as many European countries - gender prejudices and stereotypes, women's unemployment or lower-income occupations, violence within family.

Therefore, the Government of Croatia has been paying special attention to these issues and is continuously working on improving a record on overall empowerment of women.

In line with this goal, the specific and concrete measures targeted at combating discrimination and strengthening of women's role in the political and economic sphere have been relentlessly implemented, in compliance with the National Policy for Gender Equality for 2011-2015 and the National Strategy for Protection against Domestic Violence for 2011-2016.

Besides, the Strategy for the Development of Women Entrepreneurship for 2014 – 2017 is in preparation.

During the past year the Government bodies regularly organised, in cooperation with relevant state institutions and civil society organisations, targeted campaigns, seminars, forums and workshops aimed at raising public awareness and knowledge of the overall human rights of women and relevant anti-discrimination legislation.

The Ministry of Agriculture set up last July the Council for Rural Development and the Working Group with a task to collect data on women in rural areas with regard to

education, employment and self-employment, health care, preservation of cultural heritage and economic development. An action plan for empowerment of women in rural areas will be drawn up based on the results of analyses of the collected data.

The Government Office for Gender Equality held last autumn a wide-scale campaign aimed at the political parties to promote greater participation of women in the parliamentary elections 2011. The campaign was held in cooperation with the civil society organisations.

A balanced political participation of women and men in political and public decision-making processes, in representative and executive bodies of power at all levels, remains one of our priorities.

While women are fairly under-represented in political and decision-making bodies, the representation of women in the judiciary represents a good example of gender equality and mainstreaming with more than 60% of women judges at all levels of judiciary.

Special attention is being paid to gender mainstreaming within the state administration bodies. Following an appointment of coordinator for gender equality in each state body, four-year action plans are being prepared under supervision of coordinators.

Mr Chairman,

One of Croatian priorities is the implementation of the National Action Plan for Implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

We have been working on strengthening national measures, particularly educational ones, to bring into focus a specific role of women in the area of peace and security – from decision-making level to conflict prevention and resolution.

A revision of the existing documents related to the integration of gender perspective, both at home and in all international activities, is under way in accordance with the Resolution 1325.

However, in spite of many positive and significant achievements in legislative and institutional frameworks, and progress in public awareness, further efforts are essential with more intensive involvement of men in all gender equality promotion activities.

Therefore, Mr Chairman, Croatia remains fully committed to continue working tirelessly on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women by strengthening its laws and its cooperation with broad layers of society on national level, but also by strengthening regional cooperation in particular within the OSCE framework and its Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

Thank you, Mr Chairman