

**OSCE GENDER EQUALITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**  
on Occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 2004 OSCE Gender Action Plan  
**Vienna, 10-11 July, 2014**

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**Thursday, 10 July 2014**

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**Working session One: A Gender Perspective in Crisis Management**

Mr/Ms. Moderator,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ten years already passed since the adoption of the Ministerial Council Decision 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of gender Equality. The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a possibility for all of us to once again address this key OSCE document on gender equality. It has its positive impact on the whole policy in this field, including actions of international organizations and work of member countries.

As each program of action, it did not only designate the basic directions but also became a tool for implementation of concrete programs and activities.

OSCE through its two decisions, namely “Decision on women’s participation in crisis management and conflict resolution” and “On inclusion of gender issues in early warning and early action” has included the main points of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325(2000) in its work.

One of the recommendations made by Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues Ms. June Zeitlin after her visit to Armenia last year was recommendation on necessity to develop and adopt a comprehensive Action Plan regarding the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325. The recommendation is within the scope of the OSCE commitments and which comes quite natural for an organization advocating peace and security.

Mr./Ms. Moderator,

The possibility to development the National Plan of Action is now considered by Armenia and MFA discusses this issue with all interested stakeholders. In our opinion there are some important elements which should be taken into consideration by development of the Plan.

First, the Plan could be elaborated and implemented on two aspects: foreign and national policy.

Second, in recent years, a set of the governmental programs and documents generating a policy in the field of gender equality was adopted. These are “Gender Policy Strategic Action Plan (2011-2015)” and “Strategic Action Plan to Combat Gender-based violence (2011-2015)”. The adoption and further implementation of these national strategies is a targeted work, whereby one Program of Actions is followed by the next one, containing detailed plans for each year. The elaboration of National Action Plan on 1325 can be considered as integral part of previous ones. During discussions on the matter there were different points of views. Some experts believe that the 1325 Plan can be integrated within the context of fighting gender violence as a gender security matter and incorporated into the Strategic Action Plan to Combat Gender-based violence.

Third, we should recognize the inter-linkages of OSCE Decisions and Resolution 1325 with other international instruments on gender equality such as UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and Beijing Platform and Plan of Action. This year Armenia has prepared and submitted to the UN relevant bodies two very important documents – National Review on Beijing+20 and CEDAW 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> joint periodic report. The mentioned documents give a detailed analysis on the implementation of country’s commitments on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Regarding the foreign aspect of National Plan, we are confident that it should take into consideration challenges. Among these challenges is the reality that the physical security and survival of Nagorno Karabakh people is still under threat, as it was twenty years ago.

Despite the fact that in May 1994 Azerbaijan, Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia signed the ceasefire agreement, which is still in force, civilians living in Armenian villages of the bordering regions are under constant and systematic shelling and sniper fire. Military activities are accompanied by large-scale Anti-Armenian hate propaganda.

All measures that can or should be undertaken for promoting peace and stability, including people to people contacts, confidence building, inclusion of women residing on conflict territories in the matters of peace and security at all levels are welcomed by Armenia but unilateral steps can’t give any positive results if the matters concerning peace and security.

Now a few words about participation of civil society and NGOs in this process. Obviously that participation of representatives of civil society and NGOs will bring its positive contribution in development of any Plan of Action. Armenian NGOs have written a report which more concentrates on gender equality and women’s rights issues within the country than deal with implementation of 1325. Unfortunately this report doesn’t give any suggestions or recommendations or approaches regarding security and peace process itself. It means that we should pay serious attention to the trainings and awareness raising at this stage. Government is ready to co-operate either through engagement in trainings or by

involvement NGOs in programs aimed to strengthen women's participation in decision-making and gender perspectives in all aspects of peace-keeping and peace-building.

Finally I would like to note the following. Usually international organizations during the implementation of certain strategies use regional approaches. Sometimes it is not that relevant, taking into consideration, for example, the differences in the situation with human rights in neighboring countries, but in the matters relating to peace and security, the regional approach is absolutely paramount. Thank you.

### **Statement in the exercise of the Right of Reply**

We draw to your attention that Azerbaijan used this conference format to advance its narrow political agenda, presenting an entirely distorted picture of the Nagorno Karabakh issue. Nagorno Karabakh was incorporated in the composition of Azerbaijani SSR by an arbitrary rule of Bolshevik party in 1921 against the explicitly expressed will of the people's Assembly of Nagorno Karabakh. It should be noted that Azerbaijan never constituted a state with internationally recognized borders before entering the Soviet Union. The territories surrounding Nagorno Karabakh come under control of NK Armenians as a result of the war unleashed by Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan presents exaggerated or incorrect figures of IDPs and refugees those figures are part of the routine Azerbaijani propaganda at international forums. In this regard we advise to carefully study the latest data provided by UNHCR, in accordance with which the number of refugees in Azerbaijan is 1.495.

According to census of 1989 in the former Soviet Union, 168.000 Azerbaijanis lived in Armenia, 144.000 of them left Armenia by selling or exchanging their homes, documentary evidence of which is kept at municipalities.

It is well known that Azerbaijan has begun real witch-hunt in relation to persons of Armenian origin. With regard to this behavior of Azerbaijan, deep concern has been expressed by human rights organizations and first of all by watchdogs monitoring the implementation by Azerbaijan of its obligations assumed in the field of human rights. The Council of Europe Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in its Third Opinion on Azerbaijan adopted on 10 October 2012 stated "Advisory Committee was surprised to learn that only 306 persons indicated an ethnic Armenian origin in the 2009 census, particularly considering the regularly cited official estimate that some 30.000 Armenian citizens of Azerbaijan live in the territory outside the Nagorno Karabakh region".