



PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESENTATIONS ON GENDER ISSUES

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council
Vienna, 6th November 2014

Mr Chairman,

In the *Global Gender Gap Report for 2014* issued by the World Economic Forum, the five Nordic countries are ranked at the top. The Nordic countries are stable, democratic, welfare societies. The link is evident!

The report also shows that benefits of gender equality are showing in private companies. For example, companies that include more women at the top levels of leadership tend to outperform those that do not.

When we draw on the creativity, experience and capacity of the whole population, and when women participate in political life at the same level as men, our societies will prosper.

There is of course another simple and powerful reason why more women should be empowered, namely fairness.

Mr Chairman,

Ms Zeitlin has rightly made violence against women one of her priorities.

Violence in close relations, which is the term we prefer, is a persistent problem in all OSCE countries, including my own. My government's strategy against violence underlines that assisting victims is important, but not enough. We must hold the aggressors to account, through counselling, treatment or prosecution.

Mr Chairman,

We also welcome the focus on women, peace and security. An issue that was highlighted by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in this room two days ago. The integration of women in all stages of the conflict cycle must be an important aim for the OSCE. Only in this way will we ensure that the process of conflict resolution is broad-based, fair and sustainable.

Mr Chairman,

Implementing UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security should be a priority for all OSCE participating States. The recent report referred to by Ambassador Beham gives concrete advice to governments on how to draw up National Action Plans for implementing this resolution. This report was written by the Peace Research Institute of Oslo, PRIO, in close cooperation with the Gender Section. We appreciate this initiative, and look forward to the follow-up announced by Ambassador Beham. We also – of course – support the draft OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

Mr Chairman,

Norway supports the Swiss Chairmanship's proposal for a decision on an addendum to the 2004 Gender Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. The need for institutional reform that the proposal will require, namely restructuring the current Gender Adviser position to a Gender Representative, is a good idea. This will make Ambassador Beham's efforts to internalise gender mainstreaming even more effective, within the secretariat, OSCE's field presences and the SMM.

I agree with June Zeitlin when she points out that approving the addendum will provide a road map for more vigorous action to promote gender equality.

And finally, Mr. Chairman, since this is June Zeitlin's last report to the Permanent Council, I want to join others in thanking her for her dedicated work to promote women's rights and gender equality – in our organization as well as in individual participating states.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.