



**Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights**

**OSCE HUMAN DIMENSION SEMINAR**

**PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PUBLIC AND  
ECONOMIC LIFE**

**CONSOLIDATED SUMMARY**

**Warsaw, 13 – 15 May 2003**

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**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Human Dimension Seminar on Participation of Women in Public and Economic Life was held in Warsaw on 13 – 15 May 2003. The Seminar was organized by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in co-operation with the Netherlands Chairmanship-in-Office of the OSCE.

The Seminar was the nineteenth in a series of specialised Human Dimension Seminars organized by the ODIHR in accordance with the decision of the CSCE Follow-up Meetings in Helsinki in 1992 and Budapest in 1994. The previous Seminars were devoted to:

- Tolerance (November 1992),
- Migration, including Refugees and Displaced Persons (April 1993),
- Case Studies on National Minorities Issues: Positive Results (May 1993),
- Free Media (November 1993),
- Migrant Workers (March 1994),
- Local Democracy (May 1994),
- Roma in the CSCE Region (September 1994),
- Building Blocks for Civic Society: Freedom of Association and NGOs (April 1995),
- Drafting of Human Rights Legislation (September 1995),
- Rule of Law (November/December 1995),
- Constitutional, Legal and Administrative Aspects of the Freedom of Religion (April 1996),
- Administration and Observation of Elections (April 1997),
- The Promotion of Women's Participation in Society (October 1997),
- Ombudsman and National Human Rights Protection Institutions (May 1998),
- Human Rights: the Role of Field Missions (April 1999),
- Children and Armed Conflict (May 2000),
- Election Processes (May 2001) and
- Judicial Systems and Human Rights (April 2002).

The Human Dimension Seminar on “Participation of Women in Public and Economic Life” reviewed the challenges to full and equal participation of women in public and economic life. It provided a framework for discussion of pertinent issues, such as women’s role in democratization, women’s involvement in political processes, equality of economic opportunities and the inter-linkage between equal access and decision-making as a fundamental principle in advancing gender equality and a prerequisite for a truly democratic society. The participation of women in public and economic life was not viewed in isolation but in the context of democratic and economic processes that are essential to comprehensive security. The equal involvement of women and men in these processes was addressed together with the role of media in portraying both sexes in these processes. In the context of the OSCE’s experience, the seminar also considered the impact of women’s participation in peace building, post-conflict democracy building and rehabilitation. The seminar’s discussions tried to focus on ways to improve the efficiency of mechanisms for protection of women’s human rights and for ensuring gender equality throughout the OSCE region. In this respect the seminar’s working groups identified some concrete actions to be taken by relevant actors.

The seminar provided an opportunity to review the *OSCE’s Action Plan for Gender Issues* in an institution wide forum. During this working session the Action Plan’s utility and content were discussed against the background of the *Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan for Gender Issues* and the *Gender Disaggregated Statistics of the OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and Field Activities*. The working group called for special stress to be placed on the accountability by OSCE participating States for their effective implementation of international obligations and commitments relating to equality between women and men. A compilation of *Country Reports Submitted to the OSCE Informal Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking Human Beings* was compiled and printed for the Seminar containing 18 country reports; in addition, three more country reports were distributed during the Seminar.

Thanks to very relevant participation by representatives of non-governmental organization (NGOs) in particular, as well as by local implementing partners involved in work on gender equality, the seminar also reviewed the work of the ODIHR and OSCE field operations. In this respect some concrete recommendations were made as to how this work and assistance can be further improved. The ODIHR presented and disseminated an *Overview of ODIHR Gender Unit Programmes 2000-2002*, especially compiled for the Seminar, a synopsis of the work and results of the gender programs run by the ODIHR’s Gender Unit.

The meeting was not mandated to produce a negotiated text. Summary reports prepared by the rapporteurs of the five working groups were presented at the final plenary session of the Seminar and are reflected in Section VII of this report, which also contains recommendations and conclusions developed during the Seminar. The recommendations included in this report were limited to a few key points under each Working Group to avoid repetition. The recommendations – put forward by delegations of OSCE participating States and Partners for Co-operation, international organizations and NGOs – are wide-ranging and addressed to various actors (OSCE institutions and field missions, governments, and civil society). The recommendations have no official status, are not based on consensus, and the inclusion of a recommendation in this report does not suggest that it reflect the views or policy of the OSCE. However, the recommendations are a useful indicator for the OSCE in deciding priorities and possible new initiatives in developing programmes aimed at ensuring gender equality via balanced participation of women and men in public and economic life. They can also provide a useful basis for measuring the degree of follow-up to this meeting.

## II. CHAIR'S CONCLUSIONS

The Director of the ODIHR, *Ambassador Christian Strohal*, as the Chairman of the Human Dimension Seminar on Participation of Women in Public and Economic Life, addressed the closing plenary session. The main steps for action to effectively ensure equal participation of women in public and economic life identified by the Chairman were:

1. To establish strong and transparent democratic institutions and the rule of law, which by definition and practice includes women exercising leadership and power on a par with men.
  - To achieve this goal men need to be made aware of, included in and encouraged to contribute to the discussions and to become actively involved in advancing gender equality.
2. To foster peace, stability, security and conflict prevention by involving women leaders and representatives together with their male counterparts in peace settlement negotiations and post conflict reconstruction.
3. To ensure equal and effective political participation that reflects the principle of an inclusive society, where all citizens have an equal right to vote, stand for election and be governed by a truly representative government.
  - Men and women together must act upon the understanding that women's equal participation in politics, as well as full respect for women's rights and gender equality, are critical to the proper functioning of society at all levels-- regional, national and international.
4. To utilize the media to advance women in public and economic life and to prevent stereotypes that create negative attitudes towards women and perpetuate gender biases.
5. To provide for equal opportunities and fair economic reforms that benefit and empower women to participate actively in public and economic life.
  - The involvement of women in the economic reform process leads to national budgets and economic policies which include more focus on the realization of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights for all. Women and men entrepreneurs can create more equal opportunities for start-up companies and credit institutions. Fair transition from a planned to a market economy and from conflict to peace will inevitably grant women the right to property and serve to structure the labour market to ensure equal access to employment for all.
6. To enhance the role of the OSCE as an organization that effectively fulfils, advocates and protects gender equality while also promoting international co-operation.
  - The mainstreaming of gender as a focus and a priority for the organization and the participating States must include all activities and structures. The joint efforts of OSCE institutions and participating States with other international and regional organizations allow use of their relative strengths and resources in working towards achieving more effectively gender equality. In this context

the participation of government representatives, together with OSCE institutions and field missions, in partnership with civil society, is essential.

While calling upon the participants to take action as indicated, the Chairman thanked all participants, in particular the keynote speakers, moderators, rapporteurs and introducers for their contribution to the discussion

### **III. AGENDA**

1. Opening of the Seminar
2. Opening plenary: Keynote interventions
3. Discussion in five working groups
4. Closing plenary session: rapporteurs' summaries from Working Groups
5. Summing up and closing of the Seminar

### **IV. TIMETABLE AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MODALITIES**

1. The Seminar was opened on Tuesday 13 May 2003 at 15:00 hrs. It was closed on Thursday 15 May 2003 at 18.00 hrs.
2. All plenary and working group sessions were open to all participants.
3. The closing plenary session, on the afternoon of the 15 May, focused on practical recommendations emerging from the five Working Group sessions (two single and four parallel sessions):
  - Working Group 1: Women's role in democratization and peace building;
  - Working Group 2: Women's involvement in political processes;
  - Working Group 3: Women in political and economic processes and the role of the media;
  - Working Group 4: Ensuring equality of economic opportunity for women;
  - Working Group 5: The implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues;
4. The Plenary and Working Group meetings took place in accordance to the Work Program.
5. *Ambassador Christian Strohal*, Director of the ODIHR, and *Mr. Steven Wagenseil*, First Deputy Director of the ODIHR, chaired the plenary sessions.
6. Standard OSCE rules of procedure and working methods were applied at the Seminar.
7. Discussions were interpreted into all five working languages of the OSCE.

## V. PARTICIPATION

The seminar was attended by a total of 204 participants, including 84 delegates from 38 of the 55 OSCE participating States. Eight representatives from five of the Partners for Co-operation and Mediterranean Partners (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Tunisia and Thailand) were also present.

In addition, representatives of six international organizations were present: the Council of Europe, International IDEA (the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance), International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The seminar was attended by 16 representatives of 11 OSCE field operations and by 50 representatives of 43 Non-Governmental Organizations and 2 Universities.

## VI. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

The Director of the ODIHR, *Ambassador Christian Strohal*, opened the Seminar. Welcoming remarks were presented by *Ms. Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka*, Secretary of State, Plenipotentiary for Equal Status for Women and Men, Poland.

The sole keynote speaker was *Dhr. Prof. Cornelis Flinterman*, Professor of Human Rights and Director of the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights and the Netherlands Research School of Human Rights, Utrecht University, and a member of the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee), who addressed the opening plenary session.

During the Seminar, five Working Groups met. The topics were divided as follows:

### **Working Group 1: Women's Role in Democratization and Peace-Building**

**Moderator:** *Dr. Eric Ruthenshiold*, Head of the Democratization Section of the OSCE ODIHR;

**Rapporteur:** *Ms. Jyothi Kanics*, Adviser on Anti-Trafficking Issues at the OSCE ODIHR;

Topics included, *inter alia*:

- The role of women in democratic processes, as well as in post-conflict democracy-building, best practices drawn from OSCE participating States;
- Women's participation in public life as a driving force for democratization, conflict prevention and peace-building;
- Legislation and policy advancement: development of legal instruments, measures and mechanisms for women's participation in peace building missions, post-conflict rehabilitation;

- Effective approaches to ensuring women's equal opportunity for participation in leadership and decision making - networking, capacity building, empowering and lobbying;
- The role of civil society and NGOs - reflections on strategies and initiatives in conflict prevention and peace-building as well as promoting gender equality, women's active participation in society and leadership;
- OSCE's role in developing and strengthening the capacity of women's NGOs as well as NGOs dealing with related issues;
- Role of development programmes in strengthening the capacity of NGOs for interaction with international mechanisms and implementation of their recommendations. External programs and their role and effect on women's leadership and participation in democratic and peace-building processes.

## **Working Group 2: Women's Involvement in Political Processes**

**Moderator:** *Ms. Edeltraud Gatterer*, Former Austrian MP;

**Introducer:** *Ms. Sonja Lokar*, Executive Director of European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity CEE Network for Gender Issues, and Chair of the Stability Pact's Gender Task Force;

**Rapporteur:** *Mr. Harald W. Kotschy*, Minister, Austrian Delegation to the OSCE;

Topics included, *inter alia*:

- Challenges to equal opportunity for participation in political processes and effective access of women to political and private spheres in the OSCE region including high level positions, and good practices drawn from OSCE participating States;
- Lessons learned in the OSCE region on how to ensure women's access to the electoral process, including the right to vote and access to placement on voter lists;
- The effectiveness of constitutional and legislative provisions, mechanisms that are intended to ensure electoral and representative equality and best practices drawn from the experiences of OSCE participating States;
- Practical steps, including legal provisions and/or mechanisms, to promote equal opportunity for political participation; eliminating negative attitude towards women's political participation, addressing the lack of confidence in and support for female candidates by the electorate;
- Cross party dialogues, women's coalition building and addressing social and women's rights issues as representing a force for citizen orientated and democratic politics;
- The role of women in publicly elected positions/posts in parliaments, government, local authority structures, councils, commissions, school boards, public administration, judiciary, etc.;
- Transparency and gender reflective procedures in political process and institutions as a way to eliminate the barriers to equal opportunity for participation of men and women in politics.



### **Working Group 3: Women in Political and Economic Processes and the Role of the Media**

**Moderator:** *Mr. Algirdas Meskauskas*, Adviser to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman of Lithuania, former Television journalist;

**Introducer:** *Ms. Barbi Pilrve*, Editor of Estonian Newspaper “Eesti Ekspress Areen”, M.Sc, and university lecturer on Gender and Media Studies;

**Rapporteur:** *Mr. Fernando Nogales*, Counsellor, Spanish Delegation to the OSCE;

Topics included, *inter alia*:

- Media’s role in persistence of stereotypical attitudes towards the gender roles of women and men and their effect on women’s participation in public and economic life;
- Best practices in addressing and promoting awareness of gender equality in the media, stereotypes and proliferation of graphic images which objectify and/or discriminate against women;
- Initiatives of media that would guide public opinion and change attitudes that discriminate against women or discourage women’s participation in public life;
- The way women are portrayed by the media. Public image of women leaders, political candidates, ministers and other public figures;
- Equal and effective access to media for all political candidates, challenges and best practices in achieving it;
- Co-operation between NGOs and media in covering gender issues.

### **Working Group 4: Ensuring Equality of Economic Opportunity for Women**

**Moderator:** *Ms. Bea M. ten Tusscher*, Head of the Women and Development Division in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands;

**IntroducerI:** *Ms. Ewa Ruminska-Zimny*, Regional Adviser on Gender, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and

**IntroducerII:** *Dr. Natalya Oltarzhevskaya*, Director General, Koletex-Scientific Production Association, Engineering Academy, Russian Federation;

**Rapporteur:** *Mr. Jouni Laaksonen*, First Secretary, Finish Delegation to the OSCE;

Topics included, *inter alia*:

- Lessons learned from participating States and international organizations regarding women’s access to the labour market, property, including land rights, financial crediting, investment and other preconditions for economic activities. Ability to start up small business; to achieve economic independence and economic empowerment in order to enhance participation in democratic processes;
- Legal and other mechanisms designed to empower and ensure equal opportunity for participation of women in economic life: best practices in the OSCE area and a special role for state authorities of all branches - legislative, executive, and judiciary;

- The role of the OSCE in assisting participating States to apply new strategies in establishing mechanisms that effectively provide for equal opportunity for participation of women in economic life: potential capability, relevance, and added value;
- Addressing discriminatory hiring practices: the role of judicial and non-judicial institutions;
- The challenges of building an equitable system of economic remuneration and distribution in all spheres of the economy;
- Legal impediments to property ownership and inheritance;
- The importance of good governance and effects of the shadow economy on women's equal opportunity for participation in state's protection system and economic life overall;
- Programmes and mechanisms ensuring equal access to education and creating additional job opportunities as a tool for women's economic empowerment, including in post conflict and/or peace-building situations.

#### **Working Group 5: The Implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues**

**Moderator:** *Amb. Danielle Del Marmol*, Head of Mission, Belgian Delegation to the OSCE, Co-Chair of the Informal Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking;

**Introducer:** *Ms. Beatrix Attinger Colijn*, Senior Adviser on Gender Issue, OSCE Secretariat;

**Rapporteur:** *Mr. Fernando Nogales*, Counsellor, Spanish Delegation to the OSCE;

Topics included, *inter alia*:

- Exchange of views on a review of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues;
- Overview of implementation of commitments referring to equality between women and men in the OSCE participating States;
- New development of measures to ensure equality of opportunities, review of legislation, policies and practices, enforceable legal remedies against discrimination on the basis of sex;
- Initiatives to support the implementation of the Action Plan, support for gender related activities in the field;
- Recruitment of secondments, measures to promote female candidatures.

The seminar also provided for informal side meetings during lunch breaks and after the working group sessions (see annex I). The side meetings were: Photo Exhibition of photographs by Mr. Eric Gourland "Images of Women from South Caucasus", convened by the ODIHR Gender Unit; "Overview of ODIHR's Gender Programmes-introduction of partners from the field", convened by the ODIHR Gender Unit together with local

implementing partners from Caucasus and Central Asia; ” Roma women and their work”, convened by the International Forum of Roma Women Associations, and “The work of International IDEA in the area of women’s political participation”, convened by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

The closing plenary meeting was chaired by the First Deputy Director of the ODIHR, *Mr. Steven Wagenseil*. The Rapporteurs summarized the topics and the recommendations issued by the Working Groups.

A closing keynote speech was made by *Ms. Elizabeth Rehn*, Chairperson of the Stability Pact Working Table I, Human Rights and Democracy, former Minister of Defense of Finland.

## **VI. RAPPORTEUR’S REPORTS**

Following the opening of the Seminar, discussions took place in five working groups. The first working group focused on women’s role in democratization and peace-building. The second group was devoted to women’s involvement in political processes, and the third concentrated on the role of the media in women’s participation in political and economic processes. The fourth group considered the obstacles and methods for ensuring equality of economic opportunity for women and the last working group was devoted to the implementation of the *OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues*.

The current report does not attempt to reproduce the full content of the debates, but rather concentrates on recommendations formulated in the working groups. These recommendations were not formally adopted by Seminar participants and do not necessarily reflect the views of any participating State.

### **Working Group 1: Women’s Role in Democratization and Peace-Building**

The session discussed the role of women in democratization and peace-building. The opening of the session largely focused on the democratization of countries in transition which provided a good starting point for discussion and a basis to move forward to other areas of peace-building and conflict prevention. The key problems and proposed solutions proposed during the working group focused on the following identified needs:

- 1) for real two-way dialogue on equal participation of women; efforts can not be one-sided (women talking to women), men must be actively involved,
- 2) for greater awareness-raising about gender issues and human rights and about the synergy between democracy, rule of law, comprehensive security and equal opportunities,
- 3) to give effective recognition to the interdependence between civil, cultural, economic political and social rights, which were formulated to ensure equal participation of women and without which progress cannot be achieved,
- 5) for all actors -- international and national alike -- openly to co-operate with one another and to avoid duplication and competition which would be counter productive to their overall efforts in promotion of the increased role of women in democratization and peace-building processes.

Additionally the participants stressed that the lack of women in decision-making processes and their absence at the negotiating tables, as well as violence against women and the marginalization of women, are great obstacles to full enjoyment of women's human rights. The participants also debated lessons learned regarding the process and nature of judicial reform initiatives in various OSCE participating States within the last decade.

Key Recommendations to the OSCE participating States:

- The OSCE participating States should adhere without reservation and fully implement international standards and commitments governing equality, non-discrimination and the human rights of women especially in the fields of democratisation and peace-building.<sup>1</sup>
- The OSCE participating States should report regularly and on time, as required under the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), women's NGOs should participate in the preparation of this reporting. The participating States should publish and implement the recommendations made by these treaty bodies as it is crucial that international obligations governing women's rights are fully enforced.
- The OSCE participating States should make better use of international and national mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality and women's rights. To this end they should seek technical assistance from international organizations such as the OSCE ODIHR and the Council of Europe.
- The OSCE participating States should enhance their national efforts to increase women's political participation and the role of women in furthering democratization. It must be ensured that women are not tokenised; women must not only be part of the political leadership but also have full access and the ability to exercise real power and decision-making in all spheres.
- The OSCE participating States should establish permanent Government and/or Parliamentary Commissions mandated to promote equal opportunities for women and men.

Additional Recommendations:

- Best practices must be observed in the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 calling for increased participation of women in conflict resolution and peace-building processes. An autonomous NGO forum could be considered as a vehicle to support governments in the implementation of the Resolution.
- The OSCE participating states with help from International Organizations and NGOs should amend their Criminal laws to address trafficking and domestic violence.

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<sup>1</sup> On a regional and international level these commitments and standards have principally been elaborated in the Moscow Document, the Council of Europe's Recommendation Rec(2003)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) their respective additional protocols and general comments elaborated by the relevant treaty bodies, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and most recently the Security Council's Resolution 1325 (SC Resolution 1325).

- The OSCE participating States should establish effective measures, including work with media and educational institutions, to ensure that women are better represented in managing positions and actively participate in processes of democratization.

*Key Recommendations to the OSCE institutions and field operations:*

- The ODIHR should provide advice-- especially for those participating States that are not a party to the European Convention of Human Rights-- on ensuring compliance with the OSCE commitments and international treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights especially in respect to equal rights for men and women.
- The ODIHR and the OSCE field operations should increase their efforts to facilitate dialogue between civil society and government on gender equality and mechanisms for its implementation.
- The OSCE and its field operations should further strengthen assistance projects including joint training programs for NGOs and state officials on international human rights standards, especially regarding non-discrimination and gender equality.
- Gender aspects should be a strategic part throughout all the work conducted under the auspices of the OSCE. Gender issues should be central elements of field operations' mandates.
- The ODIHR and the OSCE field operations should have regular meetings with women at the grassroots level. The concerns voiced and the conclusions reached at such meetings should be brought to the attention of the political leadership through the intermediary of the OSCE.
- The OSCE and the ODIHR should ensure that their international staff has suitable training on human rights and gender issues and that respective concerns are sufficiently reflected in OSCE work.
- The OSCE and its institutions should carry out more of their work at local level (in the regions), not just in the capitals or main cities.
- The OSCE should take account of the State reports to the Committee for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) and the Committee's conclusions and recommendations.
- The ODIHR should co-operate with the CEDAW Committee and the Human Rights Committee in the development and review of standards, improvement of state reporting and the facilitation of NGO participation throughout the reporting process, i.e. from the compilation of the report to the realization of the Committees' recommendations.
- The OSCE must support the establishment of national mechanisms that ensure women's involvement in decision making in pre-, intra-conflict and post-conflict phases.
- The OSCE should ensure that women play an active role in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. The OSCE institutions and field missions should ensure that women are effectively included in negotiations and conflict resolution.

- The OSCE should develop programmes to address poverty, combined with education for women, if democratization is to be advanced. Poverty and economic reconstruction should be addressed at both the national and regional levels.
- There is a need for more integration of efforts relating to the promotion of the rights of Roma women, gender issues and conflict prevention within and among the OSCE decision-making bodies and institutions.

Additional Recommendations:

- Relevant special rapporteurs appointed by International Organizations (i.e. UN thematic and country rapporteurs) should mainstream gender issues into their reports, which should then be used as the basis for policymaking by the organizations and their members.
- The international community should assist countries in transition to train and build the capacity of government officials on human rights and gender issues.
- All governments and organisations should recognise early warning signs of conflict and engage quickly in preventative diplomacy. Early warning systems should be improved by incorporating women.
- Peace negotiations should include women, in particular from civil society, to ensure proper mechanisms for rehabilitation efforts. Support of women's NGOs should be maintained throughout the rehabilitation period and women should play a fundamental role in post-conflict reconstruction.
- Expert advice from international organizations and participating States should be provided to improve the legislative framework and practice ensuring the equal role of women in democratization and peace building processes.
- International and national NGOs should increase efforts to monitor the promotion and protection of women's rights and work to establish follow up procedures involving state structures and civil society in implementing jointly the identified and/or necessary changes.

Specific issues:

- More attention needs to be paid and more action needs to be taken to combat violence against women. It is an obstacle to women's participation, empowerment and access to political processes and thus a hindrance to the development of democratic states.
- The OSCE participating States should recognise the double discrimination faced by Roma women. Gender mainstreaming and policy development should address the situation of all minority women.
- Ensuring women's human rights must be a priority for the OSCE while working in the cultural, religious and traditional contexts of the OSCE participating States. Respect and compliance with mandatory human rights norms must be guaranteed.

## **Working Group 2: Women's Involvement in Political Processes**

The participants discussed the fundamental importance of the equal and full involvement of women and men in political processes. The session identified a number of obstacles for women to be politically involved in the OSCE area and examined the experience in the OSCE participating States in effectively ensuring women's participation in political processes. These included:

- 1) The absence of popular participation of women in political processes and the low effective level of women in politics and positions of power throughout the OSCE area hinders full realization of true democracy.
- 2) The lack of a constructive dialogue between civil society, NGO's and women from different political parties prevents them from working jointly on advancing gender equality in political processes. Such dialogue needs to be established wherever possible and men must be included as active participants.
- 3) A general deficiency of political will prevents the OSCE participating States from de facto implementation of international standards on securing political participation of women. This political will is necessary to give effect and set in motion concrete measures enforcing the existing action plans for advancing gender equality in OSCE region.
- 4) The status and role of women who are already in leadership positions must be strengthened.

The working group stressed that representation of women in political life is an everyday struggle that requires both awareness raising and a change of attitude of the government on gender issues. The approach which has shown to be effective in changing the government's attitude and policies towards increasing women's participation requires simultaneous pressure to be applied by civil society and by the international community.

Additionally, during the working session the ODIHR Election Section announced the upcoming publication of a "*Handbook for Monitoring Women's Participation in Elections*" which will have relevance both inside and outside of the OSCE area. The *Handbook* is designed to provide methodology and concrete steps to be taken in respect to monitoring women's participation in electoral processes and will assist the ODIHR-led Election Observation Missions to better integrate gender perspective into their work. Moreover, the *Handbook* will also serve as a sample and best practice for other organizations and participating States on how to integrate gender perspective into election processes.

### *Key Recommendations to the OSCE participating States:*

- The OSCE participating States should elaborate action plans that set realistic targets and establish both benchmarks and indicators to measure the progress made in achieving equal participation of men and women in political life.
- The OSCE participating States should review their legislation on equal opportunities and non-discrimination to ensure full respect for the rights contained in the OSCE Moscow and Istanbul Charters for Security, the UN Human Rights Instruments, as well as relevant Council of Europe recommendations, such as Recommendation Rec(2003) 3 of the

Committee of Ministers. To this end, they should draw on the technical assistance offered by the OSCE ODIHR, the Council of Europe or other relevant organizations.

- The OSCE participating States should create not only ministries and parliamentary committees on women's issues but also other governmental bodies that are mandated to ensure equal political participation of women. Such bodies should have sufficient budgets and be endowed with an effective mandate providing them with proper decision making authority and access to central leadership.
- The OSCE participating States should allocate a realistic fixed percentage of all public funds for the advancement of gender equality and establish mechanisms that ensure women's involvement in political processes on par with men.

Key Recommendations to the OSCE institutions and field operations:

- The OSCE field operations should continue to build co-operation with the relevant authorities in participating States in order to assist in their progress towards gender equality. As the process of advancing gender equality is an integral part of establishing democratic society, the OSCE should continue to provide information on international standards and relevant documents that are already available.
- The ODIHR should increase its efforts to promote the role of women in election processes.
- The OSCE ODIHR and the OSCE field operations should strive to increase their activities in local capacity and expertise building on gender issues ("*training the trainers*" methodology) among women leaders and politicians.
- The OSCE ODIHR should help to build a strong network of local experts who advocate the importance of involving women in political processes.
- The OSCE should ensure strong support to NGO and grassroots activities, including support to women's networks, as well as governmental efforts, aiming at transferring and exchanging information about best practice and know-how between countries on advancing women in decision making.
- The ODIHR should take the lead in providing background information on "best practices" in ensuring gender equality to inform and encourage participating States to adopt measures that are effective in increasing women's participation in political processes.
- The OSCE should establish a mechanism to monitor implementation of national gender policies within the OSCE area. The OSCE ODIHR should stand ready to review the framework of non-discrimination and gender equality programmes in OSCE participating States in order to ensure full compliance with international standards.

Additional Recommendations:

- Civil society in all OSCE countries should take on a more active role in monitoring, improving and building capacity of grassroots organizations in order to effectively promote women's participation in politics at the local and national levels.



- Best practices should be collected and made available on mentoring and assisting younger women to become more involved in politics, on strengthening the political will to advance gender equality, on improving team work, lobbying and advocacy for equal opportunities in politics.
- Political parties should be encouraged to establish voluntary internal party quota systems for participation of women and to ensure that women candidates are equally represented at the higher places in their party lists.
- Women should co-operate on promoting increased participation across party lines, as the problem of lack of access to political leadership is similar in all parties despite their different political platforms. Influential allies, both women and men, who can effectively work on advancing women in politics must be found to secure the active support of national political leadership.
- Given that awareness, education, training and capacity building are of crucial importance to equal participation, the OSCE participating States should educate their citizens and public servants on human rights and about the need for gender equality in order to achieve true democracy.

### **Working Group 3: Women in Political and Economic Processes and the Role of the Media**

The discussion focused on the impact and power of the media in creating and relaying gender stereotypes. The working group raised the need for gender-sensitive education for journalists and innovative ways to draw attention to the issue. Possible initiatives to sensitize and try to eliminate stereotypes in media were put forward by the working group. Some main problems and solutions were also identified, such as:

- 1) Stereotypes of gender roles are ingrained in all media; these sometimes subtle messages have tremendous effect on the biases that they evoke. Their elimination requires a very comprehensive, thorough and systematic campaign.
- 2) Awareness-raising and analysis of current gender-biased media reporting is necessary to initiate the necessary change in public attitude and the stereotypical portrayal of women's roles.
- 3) The media represent a very important force that should be utilized to promote women's participation in leadership.
- 4) New trends such as NGO and media co-operation, creation of national lists of women leaders who can present good examples, as well as development of media statistics and analysis which reflects gender equality aspects, are good indicators that media's influence is being taken into account in evaluating women's participation in society.
- 5) Comprehensive strategies are needed to provide effective measures which ensure reporting that is guided by gender equality principles and media formation and development of public opinion and attitudes that does not discriminate against women or discourage their participation in public life.

The discussion also focused on legal as well as moral obligations of the media in respect to gender equality, using gender sensitive language both in written and oral reporting, advertisement and overall content of information and images disseminated to the public.

Key Recommendations to the OSCE participating States:

- The OSCE participating States should, in accordance with their international obligations and commitments, encourage the media to report in such a way as to eliminate prejudices, customs, and all other practices which are based on patriarchal attitudes and/or on stereotyped roles for women and men.
- The OSCE participating States should take active steps to ensure that education for media professionals includes gender aspects as an integral part of their curricula.
- The OSCE participating states should use the mass media to disseminate information about women's human rights, non-discrimination and gender equality standards as an integral part of democratic society. The information should include statistics and data on the contributions of women to democratization and the development of society and be disseminated to all governmental structures, educational centers and public at large.

Key Recommendations to the OSCE institutions and field operations:

- The office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media should advise participating States on the development of affirmative action programs aimed at ensuring women's equal access to all forms of media and fair coverage of women's participation in public and economic life. The Office should be asked to report regularly on the progress made in this area at the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting.
- The OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media should elaborate best practices on media coverage of issues and concerns affecting women's rights and gender equality. These should be presented for action to the Ministerial Council in 2003.
- The ODIHR should continue its programs for raising awareness of women and men about women's rights as human rights. These programs should be constantly updated to take account of new normative developments resulting from, among others, the General Comments of CEDAW and the Human Rights Committee, as well as the quasi-jurisprudence emanating from their complaint procedures.

Additional Recommendations:

- International and national journalist organisations should encourage their members to increase reports on gender equality and to adopt mechanisms to avoid all forms of stereotyping.
- Media regulatory bodies should establish standards and codes of conduct for journalists, editors and publishers that include provisions regarding the responsible portrayal of men and women in line with gender equality principles.
- Civil society should be consulted on and involved in identifying and formulating priorities and approaches to the development of the media's positive role in increasing women's participation in public and economic life.

## **Working Group 4: Ensuring Equality of Economic Opportunity for Women**

The Working Group's discussion focused on the role of women in economic life and specifically what could be done to increase active involvement of women in these processes. It was emphasized that an efficiently performing national economy requires active participation of both sexes.

The main problems and solutions identified by the Working Group were:

- 1) Deterioration of women's position in the labour market especially in transition economies, women being paid substantially less or not being remunerated at all for their work. The contribution of women to national and international economies needs to be recognized and fully taken into account as both a valuable and substantial factor in the national and global economic spheres.
- 2) Gender equality as well as other human rights need to be seen in an economic context in order to bring attention to how violations of the human rights of women can negatively affect the development of a nation.
- 3) There is an urgent need for adoption of special measures to abolish discriminatory practices and to ensure equal economic opportunities for women.
- 4) Women in the OSCE area are not afforded equal opportunities and equal recognition by national economies. An efficient national economy requires active participation of both sexes. Unpaid domestic labour should be included in national GNP (Gross National Product) and should be officially recognized for the purpose of social security benefits and national insurance/pension schemes.

Much of the discussion focused on the need for the OSCE and other international organizations to take a more cross-dimensional approach to human rights generally and in particular to women's rights, and for possible change in activity and project development involving both the human and economic dimensions of the OSCE. The Working Group stressed the need for concerted efforts to build and/or continue co-operation with international women and economic institutions and organizations.

The Working Group called for more active participation of men in advocating for and implementing measures that guarantee women's equal economic opportunities.

### *Key Recommendations to the OSCE participating States:*

- The participating States should formulate their economic policies on the basis of the principles set forth in the Document of the Bonn Conference on Economic Co-operation in Europe. To this end they should explicitly recognize the relationship between political pluralism and market economies, and reaffirm their commitment to the principle of multiparty democracy based on free, periodic and genuine elections.
  - The principle of the rule of law and equal protection under the law for all, based on respect for human rights and on effective, accessible and just legal systems must be recognized. The participating States should give support to economic activity that accordingly upholds human dignity and is free from forced labor, discrimination

- against workers on the basis of race, sex, language, political opinion or religion, or denial of the right of workers to freely establish or join independent trade unions.
- The OSCE participating States should enact provisions enabling men and women equally, without distinction on the basis of sex, to combine family obligations/duties (parental responsibility, care of the elderly etc.) with work responsibilities and participation in public life.
  - Gender disaggregated statistics should be developed and widely disseminated showing both the contributions and the disproportionate distribution of wealth and benefits to women. The contribution of women to the economy, particularly in respect to non-paid domestic labor, needs to be quantified and included in the statistics. Similarly the percentage of wealth, benefits and opportunities available to women should be shown, to highlight the disproportionate disadvantages faced by women.
  - The OSCE participating States should take action to overcome the lack of economic opportunities for women by undertaking proper measures such as enacting laws against discrimination in employment on the basis of sex. Such laws must provide women, or men, the right to collect monetary compensation if the employer violates the law.
  - Participating States should increase women's access to labour markets through improvements in education, childcare, and action on discrimination in the workplace, as well as increase access to property and financial assets to make it easier for women to start up enterprises.
  - The OSCE participating States should place more focus on economic rights of women, promote economic literacy in transitional states, create women's information centers and help women in starting businesses, as well as improve measures to protect female migrant workers.

*Key Recommendations to the OSCE institutions and field operations:*

- The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities should review the principles set forth in the Document of the Bonn Conference on Economic Co-operation in Europe with a view to determine how these can improve the more equitable participation of women in public and economic life. The Office is called to report its findings to the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, in this regard, on an annual basis.
- The OSCE should recognize the increasing importance of the need to co-operate with existing international institutions involved in promoting economic participation of women. In this respect the OSCE, and the ODIHR in particular, should continue and strengthen their cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and other organizations.
- The OSCE should co-operate with business and foreign investors in view of their influence on promotion of human rights and gender equality and should work towards leveraging their role as an effective tool to increase women's participation in society.
- The OSCE institutions and field missions should mainstream gender issues into the organisation's activities, paying special attention to the economic dimension.

- The OSCE field operations, the ODIHR and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities should look into developing programmes to combat women's poverty, especially in rural areas in transitional economies, and to conduct projects with civil society, government officials and private employers that promote fair and non-discriminatory practices in employment.
- The OSCE should look into the implications of privatization in relation to women's economic empowerment and seek ways to avoid its negative effects.
- The OSCE is called on to increase its regional grassroots projects and to develop educational programmes to help women set up enterprises.

Additional recommendations:

- The OSCE must develop programmes to address poverty, combined with education for women, if democratization is to be advanced. Poverty and economic reconstruction should be addressed at both a national and regional level.
- Men should take a more active role in planning and implementing initiatives developed to advance the economic opportunities for women.
- NGO's should collect data and include gender aspects into analysis of trends on economic policies and should work towards increasing women's access to credits. The results of data collection, research and analysis should be used to promote women in the State's economic planning and policy making as well as to raise awareness on the importance of the issue to the overall development of the society and economy.
- Special attention should be paid to particular issues concerning female migrant workers and Roma women. They should be included in relevant international programmes to eliminate the additional disadvantages faced by these groups.

### **Working Group 5: The Implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues**

The working group addressed the need for revision and implementation of the *OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues* to ensure sustainability of the work carried out by the organization in the field of gender equality. The discussion stressed the need to strengthen the Action Plan and its implementation on the national level by the participating States. In this respect the working group addressed the need to strengthen the political will and efforts of the OSCE participating States in implementing their gender equality obligations and commitments. Issues and possible solutions identified during the working group included:

- 1) The need for the Informal Group on Gender Equality and Anti Trafficking Issues to focus equally on gender issues and not predominantly on trafficking issues. Similarly the need for recognition of the relationship between trafficking and gender issues should be made clear in order to draw needed attention to the fact that trafficking is very much rooted in gender inequality, poverty, discrimination and violence.
- 2) The question of women's representation in top positions of OSCE personnel should be taken on by the organization and the participating States as a top priority for effective implementation of the Action Plan. Also, promoting women, in particular among national staff, should be considered. The difficulty of gender mainstreaming was fully

acknowledged while calling for all OSCE personnel, not only those designated to monitor gender activities, to display gender sensitivity in their work and actively support gender mainstreaming efforts.

- 3) The language of the Action Plan should be more binding and benchmarks as well as a clear division of tasks should be set to prepare measure and monitor progress made in the work of the organization and the OSCE participating States.
- 4) There is a need for increased accountability in respect to gender equality within the organization as well as within the national systems of the participating States. The OSCE institutions, and particularly the field operations, should report more regularly and with more precision on the activities related to gender equality. These activities should be systematically part of the missions work and included in their regular reports.
- 5) The participating States need to comply with the reporting and implementation requirements contained in their international obligations and commitments on gender issues.
- 6) The emphasis of the OSCE and its institutions should be shifted from working on projects of limited duration to the integration of these projects within multi-year programs. This requires joint efforts by donors and recipients to work together to achieve sustainability of activities on women's rights and gender equality by planning and securing multi-year funding.

*Key Recommendations to the OSCE participating States:*

- The OSCE participating States should review the implementation and integrate the provisions of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues into and through national gender policies.
- The OSCE participating States should evaluate the statistics pertaining to secondments and develop measures to ensure greater employment of women, particularly in senior positions in the organization. This should include secondments to institutions and field operations.
- The OSCE participating States should provide more political and financial support to the organization to ensure that all the OSCE institutions mainstream gender into their work and complement this by increasing their activities in gender equality related fields.

*Key Recommendations to the OSCE institutions and field operations*

- The OSCE should make integration of gender aspects a priority. Accordingly the OSCE should make advancing gender equality and developing specific gender mainstreaming strategies one of the terms of reference for Directors of secretariat departments/units, Heads of field operations and OSCE institutions to guarantee OSCE wide gender mainstreaming in practice.
- The OSCE should consider incorporating relevant provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 into the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues.

- The OSCE should provide specific funds and budget lines on gender issues for all field missions and institutions. Among others, such funds should be available to allow the attendance of national field staff and NGOs working on gender issues at relevant events.
- The new OSCE Staff Regulations should comply with internationally recognized gender equality and women's human rights standards such as the provisions for parental leave and discrimination protection related to pregnancy.
- The OSCE ODIHR's programmes should focus on capacity building of local experts and institutions to ensure sustainability of accomplishments already achieved by ODIHR's Gender Unit. The ODIHR must increase the visibility of its gender work by providing more information and ensuring that channels of public relations are used to show the scope and outreach of its gender work.
- The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities should be tasked with analysing the issues concerning minority women and should develop actions for addressing these issues.

*Additional Recommendations:*

- Instructions on project development should contain a compulsory element of assessing their impact on gender equality. Funds should be made contingent on including gender aspects into project planning and implementation.
- Commitments and international standards addressing violence against women should be observed and regarded as a crucial issue for OSCE institutions and participating States alike.
- Information and contacts data on and for people working on gender equality should be collected and made available from each country in order to use them as a source of experience for other countries.

## ANNEX I

# ANNOTATED AGENDA

## I. Introduction

The Human Dimension Seminars are organised by the OSCE/ODIHR in accordance with the decisions of the CSCE follow-up meetings in Helsinki (1992) and Budapest (1994). The 2003 Human Dimension Seminar will be devoted to “Participation of women in public and economic life” in accordance with PC Decisions No. 529 of 30 January 2003 (PC.DEC/529) and No. 536 of 27 March 2003 (PC.DEC/536).

## II. Aims

The 2003 Human Dimension Seminar on “Participation of women in public and economic life” will review challenges to equal access by both men and women to decision making in all spheres and levels of public and economic life.

The OSCE’s distinct normative basis for correlation between human security and the OSCE human, economic and political dimensions provides a unique opportunity to approach gender equality in an inclusive manner. This inclusive approach reflects both the complexity of the issue and the specific role and value added of the OSCE in addressing it.

The OSCE participating States have stressed the importance of, and their commitment to fully promote, the effective participation of men and women in public and economic life in a number of OSCE documents, most notably in the 1991 Moscow, 1998 Vienna and 1999 Istanbul documents. Through these commitments and the recognition of the equality principle as a prerequisite of sustainable democracy, the OSCE has accepted the *de jure* and *de facto* equality of women and men as an integral part of its goals and efforts in achieving comprehensive security.

Recent years have seen dramatic changes in OSCE participating States in developing and implementing standards and mechanisms that aim to promote equal participation of women in public and economic life, and to ensure respect for and protection of women’s human rights. OSCE institutions and field missions have assisted participating States in this process for a number of years. However, there remain ample challenges, which the seminar will seek to address. In order to identify best practices, the participants should take into consideration national and international efforts and *de jure* mechanisms, as well as their effectiveness in bringing the equality principle into *de facto* compliance.

The seminar will provide a framework for discussion of pertinent issues, such as women’s role in democratization, women’s involvement in political processes, equality of economic opportunities and the inter-linkage with equal access to decision-making as a fundamental principle in advancing gender equality and a prerequisite for a truly democratic society. The participation of women in public and economic life will not be viewed in isolation but in the context of democratic and economic processes, while also addressing the role of media in portraying women in these processes. In light of the OSCE’s experience, the seminar will also consider the impact of women’s participation in peace building, post-conflict democracy building and rehabilitation. The seminar will review the OSCE’s experience in assisting the



participating States in their efforts to promote gender equality. Particular attention will be paid to lessons learned from the experience of the ODIHR and the field missions. Moreover, the seminar will discuss further steps to establish and/or to improve the efficiency of mechanisms for protection of women's human rights and gender equality. Thus, participants will have the chance to devise possible models for action.

The seminar will also provide an opportunity to review the OSCE's Gender Action Plan as well as the implementation of commitments referring to equality between women and men in the OSCE participating States, institutions and field missions.

### **III. Participation**

Representatives of OSCE participating States, institutions and field missions, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations will participate in the Seminar.

The participation of representatives from political and economic bodies, parliaments, media, judiciary, and the legal and economic community in OSCE participating States, as well as specialized NGOs and associations active in the field of gender equality, will be particularly encouraged. In this regard, participating States are requested to publicise the Seminar widely and to include whenever feasible relevant experts and practitioners in their delegations.

The "partners for Co-operation" and the "Mediterranean partners for Co-operation" are invited to attend and to contribute with respect to their co-operation and links with the OSCE in the field of the seminar.

All participants are encouraged to submit in advance written interventions on their respective work and proposals regarding the subject of the Seminar, which will be distributed during to the delegates. Participants are also encouraged to make oral interventions during the Seminar.

While prepared interventions are welcomed during the plenary sessions, more free-flowing discussions are encouraged during the working group sessions.

### **IV. Organization**

The venue for the Seminar is the Centrum Konferencyjne MON, ul. Zwirki I Wigury 9/13, 09909 Warsaw.

The Seminar will open on Tuesday 13 May 2003 at 15.00 hrs. It will close on Thursday 15 May 2003 at 18.00 hrs.

On Tuesday 13 May 2003 at 14:30, just prior to the Opening Plenary Session, there will be an official opening of a photo exhibition entitled "*Images of Women in South Caucasus.*" featuring photographs by Mr. Eric Gourland. The opening will take place in the foyer of the venue's conference center, and will include introductory remarks by Ambassador Christian Strohal, Director of the ODIHR. The exhibition is organized by the ODIHR's Gender Unit and will be open throughout the Seminar.

All plenary and working group sessions will be open. The plenary and working group sessions will take place according to the Work Program below.

Five working group sessions will focus on the following topics:

- 1) Women's role in democratization and peace building
- 2) Women's involvement in political process
- 3) Women in political and economic process and the role of the media
- 4) Ensuring equality of economic opportunity for women
- 5) The implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues

Apart from the Working Group V, all other working groups will be held in parallel sessions.

The concluding plenary session, scheduled for the afternoon of May 15, will focus on practical recommendations emerging from the five working group sessions.

An OSCE/ODIHR representative will chair the plenary sessions.

Standard OSCE rules of procedure and working methods will be applied during the Seminar.

Discussions will be interpreted into all six working languages of the OSCE.

Registration will begin at the Seminar venue at 10.00 hrs on Tuesday 13 May, and thereafter will be available daily from 09.00 to 18.00 hrs.

By prior arrangement with the OSCE/ODIHR, facilities may be available for participants to hold side events at the seminar venue. A table for display/distribution of publications by participating organizations/institutions will also be available.

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

Working hours: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.  
3 p.m.-6 p.m.

	Tuesday, 13 May 2003	Wednesday, 14 May 2003	Thursday, 15 May 2003
Morning		Parallel WG I (PH) and WG III(CR)	WG5 (PH)
Afternoon	Opening plenary session (PH)	Parallel WG II (PH) WG IV (CR)	Closing plenary session (PH)

PH-Plenary Hall

CR-Conference Room

Side events may be scheduled before 10.00, between 13.00 and 15.00, or after 18.00, in order not to compete with the plenary or working group sessions.

## V. WORKPLAN

**Tuesday 13 May 2003**

**14:30-15:00** Opening of a photo exhibition “Images of Women in South Caucasus”  
Photographs by **Mr. Eric Gurlan**  
Introductory remarks by **Ambassador Christian Strohal**  
Convenor: the ODIHR Gender Unit  
Venue: Conference Centre, Grand Floor-Foyer

**15.00 – 18.00** **Opening Plenary Session**  
Venue: Plenary Hall

Welcome and introduction from the *Seminar Chair*  
**Ambassador Christian Strohal**,  
Director of the OSCE/ODIHR

*Statement on behalf of the Polish Government*

**Ms. Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka**,  
Secretary of State, Plenipotentiary for Equal Status for Women and  
Men, Poland

### **Keynote Speech**

**Dhr. Prof. Cornelis Flinterman**,  
Professor of Human Rights and Director of the Netherlands Institute for  
Human Rights and the Netherlands Research School of Human Rights,  
Utrecht University, and a member of the UN Committee for the  
Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee)

*Statements* from delegations

**19.00** *Reception* hosted by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.  
Venue: MFA Palace, Foksal Street 6, Warsaw

**Wednesday 14 May 2003**

**10.00 – 13.00** **Two parallel working group sessions**

**Working Group I:**  
**Women’s Role in Democratization and Peace Building**  
*Venue: Plenary Hall*

*Moderator:* **Dr. Eric Rudenshiold**,  
Head of the Democratization Section of the ODIHR  
*Rapporteur:* **Ms. Jyothi Kanics**  
Adviser on Anti-Trafficking Issues at the ODIHR

The OSCE participating States have fully recognized that the advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social

justice, and thus should not be seen in isolation as solely women's issues. They are an integral part human rights protection and the only way to build a sustainable, just and developed society. Empowerment of women and gender equality are necessary and fundamental prerequisites for achieving comprehensive security- political, social, economic, cultural and environmental that is at heart of the OSCE.

Although in recent years countries in the OSCE region have made strides towards advanced democracy, none have succeeded fully in instituting the principle of shared power and responsibility between women and men at home, in the workplace and in the wider national and international communities.

Recent experiences in democratisation as a conflict prevention tool and peace building efforts have shown a need for greater involvement of women in these processes and their important contributions.

This working group should take a comprehensive look at the role of women in democratic processes and post-conflict democracy building and seek to identify best practices drawn from the experience of the OSCE participating States, institutions and field missions. In particular the session should cover the role of women's participation in public life as a driving force for democratization, conflict prevention and peace building.

The working group should try to formulate strategies for legal and policy advancement, to provide examples of measures and mechanisms for women's participation in peace building and post-conflict rehabilitation, and to look at effective approaches in ensuring women's equal opportunities for participation in decision making processes. Based on their experience, the participants should seek to identify the tools for fulfilling these strategies at the grassroots level, using examples and best practices such as networking, capacity building, training, empowerment and lobbying.

The working group should in particular focus on the rich OSCE experience in developing and implementing external programs and their role and effect on women's leadership and participation in democratic and peace-building processes. The session should also reflect on the OSCE's activities and programs in strengthening the capacity of women's NGOs for interaction with national and international mechanisms and implementation of their recommendations, and in general the role of civil society and NGOs in democratic and peace building processes.

The session should provide an opportunity for looking at the existing strategies and initiatives in conflict prevention and peace building as well as in promoting gender equality, women's active participation in society and leadership. The obstacles, barriers and difficulties in fulfilling these strategies should be discussed in more detail.

The session will seek to develop concrete recommendations on how to better advance the role of women in democratic and peace building processes and how the OSCE participating States, institutions, field missions and other organizations can provide further assistance in this field.

### **Working Group III:**

#### **Women in political and economic processes and the role of the media**

*Venue: Conference Room*

- Moderator:* **Mr. Algirdas Meskauskas**  
Adviser to the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman of Lithuania, former TV journalist
- Introducer:* **Ms. Barbi Pilrve**  
Editor of Estonian Newspaper “Eesti Ekspress Areen”, M.SC, and university lecturer on gender and median studies
- Rapporteur:* **Mr. Fernando Nogales**  
Counsellor, Spanish Delegation to the OSCE

In the past decades the so-called “communications revolution” has created new opportunities for women in the mass media with regard to dissemination of information about women, women’s human rights and gender equality. However, most mass media communication networks have been used to spread stereotyped and demeaning images of women for narrow commercial purposes, while having women underrepresented in their decision making. The media has the potential to play an important role in promoting the advancement of women as well as equality of women and men by portraying women and men in a non-stereotypical, diverse and balanced manner.

The working group will discuss the role of the mass media in creating and upholding stereotypical attitudes towards traditional gender roles, and their effect on women’s participation in public and economic life. The session will address the way women are portrayed by the media and the public image of women leaders, including political candidates, ministers and other public figures. The challenges to and best practices in achieving equal and effective access to media for all political candidates should be considered in more detail. Co-operation between NGOs and media in covering gender issues should be highlighted as a positive trend.

The working group should seek to identify the best practices in addressing and promoting awareness of gender equality in the media and to outline the most effective initiatives of media that would guide public opinion and change attitudes that discriminate against women or discourage women’s participation in public life. It should also recommend strategies for combating stereotypes and proliferation of graphic images that objectify and/or discriminate against women, and ways to promote a balanced portrayal of women in the media.

**13:00-14:30**

**Informal Discussion**

“Overview of ODIHR’s Gender Programmes-introduction of partners from the field”

Venue: Conference Centre, Meeting rooms 1 and 2

**15.00 – 18.00**

**Two parallel working group sessions**

**Working Group II:**

**Women’s involvement in political processes**

*Venue: Plenary Hall*

*Moderator:* **Ms. Edeltraud Gatterer,**  
Former Austrian MP

*Introducer:* **Ms. Sonja Lokar,**  
Executive Director European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity CEE Network for Gender Issues, and Chair of the Stability Pact’s Gender Task Force

*Rapporteur:* **Mr. Harald W. Kotschy,**  
Minister, Austrian Delegation to the OSCE

An effective democratic system requires equal access to and participation in political process by all members of society. For this reason, equal, effective and active involvement of women in political processes is increasingly seen as an indispensable prerequisite to a true democracy. It reinforces the principle of an inclusive society, where all citizens have an equal right to vote, stand for election, and be governed by a truly representative government. Recognition of this principle, its codification in international human rights documents and new and continuing movement towards democratization in the OSCE countries have opened up political processes. Irrespective of this progress, however popular participation of women in these processes has not been fully achieved.

This working group will provide an opportunity to discuss those factors that hamper the effective access of women and equal opportunity for their participation in political processes. The challenges include lack of effective constitutional and legislative provisions and mechanisms that are intended to ensure electoral and representative equality. Issues to be looked at include eliminating negative attitudes towards women’s political participation and lack of electorate’s confidence in and support for female candidates. Another concern is the transparency, financing and gender reflective procedures in political processes and institutions that amount to *de facto* denial of access to the political process by women.

The session should address the role of women in publicly elected positions in parliaments, government, local authority structures, councils, commissions, school boards, public administration, judiciary, etc. Furthermore, cross party dialogues, women’s coalition building and addressing social and women’s rights issues as representing a force for citizen orientated and democratic politics should also be considered.

The working group should put forward recommendations and identify good practices drawn from OSCE participating States, as well as

lessons learned on how to ensure women's access to the electoral process, including the right to vote, party leadership and access to placement on shortlists for elections.

**Working Group IV:  
Ensuring Equality of Economic Opportunity for Women**

*Venue: Conference Room*

- Moderator:* **Ms. Bea M. ten Tusscher**,  
Head of the Women and Development Division in  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
- Introducers:* **Ms. Ewa Ruminska-Zimny**,  
Regional Adviser on Gender, United Nations Economic  
commission for Europe and  
**Dr. Natalya Oltarzhevskaya**,  
Director General, Koletex-Scientific Production  
Association, Engineering Academy
- Rapporteur:* **Mr. Jouni Laaksonen**,  
First Secretary, Finish Delegation to the OSCE

Economic recession in many developed and developing countries, as well as ongoing restructuring in countries with economies in transition throughout the OSCE region have a disproportionately negative impact on women.

Women contribute significantly to economic life in the OSCE region, their share in the labour market continues to increase, and they are becoming more involved in micro-, small and medium enterprises. Although women contribute to development and the overall economy through both paid and unpaid work, their unpaid work, such as domestic and community work, is not adequately measured in quantitative terms and not valued in national accounts, and they are largely excluded from economic decision making.

Discrimination in education and training, hiring, remuneration and promotion, inflexible working conditions; lack of access to productive resources; inadequate sharing of family responsibilities and the disproportionate effect of conflict on women, all contribute to restricted employment and constraints in economic and professional opportunities.

The working group will address the need for ensuring equality of economic opportunities for women, lessons learned from participating States and international organizations regarding women's access to the labour market, property (including land rights), financial crediting, investment and other preconditions for economic activities. The discussion should include States' role in creating the favourable legal and financial environment for women to start up businesses, to achieve economic independence and economic empowerment in order to enhance participation in democratic processes. Illustration of successful enterprises run by women will be given as an example of the positive trend and approach to economic empowerment of women.

On the basis of the best practices in the OSCE area, this session should identify mechanisms to empower women and ensure equal opportunity for their participation in economic life, paying attention to the special role of all branches of state authority - legislative, executive, and judiciary. Ensuring equal economic opportunity needs to involve all branches of government and their agencies in a concerted effort to address discriminatory laws and practices, and the challenges of building an equitable system of economic remuneration and distribution in all spheres of the economy. Possible issues could include property ownership, inheritance, discriminatory hiring practices and the role of judicial and non-judicial institutions in addressing these issues.

The role of the judiciary in the human dimension and its function in addressing discrimination can not be separated from the equal economic opportunity for women and *vice versa*. The session should focus on the interrelationship between the two.

The issue and importance of good governance and effects of the shadow economy on women's equal opportunity for participation in the state's protection system and economic life should be addressed. It is crucial to explore these issues because women are more disproportionately affected by the inadequacies in addressing these issues, as well as much more subject to their rights being violated due to these phenomena.

Human rights protection is linked to the human rights literacy of judges and to a legal culture and tradition. This raises the question of training and legal education. In addition, the role and possible contribution of constitutions and Constitutional and Supreme Courts to a legal culture of respect for internationally agreed human rights standards should be discussed in relation to using gender-inclusive language in the formulation, interpretation and application of human rights instruments and national laws.

The session will also provide an opportunity to discuss the role of the OSCE in assisting participating States to apply new strategies in establishing mechanisms that effectively provide equal opportunity for participation of women in economic life: potential capability, relevance, and added value.

The working group should evaluate and recommend programmes and mechanisms capable of ensuring equal access to education and creating additional job opportunities as a tool for women's economic empowerment, including in post conflict and/or peace building situations.

**18:00-19:00**

### **Informal Discussion**

“Roma women and their work”

*Convenor:* The International Forum of Roma Women Associations

*Venue:* Conference Centre, Meeting rooms 1 and 2



Thursday 15 April 2002

10.00 – 13.00          Single Working Group Session

**Working Group V:**

**The implementation of the OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues**

*Venue: Plenary Hall*

*Moderator:*    **Amb. Danielle Del Marmol**,  
Head of Mission, Belgian Delegation to the OSCE, Co-  
Chair of the Informal Group on Gender Equality and  
Anti Trafficking,  
*Introducer:*    **Ms. Beatrix Attinger Colijn**,  
Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, OSCE Secretariat  
*Rapporteur:*    **Mr. Fernando Nogales**  
Counsellor, Spanish Delegation to the OSCE

The OSCE by adopting this Action Plan that expressed its readiness to work on prompting gender equality and address the problems on institutional and on national level. Since the adoption in 2000 of the OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues, there has been no institution wide discussion on the content and implementation of the Action Plan.

The session will provide an opportunity for a review of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues and an exchange of views on possible initiatives to support its implementation as well as approaches to and support for gender related activities in the field. The issue of secondments and measures to promote female candidates for OSCE posts should also be considered.

The OSCE participating States, through OSCE commitments and other international standards, have taken on the responsibility to promote gender equality in their respective countries. They have committed themselves to contribute to the full enjoyment by women of their human rights in order to achieve equality, development and peace through national laws, formulation of strategies, policies, programmes and development of priorities in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The session will provide an opportunity for an overview of the implementation of commitments referring to equality between women and men in the OSCE participating States as well as the new development of measures to ensure equality of opportunities, review of legislation, policies and practices, and enforceable legal remedies against discrimination on the basis of sex, put in place by their national systems.

**13:00-14:30**

**Informal Discussion**

“The work of International IDEA in the area of women’s political participation”

Convenor: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

*Venue: Conference Centre, Meeting rooms 1 and 2*

**15.00 – 18.00**

**Closing Plenary Session**

*Introduction from the Chair*

**Mr. Steven Wagenseil,**

First Deputy Director of the OSCE/ODIHR

**Closing Keynote Speech**

**Mrs. Elizabeth Rehn,**

Chairperson of the Stability Pact Table I, Human Rights and Democracy

**Rapporteurs’ Summaries from Working Groups**

*Statements from delegations*

*Conclusions by*

**Ambassador Christian Strohal,**

Director of the OSCE/ODIHR

*Closing of the Seminar*

## ANNEX II

### AGENDA OF SIDE EVENTS

*The Helsinki Document of 1992 (Chapter IV) called for increasing the openness of OSCE activities and expanding the role of NGOs. In particular, in paragraph (15) of Chapter IV the participating States decided to facilitate during CSCE meetings informal discussion meetings between representatives of participating States and of NGOs, and to provide encouragement to NGOs organizing seminars on OSCE-related issues. In line with this decision, NGOs, governments, and other participants are encouraged to organize side meetings at the Human Dimension Seminar on relevant issues of their choice.*

*The side meetings below have been exclusively organized and scheduled at the request of participants of the Human Dimension Seminar. The annotated agenda and content for each meeting was prepared by the organization convening the meeting and does not necessarily reflect the views of the OSCE, or the ODIHR.*

#### TUESDAY, 13 MAY

**14:30-15:00**

Opening of a photo exhibition “Images of Women in South Caucasus”  
Photographs by **Mr. Eric Gurlan**  
Introductory remarks by **Ambassador Christian Strohal**  
Convenor: the ODIHR Gender Unit  
Location: Conference Centre, Grand Floor-Foyer

#### WEDNESDAY, 14 MAY

**13.00-14:30**

**Informal Discussion**

“Overview of ODIHR’s Gender Programmes-introduction of partners from the field”  
*Convenor:* OSCE ODIHR Gender Unit  
Location: Meeting rooms 1 and 2

A briefing overview of the OSCE ODIHR Gender Unit on their programs and activities was provided to the participants. The overview was complemented by a local partners’ account on the impact of the OSCE ODIHR activities in their countries. The local partners and NGO representatives actively running OSCE ODIHR gender programs from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan were represented.

**18:00-19:00**

**Informal Discussion**

“Roma women and their work”  
*Convenor:* International Forum of Roma Women Associations  
Location: Conference Centre, Meeting rooms 1 and 2

This meeting aimed to show the activities and initiatives that women Roma and Sinti NGOs are involved in and work with especially in respect to advancing Roma women’s rights.

**THURSDAY, 15 MAY**

**13:00-14:30**

**Informal Discussion**

“The work of International IDEA in the area of women’s political participation”

Convenor: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance

Location: Conference Centre, Meeting rooms 1 and 2

Brief presentation of work and publications of the International IDEA.

## ANNEX III

### INDEX OF DOCUMENTS

#### PARTICIPATING STATES

<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	8	1.	Statement at the Opening Plenary Session
	9	2.	Written contribution of the U.S. Department of State: International Women's Issues Newsletter, Spring 2003
	10	3.	Written contribution of the U.S. Department of State "Respect for Women: The Global Imperative"
	35	4.	Compilation of the U.S. Delegation
	36	5.	Statement at the Closing Plenary Session
Recommendations			
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<b>AZERBAIJAN</b>	11	1.	Statement at the Opening Plenary Session
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<b>CANADA</b>	19	1.	Country report
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<b>CROATIA</b>	20	1.	Statement at the Opening Plenary by Ms. Dubravka Simonovic, Minister Plenipotentiary
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<b>THE NETHERLANDS</b> /	25	1.	Country report
	33	2.	Non-paper on the OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues
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<b>POLAND</b>	30	1.	Statement at the Opening Plenary by Ms. Izabela Jaruga-Nowacka, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men
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<b>SWEDEN</b>	31	1.	Fact sheet "Some gender equality initiatives in 2002", Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications
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<b>CZECH</b>	3	1.	Country report

## MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERS FOR CO-OPERATION

<b>EGYPT</b>	26	1.	Information on the National Council for Women
	27	2.	Decree by the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt on the National Council for Women
	28	3.	Excerpts from the Statements of Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, President of the National Council for Women
	29	4.	Information on and the final statement of Arab Women's Extraordinary Summit
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<b>TUNISIA</b>	12	1.	Information on Women in Tunisia
	13	2.	Written contribution: Tunisian Women in numbers (Polish language)
	14	3.	Written contribution: Le Code du Statut Personnel, Le Guide des Jeunes

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

### **Council of Europe**

- |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| 1 | 1. | Written contribution from the Division Equality between women and men Directorate General of Human Rights   |
| 5 | 2. | Resolution on the roles of women and men in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and post-conflict democratic processes - a gender perspective, 5 <sup>th</sup> European Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men |
| 6 | 3. | Declaration and programme of action "Gender Equality: a core issues in changing societies", 5 <sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference on Equality between Women and Men  |
| 7 | 4. | Recommendation Rec(2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making, adopted on 12 March 2003 and explanatory memorandum                |

### **United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

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| 16 | 1. | Conclusions from the Civil Society Workshop on Strategies for the Promotion of Women's Participation in Political and Public Life                         |
| 17 | 2. | Draft Report from the Brainstorming on Strategies for the Promotion of Women's Participation in Public Life (UNOHCHR, CoE, Civil Society Resource Centre) |
| 37 | 3. | Contribution on the methodology of rights-based approach  |

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| 4 | 4. | Intervention by the Commissioner of the CBSS, H.E. Helle Degn, "WoMen and Democracy" |
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## OSCE INSTITUTIONS

### **OSCE Secretariat**

- 2 1. OSCE Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan for Gender Issues
- 32 2. Gender Disaggregated Statistics of the OSCE Secretariat, Institutions and field activities

### **OSCE ODIHR**

- 23 1. Opening Talking Points of the ODIHR Director, H.E. Ambassador Christian Strohal
  - 38 2. List of Participants
  - 3. OSCE Commitments Relating to Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination (English and Russian version)
  - 4. Overview of ODIHR Gender Unit Programmes 2000 - 2002 (English and Russian version)
  - 5. Country Reports, Submitted to the Informal Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking in Human Beings
  - 6. Report from the SHDM on Domestic Violence, Vienna 2001
- 

## **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **INTERACTION**

- 15 1. Press-release
  - 18 2. Information on the activities of the organization
- 

- 24 Information on the International Forum of Roma Women Associations "Pale Romnja"
- 34 Newsletter provided by the Consortium of Women's Non-governmental Associations from the Russian Federation on "New Technologies of Women NGOs Collaboration with Powers"

## **OTHER DOCUMENTS**

### **Stability Pact for South East Europe, Gender Task Force Regional Center for Gender Equality**

- 21 1. Project proposal: Southeast European Women's Role in Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Post-conflict Dialogue II, 2003-2004
- 22 2. Report, May 2003