



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

OSCE Gender equality Review Conference, on the occasion of the 10th
Anniversary of the OSCE Gender Action Plan

Working Session Five: Strengthening Institutional Mechanisms for Gender
Mainstreaming – Challenges and Perspectives

Statement by Norway as delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile,
Vienna, 11 July 2014

Thank you, Madam Moderator,

I would like to make a rather specific point on institutional matters.

But before I come to that, I would like to make a few points to explain my position on this particular institutional matter.

First, we have heard a lot of nice things yesterday and today. And yes, we do make progress in promoting gender equality in our societies.

But behind the many politically correct arguments I have heard, I still feel we have a long way to go – a long way to go before we agree on what gender equality is all about.

Perhaps not so much in this room, but in our societies, there are still those who think that gender equality is about treating ladies nicely, about giving them flowers on the 8 of March, about having one woman in government – in charge of social affairs and family affairs.

We need to agree that gender equality is about doing the right things in order for women to enter – on the same terms as men – into all spheres of our societies.

Into the executive structures of the administration of our societies,

Into the labour market,

Into the board rooms,

Into politics - *including* into government,

Into the police force,

And, yes, into our armed forces.

Only this way will we be able to create societies that make full use of their human resources.

Only this way will we be able to create societies that make it possible for both men and women, including from minorities, to realize their ambitions and their potential.

Only this way will we be able to create stable and prosperous societies, in which it is good to grow up and good to get old.

And I would like to add the following point: I have during this conference heard views I find difficult to accept. I have heard that we should not forget the particular role of women and mothers in preserving the traditional, moral, religious and cultural values of our societies.

I am a man, I am a father, and I take – I have – the same responsibility in these matters as my wife.

Madam Moderator,

My understanding of why gender equality is so important tells me that promoting gender equality at the same time is promoting the core objectives of the OSCE – stability, prosperity, good governance – good societies.

Madam Moderator, I wanted to make these points to underline that gender equality must be a priority for the OSCE.

A cross-dimensional and priority area needs to be visible. The person in charge of it must have authority. To me this would imply to upgrade the senior adviser on gender issues. She – or he – should report directly to the Secretary General. She – or he – should probably be above the departments of the Secretariat.

There is of course more to be said about this, about how to engage delegations here in Vienna,

About resources we need to allocate to gender work,

About work we need to do in all parts of our organisation, including in the institutions and the field missions,

And not least, what we have to do in our societies.

But I have spoken too much already and therefore

Thank you.