



443rd Plenary Meeting

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**DECISION No. 536
AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL
MODALITIES OF THE 2003 HUMAN DIMENSION SEMINAR**

“Participation of women in public and economic life”

(Warsaw, 13 to 15 May 2003)

I. Agenda

1. Opening of the Seminar
2. Opening plenary: Keynote interventions
3. Discussion in five working groups
4. Closing plenary: Summing up and closing of the Seminar

II. Timetable and other organizational modalities

1. The Seminar will open in Warsaw on Tuesday, 13 May 2003, at 3 p.m. It will close on Thursday, 15 May 2003, at 6 p.m.
2. All plenary and working group sessions will be open.
3. The closing plenary, scheduled for Thursday morning, will focus on practical suggestions and recommendations for addressing the issues discussed during the working group sessions and identifying priorities for action.

Working Group 1: Women’s role in democratization and peace-building

Topics may include, *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

Topics may include, *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

Topics may include, *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 the gender issues.

Working Group 4: Ensuring Equality of Economic Opportunity for Women

Topics may include, *inter alia*:

- Lessons learned from participating States and international organizations regarding women's access to the labour market, equal 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

Topics may include, *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.
4. The plenary and working group sessions will take place in accordance with the work programme below.
 5. An ODIHR representative will chair the plenary sessions.
 6. Standard OSCE rules of procedure and working methods will be applied at the Seminar.
 7. Discussions will be interpreted from and into all six working languages of the OSCE.

WORK PROGRAMME

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

	Tuesday, 13 May 2003	Wednesday, 14 May 2003	Thursday, 15 May 2003
Morning		WGs 1 and 3 (parallel)	WG 5
Afternoon	Inaugural plenary session	WGs 2 and 4 (parallel)	Concluding plenary session