

**Statement of the Delegation of Ukraine  
at Working Session 15: “Ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women in all spheres of life, including implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on promoting gender equality and preventing violence against women” of the  
2018 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**

Distinguished Chairperson!  
Distinguished participants!

Ensuring equality between men and women is an integral part of the state policy of Ukraine.

Gender policy is built on a fair approach to the role of women and men as being equal in rights, freedoms, obligations, opportunities and responsibilities. It is aimed at integration of gender approaches into all spheres of society and reducing inequality in the areas where it exists.

Today in Ukraine these issues have acquired special significance due to the armed aggression of the Russian Federation in certain territories of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions.

The hostilities ongoing in Ukraine for the fifth year increase the number of domestic violence and gender-based violence cases and require special attention to respect for the rights of women and men of different social groups.

Annually, about one hundred thousand cases of domestic violence are recorded. According to unofficial statistics, every fifth woman suffers from violence.

Ukraine continues strengthening the national mechanism for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

Under the chairmanship of the Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, a number of events were held with participation of deputy ministers and deputy heads of regional state administrations responsible for implementation of the gender policy.

Priorities have been identified in each agency for implementation of the new documents approved in 2018:

The National Action Plan for fulfillment of CEDAW recommendations to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women for the period up to 2021;

The State Social Program on Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men for the Period up to 2021.

An important component of the document is mainstreaming of the gender aspect into economic and social development programs, regulatory and legal acts related to human rights. The impact of the reforms on women and men is also evaluated.

This year, changes were made to the National Plan of Action for implementation of the UN Security Council resolution “Women, Peace and Security” for the period up to 2020.

The document includes activities designed to improve the infrastructure and material and technical conditions for service of women. Measures have been strengthened to counter sexual violence associated with the conflict. The educational and information components are significant.

In the field of counteracting domestic and gender-based violence, positive changes have taken place in the legislation.

This year, the Law on Preventing and Countering Domestic Violence and Gender-Based Violence has come in effect. It provides a comprehensive approach to response actions.

Changes have been made to the Code of Administrative Offenses, the Code of Civil Procedure and the Law on the Court Fee.

Domestic violence has been criminalized. The new norm of the Criminal Code will come into effect in January 2019.

To implement the norms of the law, the Government has adopted:

Procedures:

On the interaction of all the bodies involved in its implementation – the Ministries of Social Policy, Education, Health, National Police, local executive bodies and local self-governments, including united territorial communities;

On issuance of an urgent injunction for the violence perpetrator to restrict his/her contact with the victim.

Provisions:

On a shelter for victims;

On mobile brigades of social and psychological assistance to victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence;

On psychological service in the education system, which includes questions of prevention and response to facts of domestic violence.

To date, 46 mobile psychological and social support teams provide assistance to victims in Ukraine operating in 10 regions of Ukraine (covering 48 cities and 47 districts), including remote settlements and settlements near the demarcation line.

Due to cooperation of the authorities, public organization, and support of the UN Population Fund in Ukraine, as well as international methodologies of Health Right International, in the past two years alone 7 Centers for Women Victims of Domestic and Gender Violence have been launched.

With support of the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, specialists responsible for carrying out correctional programs for perpetrators of violence get their training in the regions.

With support of the UN Population Fund in Ukraine, non-governmental organizations conduct training for specialists working with victims. The approaches to countering domestic violence have been changing, with the focus on protecting the victims' rights and interests.

We are facing an important and difficult task formulated in the Sustainable Development Goals for Ukraine – up to 2030 – to reduce the level of domestic violence and gender-based violence.

In the coming years, we plan to work to address psychological barriers among women and increase confidence in the agencies providing protection and assistance, which will increase the number of official appeals from the victims.

To this end, the efforts of the authorities at all levels and civil society will be combined. We also count on support of international organizations.

Nothing is more destructive than violence. Domestic violence, violence in the society, violence on a global scale. Violence causes retaliatory aggression and wars.

And each of us should give ourselves a sincere answer – what can we do to prevent violence, so that thousands of people do not die from violence every day triggering retaliatory aggression from hundreds of thousands of relatives and friends and a response in relation to the aggressor country.

We must think about the guys who are in captivity, about their families, children, in whose hearts the seeds of hatred have been sown.

We must do our best to make today's event a unifying platform for making important decisions aimed at a fair and speedy exchange of prisoners of war, cessation of violence and establishment of peace.

We recommend that the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Gender Section of the OSCE Secretariat to allocate a separate line in its activities to assist participating States in preventing and counteracting of domestic and gender-based violence.

In this regard, Ukraine needs support in preventing of violence in the families of veterans and in carrying out special programs for their rehabilitation.