

**EUROPEAN UNION****OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°883****Vienna, 9 May 2018**

EU Statement on Women, Peace and Security

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the speakers Dr. Marina Nuciari, Ms. Clare Hutchinson, Ambassador Apakan, Mr. Reynders and Ms. Darisuren, and thank them for their presentations. We are grateful to the Slovenian FSC Chairmanship for bringing the topic of Women, Peace and Security to the agenda. We equally welcome your work as the Chair of the MenEngage network. Men and boys have a key role and provide key contributions to the global efforts to achieve gender equality.

The EU's approach builds upon the foundations of human rights, peace and security, development, justice and gender equality. Promoting the Women, Peace and Security agenda is essential to realizing our shared ambition of conflict prevention and sustaining peace and security. Also in this context, implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and subsequent resolutions remain a priority. This has also been highlighted in the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality.

In EU external action, we continue to work for women's full and active participation in conflict prevention, resolution, mediation and peacebuilding. Furthermore, Women, Peace and Security is a priority within the UN-EU strategic partnership on peacekeeping and crisis management, and in the context of the EU-NATO partnership strong references to Women, Peace and Security are included in the areas of situational awareness, early warning and capacity-building. In the area of the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy the issue of Women, Peace and Security will be further included in EU-led military missions and operations. Eighteen EU Member States have already adopted a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, further complemented by an implementation framework at EU-level, aiming for an improved and meaningful participation of women throughout the conflict cycle.

The OSCE is well-positioned to make a unique contribution to promoting gender equality, particularly in promoting women's participation and preventing and combating sexual and gender-based violence. The FSC has a significant stake in this topic. In order to come to a better understanding and to share our best practices, we continue to support voluntary reporting on topics related to Women, Peace and Security within the annual information exchange on the Code of Conduct.

More needs to be done. Despite a growing number of National Action Plans in the OSCE region, challenges remain with integrating the Women, Peace and Security agenda into practical work. We reiterate our support for the adoption of an OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and security as one such step. The external dimension needs to go hand in hand with the internal dimension of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Within our own national systems, and within the OSCE framework, we need women to participate equally in all phases and at all levels. Male military personnel must recognise that women and men experience conflict differently and therefore require different responses. In this context, the EU welcomes the SMM Gender Equality Action Plan 2018-2019 and the strengthening of the office of the Senior Gender Advisor. The Action Plan entails important deliverables, both on the external dimension, including capturing the impact of conflict on men and women, boys and girls, and their roles in dialogue facilitation and peacebuilding, and the internal dimension, including equal opportunities and improving gender balance and increasing the ability to mainstream a gender perspective into our work. The SMM Action Plan could be a useful model for developing similar plans in other areas.

We welcome further efforts to raise the awareness of all military personnel regarding the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and to increase the participation of women at all levels in the security sector, which can significantly enhance its effectiveness. In this context, we are greatly encouraged by the comments of our speakers today. We firmly believe that a gender perspective encompassing the equal participation of women and men is an essential goal; it is a means to help prevent and resolve conflicts, and promotes a culture of inclusive and sustainable peace and security.

We look forward to hearing the view of other participating States on how we can continue to improve our work in this area.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.