

Statement by Tone Tingsgard, Vice President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Special Representative on Gender Issues.

I am very pleased to take part in the presentation of this publication which I find extremely important.

It is also of utmost importance for me to highlight and emphasize the many resolutions on Violence against Women that have been passed and supported by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly throughout the years. From the Assembly's first Annual meeting in 1993 and then every year from 1996 the issue has been on the agenda.

We have condemned systemic rapes that occur in armed conflicts. We have taken as our obligation to promote the UN resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. We have taken many resolutions against women trafficking and prostitution. And last year in Astana, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly decided upon a resolution against all kinds of violence against women including domestic violence.

It is also my firm belief that fighting Violence against Women must be accompanied by the fight for equal opportunities and equal rights for women and men. The lack of Gender Balance in politics and in society as a whole is the main cause behind Violence against Women. This must be understood and taken seriously. If not we shall never see an end to this violence.

All the world's competent women must take the positions of the many incompetent men if we shall get sustainable solutions to all these disgusting varieties of Violence against Women.

Today it must be repeated again and again: the reason behind the existing situation is not lack of knowledge – it is lack of political will.