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**STATEMENT BY  
AMBASSADOR SUSANNE SCHÜTZ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY, AT THE 1127th PLENARY MEETING  
OF THE OSCE FORUM FOR SECURITY CO-OPERATION**

11 February 2026

**Agenda item 1: Women in the armed forces**

Madam Chairperson,  
Dear colleagues,

Germany aligns itself fully with the statement by the European Union. Allow me to make some additional comments in a national capacity. We welcome France's decision to take up this dialogue in the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) as an important contribution to the implementation of OSCE commitments in the area of women, peace and security, and we thank the panellists here in Vienna for their valuable and interesting insights.

As Captain Birk has explained, armed forces have historically always been characterized by a predominantly male-dominated organizational culture. In Germany, all military careers were fully opened to women just over two decades ago. Today, women serve in all branches of the German armed forces, including as combat troops, aircrew and in naval units.

As far as Germany is concerned, the integration of women is not only essential and self-evident in terms of equality and equal rights, but is also a necessity in terms of security policy and operations. Women strengthen the operational capability, leadership quality and resilience of military units. In complex and multinational operational environments in particular, mixed teams increase adaptability, communication and trust. Women make the armed forces better.

At the same time, the integration of women remains an ongoing management task. Successful integration cannot mean that women have to adapt to a historically male model. Rather, it is the institution's responsibility to create the appropriate conditions – for example, through suitable equipment, infrastructure and training, as well as through clear standards for professional conduct. True equality between male and female soldiers is a basic prerequisite for the operational readiness and credibility of the armed forces.

We are concerned to see an increase in counterproductive narratives, including those spread via transnational anti-rights networks, which also reach soldiers via digital media. Such tendencies can undermine internal cohesion and thus the operational readiness of armed forces. Comradeship is based on

mutual respect, discipline and a shared professional ethos. There is no place for marginalization of any kind in our armed forces.

Germany sees responsible military leadership as a key tool for addressing these challenges. It is up to leaders at all levels to shape culture and behaviour accordingly. The cohesion and thus the effectiveness of the armed forces depend on this.

Germany is convinced that the conscious and careful integration of women is an effective means of achieving these goals and helps to build trust, stability and resilience in the OSCE area. We look forward to further exchanges in the FSC on best practices and joint learning processes.

Thank you.