

OSCE Ministerial Council: joint statement on UNSCR 1325

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the following 52 participating States: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, Republic of North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States and Uzbekistan.

This year, we mark twenty years since the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000). The resolution stresses the importance of women's full, equal and meaningful participation, including at all levels of decision-making and leadership, in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security as well as promoting the safety of women and girls from violence in conflict and crises. This landmark resolution and all its subsequent reviews, all in line with UN Sustainable Development Goal 5, are essential in furthering the critical role of women in matters of peace and security at all levels.

As the world's largest regional security organization, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) must lead the way. With its field missions, secretariat and autonomous institutions, the OSCE offers participating States a unique network. The OSCE's concept of comprehensive security covers all different elements of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. This provides a very suitable setting for full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security commitments on a range of levels, from the political to the very practical.

The implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and its subsequent resolutions has advanced within the OSCE, as several initiatives illustrate. Voluntary information exchange on Women, Peace and Security happens through the OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security and through the inclusion of gender in discussions on Small Arms Light Weapons/Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition (SALW/SCA). Furthermore, the voluntary National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security have proven to be a useful tool to implement UNSCR 1325 for a majority of participating States.

Women mediators and the 2019 OSCE toolkit 'Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes' demonstrate that inclusion is not only right; it is also the most effective way to achieve stability and peace. Including and empowering women not only to the armed forces but also to peace processes, including peace operations and mediation, is equally important and must become a standard practice. The full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda requires everyone, including boys and men to be engaged as positive agents for change.

Achieving sustainable peace is not possible without the full, equal and meaningful participation of women'. However, women and their efforts remain too often invisible. For this to change, the Women Peace and Security agenda needs to be inclusive of young and diverse voices, and requires responsive approaches to evolving concepts of security and needs on the ground. The OSCE Scholarship for Peace and Security contributes hereto. Cooperation with civil society remains of utmost relevance in this regard and should be reinforced, as civil society drives the Women Peace and Security agenda implementation through their crucial contribution, important views and essential perspectives.

Nonetheless, Mr. Chairperson, obstacles and challenges still persist. The 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 is thus a moment to call for action in areas where the OSCE is both at the forefront and one of the best equipped organisations. We need to step up our efforts to empower women's equal, full and meaningful participation and leadership and women professionals in conflict prevention and crisis management, mediation, peace processes, policing, border management, arms control and disarmament, and in the security sector, including armed forces. To achieve this, we have to act upon our promises, which requires both political will and resources.

In order to do so, the OSCE needs to continue improving its existing commitments. Two decades after subscribing to UNSCR 1325, we should remain ambitious and make full use of the potential for further advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda, in particular within the FSC. We regret that the efforts for an FSC decision on UNSCR 1325 did not reach consensus. As the Women, Peace and Security agenda cuts across the FSC's work, the FSC has a key part to play in delivering the full implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions in the OSCE area. We already committed to this during the OSCE ministerial in 2011. These resolutions are highly relevant. Concrete additional efforts in the OSCE, including the FSC, could include the following:

- Set up a plan of action for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, in all aspects of the FSC's areas of work, including at all levels of decision-making and leadership;
- Consider establishing a directory of national focal points on gender equality in order to facilitate the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review of the plan of action;
- Promote the information exchange on issues pertaining to Women, Peace and Security through the Code of Conduct on Politico-military Aspects of Security;
- Facilitate gender mainstreaming, also in SALW/SCA controls and in practical assistance work;
- Encourage and support the sharing of experiences and best practices as regards the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation;
- Compile national practices in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and its subsequent resolutions, with a focus on participating States' promotion of the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in their armed

and security forces.

- Encourage the active use of the 2019 toolkit 'Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes' as practical tool for increasing the role of women in the security sector;
- Encourage the development of voluntary NAPs on Women, Peace and Security and, for those States who already have these Plans in place, continue to improve them, monitor and evaluate their implementation as well as provide sufficient budget to do so;

Although gaps remain to be bridged in order to meet the commitments we made in 2004 through the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality and all related commitments, we stand ready to live up to our promises to strive for full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda that arose from UNSCR 1325 and thus to turning our words into action.