



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°1060 Vienna, 25 October 2023

EU Statement on Women, Peace and Security

1. The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the distinguished Speakers to the Forum and thank them for their insightful presentations and for having shared with us their personal experiences from the armed forces. We appreciate that the Canadian FSC Chair has dedicated today's Security Dialogue to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.
2. Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine underlines amongst others the importance of the WPS agenda. The need to address the situation of women and girls in conflicts has once again become apparent and urgent. Reports, such as those compiled through the Moscow Mechanism document the horrendous cruelties of widespread conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence in Russia's war of aggression. The international community must ensure that perpetrators are held accountable, and survivors are provided with adequate support. While we must consider women's situations and specific needs in this regard, it is equally important to support and empower women and girls as agents of peace and security. We see the leadership of the Ukrainian women who, as soldiers, diplomats, journalists, civil society representatives and politicians, are proactively engaging in a whole-of-society response – under war-time conditions. We give these women our full support and express our highest respect.
3. The mass exodus of Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh in the wake of Azerbaijan's military operation also showed the importance of keeping the focus on the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the FSC.
4. As the largest regional security organisation in the world the OSCE can make a strong contribution to the WPS agenda. In line with the 1999 Istanbul Document, the EU and its Member States remain committed to ensuring full equality between

women and men and continuing the full implementation of the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. Implementing UNSCR 1325 is not just a complementary, cross-cutting aspect of the OSCE's work but it is part of our commitments and consensus-based decisions. These decisions include MC decision 3/11 on the conflict cycle, MC 7/09 that calls for equal opportunities within the security services, including the armed forces, and MC decision 14/05 that acknowledges the need for concrete action by the OSCE to integrate women into all phases of the conflict cycle, including crisis management.

5. The EU and its Member States recognise the important role of women in Armed Forces. Gender mainstreaming to enable more inclusivity and participation of women in planning and decision making at all leadership levels is an absolute priority. Integration of women's perspectives at all stages of preparation, planning and implementing of policy is proven to have more effective results in both combat and peacekeeping scenarios.
6. We reiterate our call for the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women and girls in conflict prevention and resolution, throughout the conflict cycle and in recovery and reconstruction and we recall our unwavering support for an OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Along this line, the EU and its 27 Member States have endorsed the update of the guidance on voluntary reporting on WPS under the Code of Conduct, which helps to improve the exchange of data and best practices amongst participating States.
7. The EU underlines the importance of a strong cooperation between key stakeholder and civil society organisations in implementing gender equality and WPS commitments. Civil society organisations, women-led organisations, women human rights defenders, women peacekeepers and women peacebuilders have a crucial role to play as agents of change.
8. Security sets forth policy objectives and actions towards a gender-equal Europe by 2025. It formulates key actions for the coming years and commits to ensure an equality perspective in all EU policy areas, including Foreign and Security policy with a particular attention herein to the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.
9. We welcome the initiative to invite Military Advisors and FSC Delegates to a Barbershop Conference here in Hofburg on 31 October, aiming at encouraging

participants to become actively engaged in promoting gender equality, while also increasing their understanding of the WPS agenda, and its role in promoting international peace and security.

10. Madame Chair, 31 October is the 23rd anniversary of the adoption of the Security Council Resolution 1325. More than two decades have passed since the resolution was adopted. A lot has been achieved but much more must be done. The full implementation of all aspects of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda remains a strong priority for the EU in the OSCE.

Thank you.

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

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.