



## EUROPEAN UNION

### OSCE 91<sup>st</sup> Joint FSC - PC meeting Vienna, 10 July 2024

---

#### **EU Statement on WPS – Women’s contribution to peace and security: lessons learned and challenges ahead**

---

1. The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the distinguished Speakers to this meeting and thank them for their insightful presentations here today as well as for their personal contributions to a more inclusive approach to peace and security. We appreciate the selection for today's joint FSC-PC Security Dialogue on UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda, the specific and relevant topic of “Women’s contribution to peace and security: lessons learned and challenges ahead”.
2. Russia’s illegal, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression against Ukraine has highlighted the importance of the WPS agenda. The growing evidence of sexual and gender-based violence committed during Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, including as a shameful tactic of war by the Russian Forces, is alarming. The EU strongly condemns these illegal, brutal and cowardly actions and reiterates its steadfast commitment to upholding international human rights law, international humanitarian law and to ending impunity for international crimes. We call on participating States to conduct effective investigations into these crimes, bring perpetrators to justice, ensure accountability, and provide all victims with safe and unhindered access to justice, adequate redress, and reparations. We commend the tireless efforts and contributions of civil society and human rights defenders to this end.
3. We recall the commitments made in Istanbul 1999 and stress the important role that the OSCE plays in promoting and supporting the regional implementation of the WPS agenda. We reiterate our call for the full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership of women in conflict prevention and resolution, throughout the conflict cycle and in recovery and reconstruction. Our approach to the women, peace and security agenda is comprehensive. For us, women’s participation is not a separate pillar of the agenda, it is a cross cutting priority.

Hence any Security Dialogue in the political-military dimension, may also dwell upon aspects of the women, peace and security agenda as an intrinsic element.

4. As the largest regional security organization in the world and a key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, the OSCE can make a strong contribution to the regional implementation of the WPS agenda. We commend the Secretariat, ODIHR and the field missions for their continuous engagement in this regard.
5. Implementing UNSCR 1325 and its follow-up resolutions is part of our commitments and consensus-based decisions. These decisions include the Gender Action Plan from 2004, MC decision 3/11 on the conflict cycle, MC decision 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. Furthermore, different OSCE tools have been developed aiming at strengthening gender equality and promoting the WPS agenda. This includes the 2019 toolkit “Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes”, the 2020 Gender and Security toolkit, ODIHR’s Practical Guide on Addressing Sexual Violence in the Armed Forces and its toolkit 1-5 from 2022 aiming at combatting violence against women in politics, parliaments, and in political parties. We also see the leadership of Ukrainian women who, in all their diversity as soldiers, diplomats, journalists, civil society representatives or politicians, are proactively engaging in an all of society response.
6. The EU underlines the importance of a strong cooperation between key stakeholders and civil society organisations in implementing gender equality and WPS commitments. Civil society organisations, women-led organisations, women human rights defenders and women peacebuilders play a vital role as agents of change.
7. We also recall our unwavering support for an OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and support the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and its follow-up resolutions.
8. The EU policy framework on Women, Peace and Security sets forth forward-looking, bold and timely objectives and actions to integrate gender equality across

European foreign and security policy. It constitutes our common vision and mindset. We stand ready to work tirelessly within the Union and with our international partners to turn this vision into reality.

Thank you, Chairs.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA\*, MONTENEGRO\*, ALBANIA\*, UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA\*, and GEORGIA, the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as ANDORRA 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.