



EUROPEAN UNION
OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation N°897
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**EU Statement on the 18th Anniversary of the Adoption of
UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security**

The European Union and its Member States warmly welcome the distinguished speakers to the Forum for Security Co-operation and thank them for their insightful presentations. We commend the Swedish FSC Chairmanship for convening this special FSC meeting on the occasion of the 18th anniversary of the adoption of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. We equally appreciate the successful efforts of the current FSC Chair to integrate the gender perspective in all security dialogue meetings. Madame Chairperson, you have set an excellent example which we sincerely hope will be followed by incoming FSC Chairs.

Nearly two decades after the adoption of the landmark UNSCR 1325, women remain underrepresented or unrepresented in efforts to negotiate peaceful political resolutions to conflict. Although women continue to play instrumental roles in all efforts to resolve conflict, their achievements often go unrecognised and their work, to a large extent, does not result in access to subsequent political processes and operational activities. According to the most recent report of the UN Secretary General on the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325, women constituted only 2 % of mediators, 8 % of negotiators and 5 % of witnesses and signatories to major peace processes between 1990 and 2017. Only three out of 11 peace agreements signed in 2017 contain provisions on gender equality. This is a cause for concern and more effort is needed worldwide in order to improve delivery on key commitments under the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Peace is more sustainable when women are fully included in peace processes. This was also emphasized in the annual debate on Women, Peace and Security of the UN Security Council on 25 October 2018.

The EU, in its capacity as a global leader and UN partner in the full implementation of the Women Peace and Security agenda, consistently promotes gender equality, women's empowerment, leadership and rights in our external action, as they are at the

core of our European values. As clearly defined in the EU Global Strategy, we consider Gender Equality and the Women, Peace and Security agenda as critical cross-cutting considerations along with Human Rights across all our thematic priorities. Thus we promote the full integration of women, peace and security aspects into all our policies, strategies and political dialogues aiming at more effective conflict prevention, conflict resolution, mediation, and peace-building.

In the context of Women, Peace and Security, an important precondition is to provide all Women and Girls with the sense of proper and full safety and security. Only then they will be able to deploy their full potential and to feel empowered. To this end, and further to many other ongoing projects already underway, we are proud to have launched the EU–UN Spotlight Initiative, a joint action, backed up by initial EU funding amount of EUR 500 M aimed at eliminating targeted forms of violence against women and girls in specific partner countries. Ending sexual and gender-based violence is a matter of peace and security, as well as of sustainable and inclusive development. It is part of the resilience of our societies, institutions, countries and of our world.

Also, we work together with our key partners to implement the joint initiative on the Regional Acceleration on UNSCR 1325. Along with the UN and other regional organisations, including the OSCE, NATO and the African Union, we will continue our joint engagement to integrate a stronger gender dimension into all peace and security efforts. We welcome and engage in all initiatives that help strengthen these efforts, such as the Global Network of Gender Focal Points, the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network and the Women Mediators' Networks.

The EU and its Member States will continue to wholeheartedly work for both improved gender balance, horizontally as well as vertically, and with meaningful gender mainstreaming as the key strategy to ensure the systematic integration of gender perspective throughout all our activities. We are determined to continue to lead globally on these issues, including in the OSCE context.

The OSCE is well-positioned to make a unique contribution to promoting gender equality, particularly in promoting women's full and equal participation and preventing and combating sexual and gender-based violence. The FSC has a significant stake in this topic. In order to come to a better understanding and to share our best practices, we continue to support voluntary reporting on topics related to Women, Peace and Security within the annual information exchange on the Code of Conduct.

However, more still needs to be done. Despite a growing number of National Action Plans in the OSCE region, challenges remain with integrating the Women, Peace and Security agenda into practical work. We reiterate our support for the adoption of an OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security as one such step. We are committed to work together to improve representation and the meaningful and equal participation of women. In this sense, an increased participation of women as briefers, particularly on topics unrelated to gender issues, in this Forum would be a significant step forward in the mainstreaming of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Furthermore, although steps have already been taken, servicewomen are still a small minority in the armed forces across the OSCE region. On average they make up 9.7 % of all service personnel.

We also need to get better in learning from what works. For instance, the 2016 comprehensive peace agreement in Colombia set an international example for women's involvement, but such examples can also be found in the OSCE region. Women candidates are available, and women are more than ready to play their part. We should make sure that they can.

It is important to also recognise and address the roles of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and in this regard, we welcome the contribution of the OSCE MenEngage network and urge all participating States to contribute to its work. Indeed, as can be concluded from the OSCE conference of 1 October 2018 on "Women in the Security Sector: Challenges and Opportunities for the OSCE Area and Beyond" organised by the Italian Chairmanship, inclusivity is crucial for gender equality.

We welcome further efforts to raise the awareness of all military personnel regarding the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and also commend the FSC Chair for organising this afternoon's side event on the role of military commanders in the prevention of sexual and gender based violence in the OSCE.

We also welcome the efforts of the Italian Chairmanship to bring the topic to the agenda of the Ministerial Council in Milan, where we would encourage the Council to adopt decisions on "Advancing Women's Participation in Political and Public Life" and "Preventing and Combating Violence against Women".

We look forward to hearing the views of other participating States on how we can continue to improve our work in this area.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA, ANDORRA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.