



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT ON THE ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT ON GENDER EQUALITY

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council,
Vienna, 3 September 2015

Mr Chairman,

Norway strongly supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to mainstream gender equality in the work of the organisation. Not only because it is fair. Not only because we have commitments. But because it is smart, it is beneficial, and it helps the OSCE do a better job. Gender mainstreaming will make the OSCE a more attractive place to work for both men and women, and it will improve the assistance OSCE gives to participating States.

Mr Chairman,

We hear from the Secretary-General that the OSCE has not managed to recruit enough women to senior positions, including as Heads of Missions. We are particularly concerned that women are under-represented in first-dimension positions. One reason is a lack of candidates. This is a challenge to us all as governments. We must look for, train and encourage female candidates from our own countries.

Mr Chairman,

Integrating a gender-sensitive perspective is of great importance to the OSCE as a security organisation.

Women are among the most vulnerable in times of armed conflict, humanitarian crises and displacement. However, women are not only victims, but also actors and agents of change. We therefore need the participation of both women and men in formal as well as informal processes, in mediation, peace negotiations, humanitarian and peace building efforts. The participation of women will ensure that a broader range of interests is taken into account and give greater legitimacy to conflict-resolution efforts. We therefore support further work in the OSCE to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Mr Chairman,

Combating gender-based violence is the theme of this year's report. Experience shows that conflict has a negative impact on gender-based violence, both in the home and in society. Conflict-related sexual violence is also a serious problem with long-lasting impact in some conflict areas. Combating sexual violence is therefore closely linked to achieving peace and security.

Mr Chairman,

The Gender Equality Review Conference organised last year by the Swiss chairmanship was very useful for identifying need for further progress. We strongly supported the update in Basel of the section of the Gender Action Plan concerning violence against women. It is our hope that this year we will succeed in updating the other sections of the plan. The OSCE should take pride in having updated and forward-looking commitments in an area that is so central to our mandate.

Last year's conference also showed strong support for strengthening the OSCE's own institutional set-up for gender equality. When we ask the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts both inside the organisation and in assistance to participating States, we must ensure that the institutional structures are able to achieve this.

Mr Chairman,

International research confirms the strong link between a high degree of gender equality and prosperous economies, stable democracy and peace. In short, gender equality is instrumental in achieving our goals.

Thank you, Mr Chairman