

FSC 1060 Plenary meeting 25 Oct 2023
Security Dialogue - Women, Peace and Security
Ireland Statement

Ireland fully aligns with the statement of the EU and would like to add a few remarks in our national capacity.

We wish to express our gratitude to the FSC chair for placing the focus of today's meeting on Women, Peace and Security and the conflict cycle. This focus is both timely and relevant in the current context as Russia continues to pursue a brutal unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. We commend Ukrainian women for their bravery and resilience including in political, military, and humanitarian response, within civil society, as human rights defenders, leaders and caretakers.

I would also like to thank the OSCE Secretary General, Helga Schmid for her leadership on WPS and today's speakers for their important contributions to this discussion.

Ireland continues to draw inspiration from the lessons learned in building peace on the island of Ireland. We have witnessed at first hand the transformative impact women have had on the Northern Ireland peace process. Such lessons are reflected in our all-of-Government approach to Women, Peace and Security, guided by Ireland's third National Action Plan (NAP 2019 – 2024) on WPS. This Plan has been afforded special recognition by the UN Secretary General for including in its design, women from conflict-affected contexts living in Ireland, those who have experienced conflict on the island of Ireland, and rural and minority women. The NAP forms a central element of our broader commitment to gender equality, which is a priority for Ireland, reflected in both our foreign policy and our policy for international development.

Ireland's Defence Forces Action Plan on WPS is a gender mainstreaming strategy focused on enhancing women's integration, participation and representation at all levels. Gender Diversity and Unconscious Bias Training ensures that all personnel understand how to make the workplace a more supportive and inclusive environment. Gender training, recognised as demonstrating best practice internationally, is provided pre-deployment and on an ongoing basis for all personnel deployed overseas as part of peacekeeping operations. Training includes modules on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and gender-based violence with a view to ensuring that Irish peacekeeping personnel can be held to the highest standards when on deployment.

Furthermore, fostering the participation of women at all leadership levels of decision making in the Defence Forces is designed to enrich and improve more comprehensive planning and operational

outputs. An example of this at tactical level is the concept of diversity of teams on overseas operations, which provides a channel for women in local communities to connect with women peacekeepers enabling identification and understanding of gender specific security perspectives and concerns.

The Defence Forces Women's Network was established in 2016. This supportive network has been successful in encouraging women to identify barriers to their own participation and exert influence on areas where women are directly affected, but also to incorporate gender perspectives in all military affairs.

Ireland commends the OSCE's ongoing leadership in the area of Women, Peace and Security. Ireland is proud to support OSCE initiatives in this area such as the WIN project. We must all defend the progress made to date and maintain the momentum required to move towards full gender equality.

We know that without the active and positive input of men, we cannot attain gender equality. We commend the role of Men Engage at the OSCE. Working together, we can maximise the full, equal and meaningful participation of women at all decision making levels to create a representative and legitimate security sector.