

OSCE Gender Equality Review Conference,

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A Gender Perspective in Crisis Management

Presentation by

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The purpose of this conference is to respond to the question to what extent the OSCE, as a regional key instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation (“conflict cycle”) has been successful a) in mainstreaming gender in its policies, operations and programmes, and b) in assisting the participating States to implement their commitments of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

The answer to this question requires a comprehensive analysis of results achieved under the *2004 OSCE Action Plan*, taking into account contributions of other actors mandated to promote and implement the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Such a complex task goes far beyond the frame of my brief presentation, in which I would like to discuss the relations between the current global normative Women, Peace and Security frameworks, their implementation and impact, challenges and ways forward – a bigger picture, which is relevant not only for OSCE, but also for UN Women and other stakeholders in the field.

Let me start with reiterating that the **normative global frameworks for the Women, Peace and Security agenda** (and related initiatives) have been significantly expanded, following the adoption of the landmark UNSCR 1325 (2000). Only in the year 2013 two Security Council resolutions (2106 and 2122) have been adopted (which brings them currently to a total of seven); General Recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post conflict situations was adopted by the CEDAW Committee; a historic ‘*Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict*’ was endorsed by 122 member states at the start of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly; a high-level advocacy initiative which brought together a ‘*Circle of Champions*’ to encourage the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence was launched in 2013; and a declaration on women’s economic empowerment for peacebuilding by the UN Peacebuilding Commission was adopted.

This and the next year provide further opportunities to strengthen commitments to gender equality and women’s empowerment - on the occasion of 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and in the framework of finalizing the post-2015 global development agenda.

Development and adoption of normative frameworks has been important for demonstrating high political commitment on international and national levels, yet it has not automatically been translated into actions and/ or measurable results.

There is a number of ways how relevant actors aim at translating Women, Peace and Security commitments in actions and results.

At a member state level there are currently more than 40 National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security, which represent one possibility for states to implement the respective global normative

frameworks and national commitments. It has been expected that a stand-alone National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security would – rather than mainstreaming Women, Peace and Security in priority plans of the line ministries (such as Defense, Interior, Justice, Foreign Affairs) – benefit from the existence of global indicators on Women, Peace and Security developed in response to the UN SG request in RES 1889 (2009), and also trigger budget allocations and the institutionalization of the Women, Peace and Security agenda in relevant ministries. Experiences, however, show qualitative differences among national plans on Women, Peace and Security, some of them lacking proper results orientation and/ or proper budgets.

At a global level, the UN Secretary General's Annual Reports on Women, Peace and Security presented to the UNSC serves to monitor achievements, gaps and challenges in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda against global indicators. These reports also provide recommendations for consideration by the Security Council, member states, regional organizations (including the OSCE) and UN organizations. In the most recent report (September 2013), the SG highlighted measurable results and progress achieved in all areas of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, but it is more important to discuss the identification of remaining gaps, challenges and recommendations in order to formulate the way forward. Let me summarize some of them relevant to consider for further work of both the OSCE and UN Women, focusing especially on support to the member states, which is already ongoing in several countries, especially where both UN Women and OSCE have field presence.

Prevention

An area of concern in the SG report is the quality of gender analysis and actionable recommendations reaching the SC, especially country specific reporting. There is space for cooperation with the member states on strengthening capacities and the quality of gender analysis and recommendations. It is necessary to recognize the importance of (local) women's contributions to early warning as well as conflict prevention and resolution and encourage governments to provide adequate financial and institutional support to local women's organizations to be part of the conflict prevention gender analysis.

The report also encourages states to use CEDAW and UPR reporting processes to assess the implementation of Women, Peace and Security commitments. UN Women, if approached, is ready to assist member states to facilitate the preparation of national reviews that reflect responses to Women, Peace and Security commitments.

The SG's report recommendations for regional organizations include also support for capacity building of women leaders in conflict prevention and resolution (the OSCE gender sensitive mediation tool kit is a recent example of good practice).

Participation

There has been some progress in increased women's participation in formal conflict resolution, in mediation teams and in the number of consultations with women's CSOs. Yet, stronger incentives are needed to include women and consult gender experts -- such as, for example, additional financing to encourage negotiating parties to nominate more women as formal negotiators.

UN Women and the OSCE can, where possible, also contribute to strengthening the knowledge of negotiating delegations of the gender dimension of a conflict.

Protection

The SG's report indicates that notwithstanding stronger policy frameworks, the protection of civilians remains a serious challenge. Displaced and refugee women are especially vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence due to frequently poor shelter, low availability of specialized services and limited recourse of justice. Unaccompanied girls and women, disabled, pregnant, older with limited livelihood options are among the most vulnerable and exposed to such responses as sex work or early marriage. In this respect, the SG recommendation relevant for member states, regional organizations and the UN is to update the analytical inventory of peacekeeping practice to review recent practice in providing protection for women and girls.

Peacebuilding and recovery

After the conflict not enough attention has been paid to women's economic security (access to land, property rights, access to financial sources) and demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programmes, which would increase women's chances to social inclusion and financial independence after the conflict. It is important to ensure that women benefit from such programmes and if necessary are specifically targeted as primary beneficiaries. Advocating for such an approach with the governments and/or providing targeted technical assistance in developing such programmes would be one possibility to contribute to peacebuilding as a part of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Until very recently, reparations have been the most neglected, yet they are the most gender responsive transitional justice measure to address the rights of victims of sexual violence during conflicts. During the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict held in London in June this year, UN Women and OHCHR launched the *UN Secretary-General's Guidance Note on Reparations for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence* that provides guidance on gender-sensitive reparations for victims of sexual violence.

Summary

It is nothing new to say that while there is a robust normative framework for the Women, Peace and Security agenda, its translation into sustainable results requires **systematic monitoring against agreed indicators, evaluation, regular reporting and adequate budget allocations**.

The **CEDAW review process**, especially after the adoption of General Recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict and post-conflict situations, remains an important mechanism linking CEDAW and the seven UN SCRs on Women, Peace and Security.

Coordination of technical support to member states with relevant parts of the UN system and regional organizations is the key in avoiding duplications and ensuring that existing gaps in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, especially in member states, are adequately addressed.

Exchange of good practice in areas of common interest, and complementarity of mandates and expertise of UN and regional organizations deserves to be better exploited in order to provide more targeted support to the member states.