



EUROPEAN UNION

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EU Statement on the Code of Conduct

The European Union and its Member States appreciate this Security Dialogue dedicated to the Code of Conduct, with particular emphasis on the integration of women in armed forces. We welcome Secretary General Helga Schmid, Prof. Alexandre Lambert, Ms. Roswitha Mathes, Colonel Claes Bitterlich and Major Linda Johansson and thank them for their interesting and comprehensive insights into this topic.

A gender perspective, encompassing the equal participation of women and men, is both an essential goal and an effective way to help prevent and resolve conflicts and to promote a culture of inclusive and sustainable peace. Gender mainstreaming in the military is a work in progress and further efforts are needed to integrate a gender perspective and enhance the participation of women at all levels, including in the decision-making ranks.

We equally appreciate practical work on the implementation in the OSCE context of UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and continue to support voluntary reporting on topics related to women, peace and security in connection with the annual information exchange on the Code of Conduct. We also support the initiative of a Draft Decision at the upcoming Ministerial Council in Stockholm on ensuring and promoting equal opportunities as well as full and meaningful participation of women and men in the armed forces. Such a decision will emphasise the need to offer the same career opportunities to all personnel in the Armed and Security Forces, thus advancing gender equality in all aspects of the OSCE conflict cycle.

Today, we also wish to thank the Swedish Chairpersonship for organising the recent visit within the framework of the OSCE Code of Conduct. The event held in Stockholm from 29 September to 1 October 2021 demonstrated good practices employed by Sweden to increase the participation of women at all levels of the Armed Forces. Participants experienced first-hand how Sweden has spared no effort in safeguarding the equality of women in the Armed Forces, from ensuring gender neutral conscription and that women are given equal opportunities and suitable resources, to advancing their careers and overall wellbeing in the Armed Forces.

Indeed, the comprehensive way that the Code of Conduct is designed to safeguard the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all in the Armed Forces and of all affected by army activities in conflict and post-conflict situations serves as an inspiration for us all to be ambitious and proactive in truly integrating women in the armed forces. By comprehensively implementing these aspects of the Code-of-Conduct, Sweden has gone beyond what it subsequently takes to implement UNSCR 1325 and its subsequent resolutions.

Advancing the participation of women in CSDP missions has long been high on the European Union's agenda. In line with the Women, Peace and Security requirements, the EU continues to embark on initiatives in enhancing human rights and gender equality within military ranks. This includes among others the improvement in data collection and analyses of sex-disaggregated data for mission personnel, and the creation of Gender Advisors positions and Gender Focal Point networks in all civilian missions. Furthermore, the New European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management situated in Berlin, which focuses on enhancing capabilities to strengthen civilian crisis management in the framework of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), has made it a key priority to contribute to substantially improved representation of women in civilian CSDP missions.

There is still more that needs to be done. Women comprise only 24% of international personnel, 30% of all staff in civilian CSDP missions and 7% of the staff in military missions and operations. Increasing women's participation in these missions is more

effective when efforts to recruit more women are coupled with measures and incentives that aim to keep them longer in such missions.

We emphasize the need for Armed Forces to operationalise gender in their activities and that all deployments including senior management, receive the best training on gender mainstreaming, prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation and abuse.

In conclusion, we encourage all participating States to continue increasing the number of women at all levels in their respective Armed and Security Forces and to step up training and deployment of women as civilian crisis management experts as well as military experts in all their operations, including by seconding more women for OSCE field missions.

The Candidate Countries the REPUBLIC of NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, SERBIA* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN 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 Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.