

OSCE Human Dimension Meeting, Warsaw, 21 September – 2 October, 2015**Working session 5: Tolerance and Non-Discrimination I****Statement by Austria, Croatia and Slovenia on women, peace and security**

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of Austria, Croatia and my own country, Slovenia, and we align ourselves with the statement made earlier on behalf of the EU.

This year we mark several anniversaries with regard to gender equality and women's rights, including the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Program of Action and the 15th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. In April 2014 also the OSCE contributed to the review and the Global Study on the implementation of resolution 1325 with a regional Conference and Consultations in Vilnius.

This landmark resolution comprehensively addresses all aspects of women in conflict situations – their participation at all levels in conflict prevention and resolution, protection of women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence and prevention of violence against women and girls, as well as the integration of a gender perspective into peacekeeping and peace-building. It is our belief that all these elements concern also the work of the OSCE in all three dimensions. Women, peace and security issues should not remain limited to the human dimension, the security and economic dimensions concern women to the same extent.

In order to find effective solutions to issues of peace and security, we must include women with their views and their ideas, and not only with regard to issues concerning women. Active participation of women in all phases of conflict prevention and resolution and at all levels of decision-making is important in the efforts to achieve sustainable peace and security. Women in OSCE region should play an equal role as men with regard to peace, security and stability and sustainable democracy and economic development. We also encourage the OSCE to give priority to appointing women in leadership positions.

It is also important that we pay full attention to the scourge of sexual and gender-based violence. Armed conflict and other crisis situations put women and girls at a much higher risk of becoming victims of sexual and gender-based violence or trafficking in human beings. The OSCE region is no exception. We are also extremely concerned by the rise of extremist and

terrorist violence particularly targeted against women. These alarming trends underscore the need to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in order to address the root causes of conflict-related sexual violence, transform harmful social norms and counter the rise of extremism.

OSCE participating States have on several occasions confirmed their commitment to gender equality, also to address the issues pertaining to the women, peace and security agenda. The 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality was the first step in the direction of making these commitments a reality. However, we consider that additional measures should be taken to comprehensively and effectively address women, peace and security issues in the three dimensions. Austria, Croatia and Slovenia would like to reiterate their support to the development of an OSCE-Wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.