



United States Mission to the OSCE

2015 Annual Evaluation Plan on the Promotion of Gender Equality

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
July 21, 2016

The United States thanks the Secretary General for his comprehensive report. We recognize the influential role that the empowerment of women can play in advancing international security, and we are committed to furthering this agenda. The concept is both simple and powerful: that we are all safer, that our efforts at peacebuilding are stronger, that constitutions and peace agreements are more inclusive, just, and lasting when women have a say in how societies rebuild peace and both prevent and recover from conflict.

This is an issue that the United States – including President Obama, Secretary Kerry, and other members of the cabinet – cares about deeply, and which we actively work to promote at home and abroad. In particular, the United States strongly supports UN Security Council Resolution 2422 on Women, Peace, and Security, and the seven resolutions that preceded it.

We agree with the Russian Federation that work on Resolution 1325 and related resolutions within the OSCE should not depend on overly broad interpretations of these resolutions. Nonetheless, we are convinced that there is valuable work for us to do within the OSCE and we look forward to working with others around this table to advance that work.

We incorporate gender considerations into our approach to peace processes, conflict prevention, the protection of civilians, and humanitarian assistance. We support women's participation in conflict prevention and stabilization programs. We are also investing in better training for diplomatic, defense and development experts, which is better preparing us for success in integrating gender considerations into our strategic planning, and increasingly we are requiring gender analyses in our resource planning. In this vein, the Department of Defense has sought to integrate women, peace, and security objectives into its policy, strategy, and planning. At the Department of State, we continue to elevate women's perspectives in the execution of foreign policy. And we are leading by example in reflecting the importance of women's leadership internally, with 35 percent of chiefs of mission now women – an improvement from the 10 percent level of 20 years ago.

Having reviewed the Secretary General's report, we are encouraged to see progress made in 2015 regarding the recruitment of women to professional positions and senior management jobs at the OSCE. However, much work remains, and we must all be more diligent in our efforts to put forward greater numbers of female nominees for seconded positions, including in senior roles, to make this Organization more effective. We share the view that none of this

can be accomplished if we do not devise a more systematic and strategic approach to advance gender equality in the OSCE's policies and operations, as well as to monitor and evaluate our progress in this regard. As members of the OSCE charged with security in our region, we are not faithfully advancing international peace and security if we are not doing everything possible to ensure that our work rises to meet the needs and perspectives of men and women alike in advancing a safer, more secure world.

We appreciate the frank assessment included in the report that more progress must be made on gender mainstreaming of OSCE policies, programs, projects, and activities. As noted in the report, the third dimension continues to account for the bulk of gender mainstreamed projects, with a deficit in the first and second dimensions. We look forward to further efforts to address this imbalance.

We applaud the focus in the report on establishing mentoring networks both within the OSCE and participating States. Such initiatives can serve to connect women in both the public and private sectors, and can hopefully lead to more women in leadership positions in the future.

Thank you again, Mr. Secretary General, for your report and for highlighting the important work that remains ahead for the OSCE and its participating States. Together, we can improve gender equality at the Organization and throughout the OSCE region, and thereby create more peaceful, stable, and secure societies.

Colleagues, one still unfinished element of our efforts to promote gender equality is adoption of the Decision on the Addendum to the 2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. The draft decision includes topics such as: taking a comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming; encouraging women's participation in conflict prevention; promoting equal opportunity for women in economic, social and cultural spheres; ensuring equal opportunity for the participation of women in political and public life; and preventing and combating violence against women. Adoption of this decision would be a significant sign of our commitment to the promotion of gender equality, which remains a key part of our comprehensive approach to security.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.