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**STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATIONS OF  
SWITZERLAND AND LIECHTENSTEIN AT THE MEETING OF THE  
PERMANENT COUNCIL**

25 September 2008

**Regarding the Annual Evaluation Report by the Secretary General on the  
implementation of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of  
Gender Equality**

Mr. Chairman,

The evaluation report by the Secretary General on the implementation of the Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality once again contains valuable and detailed information on the work carried out in this area. We particularly value the self-critical assessment of the progress made and the practice- and needs-oriented recommendations.

Both our delegations would like to comment on two points:

First. It is extremely useful and relevant for future priority-setting that the report notes the great differences that occur in the degree to which gender aspects are included in various OSCE activities. Evidently this point is scarcely taken into account in politico-military and economic and environmental projects, whereas in activities in the human dimension gender and the strengthening of women's rights are in the meantime firmly established. In view of this fact and the OSCE's obligations to promote equality, we believe that focused gender mainstreaming efforts need to be undertaken in the first and second dimension. We should like to encourage the OSCE, on the one hand, to make capacity-building for gender equality an annual goal for the field missions here, particularly in the politico-military field, and, on the other hand, to press ahead with the development of specific training modules and training sessions by the Gender Issues section for these areas.

Second. We remain convinced that gender focal points must occupy a relatively high position if they are to be able to assert themselves within the Organization's hierarchy and advance gender mainstreaming. We therefore welcomed the recommendation made in last year's report that senior officials in the executive structures and mission heads should place the gender focal point function at a sufficiently high level within the hierarchy. The most recent report now quite rightly goes a step further and gives the clear recommendation that in field missions the deputy head should be appointed the gender focal point.

Mr. Chairman,

We support this proposal as well as the idea that more men should be entrusted with gender mainstreaming activities. We are doing this not only in view of the underdeveloped and poorly institutionalized mainstreaming within the politico-military dimension but also because of the obligation of the OSCE and of its participating States to implement United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). With a view to focused monitoring, we should like next year's gender report to tell us how the recommendations were implemented, specifically those concerning gender balance and the level of the focal points in field missions.

The promotion of gender quality is continually progressing in the executive structures and field operations of the OSCE. What Switzerland and Liechtenstein — and other participating States too — would like to see is for gender equality to receive greater attention also at a political level, in terms of personnel decisions taken by the decision-making bodies.

Thank you for your attention.