



Statement on behalf of the European Union

**Open Debate at the Security Council
Fifteenth Anniversary and Global Review
On Women Peace and Security
United Nation Security Council Review 1325**

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**Statement delivered by
Mara Marinaki
European External Action Service
Principal Advisor on Gender and UNSCR 1325**

Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations

Check against delivery

The EU and its MS have a long-standing commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325, in our internal and external action.

As a security, development and political actor, the EU is heavily implicated in supporting conflict prevention, peace processes and addressing the consequences of conflict. From the 17 civilian and military missions that the EU has presently deployed worldwide, to the EU's role as a foremost global provider of development aid and humanitarian assistance, women, peace and security issues are a vital consideration in our external policies. The boundary between internal and external policies is increasingly blurred in a complex world. From terrorism to intensified refugee and migrant flows, it is vital that the symptoms – and root causes – of global challenges are tackled with firmness and fairness.

With this in mind, it is all the more important that we understand and embrace the role of women in conflict resolution and prevention. Women need to be heard as every step for women's rights, every victory on the status-quo, was hard fought –

and as Malala Yousafzai pointed out: "We realize the importance of our voices only when we are silenced"

We – and the international community – can undoubtedly do more to ensure that women's voices are heard – and acted upon. The HL Review gives the opportunity to assess progress and enhance implementation of the WPS agenda. For this reason, the EU has contributed actively to preparations for the Global Study. We welcome the work of Ms. Coomaraswamy and her team, as well as the Secretary-General's Report. The facts elaborated in the Global Study speak for themselves, not least the insight that - when women are at the peace table - the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least two years increases by 20 per cent, and 35 per cent over 15 years.

Therefore, the EU's approach to WPS is to ensure that the agenda aims to:

- **promote and protect the human rights of women** and their participation as positive agents of change, agents of peace and development, and
- **make conflict resolution and peacebuilding more effective,**
- while **we must also protect women in situations of conflict,** and prevent them from becoming victims or perpetrators.

In this context, our WPS action aims to fully integrate the gender perspective in the EU's peace building, conflict analysis and conflict resolution activities.

On top of our long-standing, active and continuous commitment, we intend to do even more and to **assume substantial financial commitments:**

To thoroughly mainstream gender and to include gender-specific actions in all the EU financial instruments, in order to cover *inter alia* mediation, natural resources and conflicts, security sector reform, early warning, post-conflict/disaster needs' assessment and police/civilian stabilisation missions. For this purpose, **we will allocate more than €100 million over the next 7 years to gender equality, women and girls' empowerment projects,** while in the context of the EU's humanitarian assistance, we will tailor responses to the different and specific needs of women and men of all ages, using targeted tools to assess how effectively all EU's humanitarian actions integrate gender and age.

We will continue prioritising our **cooperation with the UN system:**

- In the framework of our strategic partnership with **UN Women** under our Memorandum of Understanding, the EU will continue to support the UN Women in the area of WPS, including women's leadership and political participation, combating sexual and gender-based violence, and women's empowerment in global issues.

- We will also continue to support the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, **Zainab Bangura**, and all work aimed at an integrated approach to prevent and punish acts of sexual violence, as well as to bring justice, services and reparation to its victims. We commit to put EU's full weight behind the Istanbul Convention to fight violence against women, through prevention, protection and prosecution.

The EU will also encourage the enhancement of the gender dimension through **better synergies in the UN peace and security architecture** among all the UN Reviews.

- **We will continue to engage in close dialogue and actively support civil society** on issues concerning women in conflict and post-conflict situations, and to empower women's participation and leadership in peacebuilding initiatives, through our regular contacts with women's organisations and we will pay particular attention to the **protection of women human rights' defenders**, especially in situations of conflict.

We remain convinced that **coordination among the UN MS with international and regional organisations is key to the effective implementation of the WPS agenda**. In this context, we will strengthen our work together with regional and international organisations and civil society organisations.

The EU believes in holding first of all ourselves to the highest possible standards. Therefore, today we also commit that:

- **We will improve the way we measure the impact of our actions, in order to enhance accountability**. In this context:
 - **The EU will update the indicators** for its *Comprehensive Approach to Implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820*, to measure more effectively the impact of our action.
 - We are in the process to complete a baseline study to measure how we have integrated gender into our crisis management missions and operations.
- We must address the issues related to WPS in emerging challenges. The EU will actively coordinate its policies on WPS, and on preventing and countering violent extremism in all its forms. We condemn all forms of violence and abuses that women and girls have been suffering in the hands of terrorist groups and regimes in conflict zones, where terrorist groups fight their battles on the bodies of women and girls. We need to promote the positive role that women can play in countering terrorism and violent extremism in their families, their communities and their societies.

- **Promoting gender equality is also a priority for the EU internally**, and we are committed to lead by example to improve the gender balance in decision-making positions in our own institutions, including through a better representation of female candidates in middle and senior management positions and as Heads of Delegation in our missions abroad
- At the same time, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy **has already created last month the post of the Principal Adviser on Gender and the implementation of R1325 on WPS**, to mark EU's engagement with international, regional and national actors on gender- and WPS-related policies and actions; and to contribute to the EU's internal coordination, **where I have the honour and joy to have been appointed to this post** and I will work to enhance the visibility and effective prioritisation of gender and WPS in the EU's external action **and to assist the work of the UN, in close consultation with all UN services and agencies.**

Let me conclude by expressing the EU's expectation for an ambitious outcome of the High-level Review of UNSCR 1325. We hope that it will further raise awareness about the Resolution and its significant contribution to peace and security; that it will enhance the gender dimension of the UN peace and security architecture; and that it will give the WPS agenda more means for its effective implementation.

Based on the results of the Review - and as the European Union has done in the past 15 years –we will bring our full support to the WPS agenda, aiming to contribute to its accelerated and more effective implementation.