

**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
October 2014, Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Ms. Beham, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

I thank you, Madam President, for allowing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to participate in this important debate. I too would like to thank the briefers for their interesting and thought-provoking statements this morning.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe deals with early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. It has a uniquely broad concept of security that encompasses a wide set of areas that we believe influence the stability and security of a country. It is not just traditional security stemming from the security forces such as the police and the military that we address, but the politico-military dimension and aspects ranging from the economic and environmental to the human dimension, which includes the rule of law, legal reform and human rights.

In fact, as the OSCE Heads of State and Government endorsed in 2010, it is the inherent dignity of the individual that is at the core of comprehensive security. Thus, gender equality as a concept for ensuring the dignity of women and men is one of the cornerstones of our comprehensive security approach. That approach recognizes, as I already indicated, that security analysis should go beyond the traditional understanding of security and include aspects of economic rights, environmental security and human rights, including women's rights. In the OSCE, we therefore view gender equality as a basic concept for attaining security. That is where we believe the OSCE comprehensive security approach is largely congruent with resolution 1325 (2000), on the women and peace and security agenda.

I am here today as a representative of the OSCE, the world's largest regional security organization, with 57 participating States, stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok. As such, I would like to emphasize that we wholeheartedly support and try to proactively contribute to the ongoing process of strengthening the role of regional organizations under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

In an effort to strengthen the strategic partnership between the OSCE and the United Nations, we have developed, among many other things, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and in close coordination with the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons — whom we heard speak today — a handbook on a collaborative approach to addressing displacement and the protection of displaced populations and affected communities throughout the conflict cycle, from early warning and conflict prevention to crisis management, conflict resolution and post-conflict transition and rehabilitation. That so-called protection checklist has been fully gender mainstreamed and includes separate references to sexual and gender-based violence against displaced persons, in particular women and children. As its name says, the protection checklist offers very concrete operational instructions and recommendations for field staff on how to protect displaced populations and their rights, and it draws from the unfortunately rich experience of the OSCE and of course UNHCR in dealing with displacement.

Among the many lessons that we have learned from tackling displacement is that there has to be a special focus on the different experiences women and girls have in the various phases of the conflict cycle and that the different protection needs of women and girls have to be taken into account when responding to displacement situations.

Last week, the OSCE launched a study on national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the OSCE region, which we undertook in cooperation with the Peace Research Institute Oslo. The study looks into the 27 national action plans that exist among the 57 OSCE participating States and identifies good practices, lessons learned and challenges that still hamper the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

Although different protection issues feature high on the women and peace and security agenda, the national action plans that we studied focus mostly on the protection of women against sexual violence. Many of the national action plans in fact refer to protection against sexual violence as an important reason to create women and peace and security policies.

However, such an approach, as important as it is, reduces women to mere victims and does not take into account the many other significant provisions of the women and peace and security agenda that call for the participation of women in decision-making, conflict prevention and resolution and peace processes. It does not take into account the political and economic empowerment of women and the crucial role of women in rebuilding societies. Our study on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its follow-up resolutions indicates that States tend to disregard the empowerment aspect when designing their national action plans, in particular when it comes to the domestic security sector or the inclusion of women in conflict prevention measures such as early warning, confidence-building, dialogue facilitation, preventive diplomacy or mediation. On the basis of the study, we will work with OSCE participating States to improve that aspect. We have heard some of them today speak about their national action plans.

In an effort to strengthen the empowerment and conflict prevention elements of the women and peace and security agenda, to strengthen the linkage of formal mediation and dialogue facilitation with informal peace initiatives, and to ensure that women, including displaced women, become active stakeholders in peace processes, we published our Guidance Note on Enhancing Gender-Responsive Mediation in 2013 and are now working on its implementation.

In our most recent effort, the OSCE has again proven its commitment to the principles of the women and peace and security agenda in setting up its Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine as a response to the ongoing crisis there. The Mission includes a gender adviser in its core team at headquarters to assist with gender mainstreaming in conflict analysis, in addition to reaching out to women's groups from all sides. We have created a gender focal-point network in the teams that are deployed throughout the country. We also strive to increase gender balance among the monitors. Currently approximately 27 per cent of them are women.

Among other things, the Mission is monitoring the situation of the internally displaced persons (IDPs), of whom the majority are women, in order to ascertain what their needs are. We are also looking at ways to include women and women's organizations in the formal negotiations to put an end to the conflict. We have invited Ukrainian women to come to Vienna in November to meet with OSCE senior representatives to discuss the situation of women in the conflict, including as

IDPs, and their suggestions for resolving the crisis. We feel that it is of utmost importance that women now become part of the peace process in Ukraine and of any dialogue to settle the conflict and rebuild trust.

As we are approaching the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we need even more concerted efforts to further the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda. There has been much progress since the adoption of that ground-breaking document, but much also remains to be done. The OSCE will be happy to feed the findings of our study on national action plans into the global review of resolution 1325 (2000) led by UN-Women for the upcoming anniversary, and we will be pleased to contribute to that review by offering the results of our work on the gender aspects of violent extremism that leads to terrorism. Over the years, we have gathered unique expertise in that area, and we are proud to share it in order to improve the global fight against terrorism.

Regional organizations, such as the OSCE, working on the maintenance of international peace and security have a recognized role in promoting all aspects of resolution 1325 (2000) and its follow-up resolutions, which include the protection and empowerment of displaced women. But it is obvious that States have the primary responsibility for ensuring that the provisions of the women and peace and security agenda are translated into action. I strongly believe that an enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE will benefit our member States, as well as our Organization's efforts to strengthen the commitment to global peace and security.