

Swedish Delegation to the OSCE

Statement by Ambassador Krister Bringeus on Women's Role in Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management at the HDIM, September 27th 2005

Mr. Chairman/Madame Chair,

My Government's message here is a simple one. We need to do more for women as actors in Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management. Why? Why?

- More women in international missions leads to increased efficiency.
- More women in international missions strengthens the legitimacy of the operation.
- In particular, more women in international missions improves the possibilities to reach out to the whole population in the host country.

This is also to say, that so called gender issues should not be treated as a separate matter, but be incorporated in all policies and activities. The catchword is mainstreaming. This is - not the least - important in the OSCE.

You may recall that my Foreign Minister led a seminar in Vienna last June on this topic. Here is the report. You will find copies outside this hall.

The report contains some eleven concrete recommendations. Let me just highlight one. Our organization, the OSCE, should take a firm decision on implementing UNSCR 1325; 1325 being the international legal platform when it comes to women in Crisis Management. The essence of such a decision – the added value - should be to ensure that the spirit of 1325 in a consistent and hands on way penetrates the OSCE.

To this end, Sweden has put forward a concrete proposal for such a decision for the coming Ministerial Council in December asking for a comprehensive implementation of the 1325 with regard to recruitment and gender mainstreaming.

I take this opportunity invite you all to our side event right after this session on Sweden's own efforts to implement 1325!

Mr. Chairman/Madame Chair,

The starting point when we talk gender equality is obviously the OSCE Action Plan. We once again commend Ambassador Kongsheim of Norway for her skillful, persistent, approach seeing to that this plan materialized.

Now, the challenge ahead of us is to implement this plan.

Two problems: A lack of **political will**. A lack of **understanding** as regards equality and gender.

As I said, all participating States carry a responsibility, but in the organization it is the Secretary General and the Chairman-in-Office who must take the leadership role. The Secretary General's report in October on the implementation of the Action Plan will be crucial.

Here are some areas where the OSCE should do better:

Nomination. Recruitment. Training. Cooperation with the NGOs.

- **Nomination:** Participating States – including my own - must nominate qualified women for international missions. The reluctance by participating States to present female candidates is a problem.
- **Recruitment:** Increasing the number of women in the OSCE, both in field and in the Secretariat, could inspire and set examples for the participation of women in national and local decision-making bodies in conflict areas where the OSCE is present.
- **Training:** The awareness of gender equality and gender mainstreaming must be enhanced.
- **Cooperation with NGOs:** We have a great deal to learn from non-governmental organizations and other civil society representatives. We need to work together, state actors and NGOs, to ensure that actions are taken at all levels from the community and field levels to policy and legislative levels.

I thank you!