
Conference on Disarmament

22 September 2023

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Note Verbale dated 5 September 2023 from the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva transmitting the statement by the Delegation of Ukraine at the Conference on Disarmament thematic debates on Disarmament and Gender in the context of Women, Peace and Security, which was held on 23 May 2023

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and has the honour to submit the Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine at the Conference on Disarmament thematic debates on Disarmament and Gender in the context of Women, Peace and Security, which was held on 23 May 2023.

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine requests the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) that this Statement be issued as an official document (and Working Paper) of the 2023 CD session and included in the Appendix to the Final Report of the CD, as well as uploaded on the Conference's website.

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament the assurances of its highest consideration.

Annex

Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine at the panel discussion on Disarmament and Gender in the context of Women, Peace and Security, 23 May 2023, Geneva

Madame President,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ukraine aligned itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

We align ourselves as well with the cross-regional joint statement delivered by Colombia on behalf of the group of States.

At the same time, I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Madame President,

The Delegation of Ukraine appreciates your efforts and welcomes your decision to convene a panel discussion on Disarmament and Gender in the context of Women, Peace and Security. We thank all briefers for their comprehensive presentations.

Ukraine considers this topic a very timely one and meaningful, and recognizes the importance of exploring gender perspectives relevant to the substance of disarmament and the potential role of the Conference on Disarmament to advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Under the circumstances of ongoing russian aggression since 2014 women of Ukraine have been increasingly engaged in the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda guided by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and Ukraine's commitment to a gender equality policy. The WPS Agenda has always been of the utmost significance for Ukraine.

Ukraine adopted a National Action Plan on WPS and was the first United Nations Member State to do this during a full-scale war.

In December 2022 in order to promote further the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda Ukraine adopted its second National Action Plan until 2025. The revision of Ukraine's National action plan for Women, Peace and Security during an ongoing war of aggression was one of the clear examples of the WPS agenda in action.

Russia's war against Ukraine has made it clear that our second National Action Plan, required serious updates and adjustment to new security threats. Our commitment to implementing the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 remains the same, but our capabilities have been undermined by Russia's invasion.

Firstly, 2,8 million people, mostly women and children, have been forcibly transferred by the russian military to Russia.

Secondly, russian soldiers have used sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon and committed numerous war crimes against women and children.

Thirdly, due to the increased participation of women in the military, there is a growing number of women veterans. Compared to 2014, the number of female military personnel has increased by 2,5 times. (As of 1 March 2023, 60538 women are serving in the Armed Forces of Ukraine).

The second National Action Plan „Women, Peace, Security” addresses these and other challenges, including the expansion of the participation of women in the response process to armed aggression and post-war reconstruction, effective and timely assistance to victims of war-related sexual violence (CRSV), providing support for people who live in temporarily occupied territories, areas of hostilities, who are in captivity, forcibly deported to Russia or forced to flee abroad.

Ukraine adopted a number of legal acts to create conditions for the effective implementation of the National Action Plan. Ukraine ratified the Istanbul Convention; approved the State Strategy for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men for 2030; lifted all restrictions for female military personnel to any military specialties and military officer positions.

Madame President,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ukraine will exert every effort to ensure that sexual violence, such as the one committed by the Russian army in Ukraine, will never be used as a weapon of war anymore.

By signing the Framework of Cooperation with the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ukraine became the first country, which established an all-encompassing coordination mechanism for combating CRSV.

We have established the Interagency Working Group on Combating Sexual Violence Related to the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and Providing Assistance to Survivors. According to the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine, now more than 180 facts of CRSV committed by Russian militaries were documented, and we understand very well that this is only the tip of the iceberg.

Another essential step is getting political commitments and being on the frontline of international legal battle for justice. Ukraine supports international endeavors in this regard. I am delighted to note that Ukraine has joined the International Alliance on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative launched by the United Kingdom. We believe that strengthening cooperation between states, multilateral partners, civil society and survivors could be a crucial prerequisite for breaking a circle of impunity.

Madame President,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ukraine is convinced that implementation of the 1325 Resolution will only be effective if the national efforts of the Member States are complemented by cooperation within regional and sub-regional organizations. Ukraine welcomes the continued efforts of the European Union (EU) as a regional partner to strengthen the support for women peacebuilders, human rights defenders, activists, and gender equality advocates.

In conclusion, let me confirm our full commitment to furthering awareness and implementation of the Women Peace and Security Agenda, including in the Conference on Disarmament.

I thank you.
