



**Buantoscaireacht na hÉireann
don Eagraíocht um Comhoibriú agus Slándáil san Eoraip**
Permanent Mission of Ireland to the
Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe

Rotenturmstrasse 16-18
1010 Vienna
Austria

Remarks by Ireland at the joint FSC/PC on 8 March 2023

Ireland fully aligns with the statement of the EU and would like to add a few points in our national capacity. We would like to thank the OSCE and FSC chairs for placing the focus of today's meeting on Women, Peace and Security and the conflict cycle. This issue is both timely and relevant in the current context in which Russia is continuing to pursue a brutal unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. I would also like to thank the Secretary General for her leadership on WPS and today's speakers for their important contributions to this discussion.

Ireland has been a longstanding champion of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda including at the UN where it was a key priority for our membership of the Security Council in 2021-2022. Further work is required to ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation at all decision-making levels, however, we commend the OSCE for its work on WPS. In particular, the Toolkit entitled 'Inclusion of Women and Effective Peace Processes' provides concrete advice on increasing the inclusion of women in a meaningful way in efforts to achieve sustainable peace.

In Ireland, we have witnessed at first hand the transformative impact women have had on the Northern Ireland peace process, both in negotiating the political settlement and continuing the essential work of peacebuilding today. However, it is important to recognise that, while there is a powerful story to tell about women's engagement in the Northern Irish Peace Process, it is far from perfect. Women were neither institutionally supported nor intentionally involved in the process by any of the main parties to the negotiations. The women of Northern Ireland had to win their seats at the table through their own initiative and determination.

Research has shown that peace agreements that are brokered with the active participation of women tend to be better in terms of substance and are also more enduring. Women's full, equal and meaningful participation in the decision-making processes related to peace and security is not just desirable, it is essential. Ireland recognises and commends the key role that women play in Ukraine's armed forces illustrating the importance of implementation of the WPS agenda in armed forces at all stages of the conflict cycle and in representation, leadership and at all levels of decision-making.

The WPS Agenda is also critical in terms of understanding the differential impact of conflicts and crises on women which has been starkly illustrated by the war in Ukraine. We are horrified by reports of conflict-related sexual violence committed by the Russian Armed Forces in Ukraine, in particular against women and children. Those responsible must be held to account. Ireland strongly supports and is committed to a holistic and survivor centred approach to prevent and address sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence. This must include access to comprehensive health services, including sexual and reproductive health services.

Let me conclude by assuring the Government and people of Ukraine of Ireland's continued unwavering support for its sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

Thank you.