



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY  
TO THE OSCE

**STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO THE SECURITY DIALOGUE ON THE  
IMPACT OF ARMED CONFLICT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS**

As delivered by Military Advisor Colonel Bjørn Gaute Herlyng at the 1139<sup>th</sup> Forum for  
Security Cooperation,

Vienna, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2026

Thank you, Chair,

Norway aligns with the statement delivered by the European Union. Allow me to make  
a few remarks in our national capacity.

At the outset, allow me to thank you for bringing this important topic to today's Security  
Dialogue. I would also like to thank the panelists for their valuable insights.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has once again demonstrated that armed  
conflict affects women and girls, men and boys in different ways. While military  
conscription primarily impacts men and their families, men and boys also face  
heightened risks of injury, death, detention and psychological trauma.

At the same time, women and girls often experience distinct social and economic  
consequences. They are at increased risk of gender-based violence, including conflict-  
related sexual violence, trafficking, and exploitation. Many are forcibly displaced and  
take on expanded responsibilities as caregivers and providers, often under extremely  
difficult conditions.

Destruction of infrastructure, insecurity, and displacement limit access to schools and  
labor markets. Legal and structural barriers, such as lack of access to property rights,  
finance and documentation, can further restrict women's economic opportunities, both  
during and after conflict.

However, it is essential that we do not portray women solely as victims. Women are also  
leaders, providers, and agents of change. Across the OSCE region, we see women  
sustaining families, supporting local economies, and contributing actively to  
humanitarian response, peacebuilding and recovery efforts.

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To effectively strengthen the social and economic empowerment of women and girls, participating states must invest in local ownership, long-term capacity building, and inclusive approaches. Supporting local women's organizations is particularly important, as they have unique insight into community needs and play a key role in delivering assistance, building networks, and enabling participation.

In Ukraine, support to local women's organizations has demonstrated how the empowerment of women at the community level can strengthen both resilience and recovery efforts. Ensuring predictable, multi-year funding and supporting networks between organizations can enable women not only to respond to urgent needs, but also to take part in economic life and reconstruction processes.

From a Norwegian perspective, this approach is closely linked to our broader commitments under the Women, Peace and Security agenda, including support for women's rights, education, and economic participation. Strengthening women's access to livelihoods, financial resources, and decision-making arenas remains a priority. At the same time, efforts must also address the needs of men and boys affected by conflict, including reintegration, mental health support, and access to economic opportunities.

Women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding and recovery processes is not only a matter of rights, but of effectiveness. Evidence shows that peace processes are more sustainable when women are involved. Women contribute to community resilience, inclusive governance, and long-term stability. We must therefore work actively to remove barriers to their full, equal, and meaningful participation.

Mr Chair,

Promoting the rights, resources and representation of women and girls, while also addressing the needs of men and boys, is not only a matter of equality. It is a prerequisite for comprehensive and effective security policy.

Thank you.