



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Council Conclusions on promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in crisis management

*2760th GENERAL AFFAIRS Council meeting
Brussels, 13 November 2006*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council underlines the importance of promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the context of CFSP/ESDP at all levels. The Council expresses its determination to put in practice the decisions taken to promote gender equality in the context of ESDP and the related checklist, which seek to ensure gender mainstreaming and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) from the early planning to the conduct and evaluation of ESDP missions and operations.
2. The Council emphasises the importance of effective monitoring to ensure a systematic follow-up of the commitments made. Also the Generic Standards of Behaviour, inter alia, against sexual exploitation and prostitution should continue to be fully implemented by all ESDP missions and operations. Where not already in place, national measures, such as action plans for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by Member States as well as third states participating in ESDP operations, should also be encouraged.
3. The Council underscores the importance of improving gender balance in the ESDP operations, also at the senior-management level. The Council therefore invites the Member States to ensure that they nominate more female candidates for upcoming CFSP/ESDP assignments, including the posts of EU Special Representative and Head of Mission. The Member States are also invited to pursue active recruitment strategies and to identify and address specific obstacles limiting women's participation. Mission reports should include relevant statistics in this respect.

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4. The Council stresses that gender equality and human rights should be fully integrated in the planning and conduct of all ESDP missions and operations, including fact-finding missions. Gender awareness and sensitivity contribute generally to the operational effectiveness and situational awareness in standard assignments. Regarding certain tasks, such as checkpoints and outreach activities, it is of particular importance to include in the mission personnel both men and women. A gender adviser or a gender focal point should be appointed for all ESDP missions and operations. In this context, the Council welcomes the work of the gender adviser appointed to the EU's military operation EUFOR RD Congo. The Council notes that support for improved gender sensitivity must be assured throughout the chain of command.
5. The Council emphasizes the importance of training activities, tailored to the needs of the military and civilian personnel taking part in the ESDP operations, in particular on gender equality and human rights as well as gender-based violence, and encourages the Member States to intensify these training efforts. Such training should include those highest in command. A particular emphasis should be put on mission specific training. The Council encourages the development of public information campaigns and public material on women's and men's involvement in the security sector, including the military and police, in order to change stereotypes regarding women's participation, assignments and tasks.
6. Gender perspective needs to be fully integrated in peace building. All reconstruction efforts should draw on the knowledge and expertise of women's groups and networks within the community. The Council encourages the development of targeted EU activities to promote gender equality and the role of women in post-conflict situations. In this context, the Council stresses the importance of actively supporting women's participation in civic education and political processes, including right to vote and stand as candidates in elections.
7. The Council underlines that policies aimed at the protection and reintegration of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) / refugees should take gender issues into account.
8. The Council emphasizes that gender perspective should be incorporated in EU's policies and activities on Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR). DDR programmes should ensure that female combatants are identified and registered early and that both sexes can participate equally in these programmes. Women need to be ensured equal access to the assistance package to which they are eligible under the DDR programme and to be involved in economic reintegration activities.
9. The Council underlines the importance of addressing gender perspective in the context of rule of law activities. Gender equality could also be promoted in post conflict situations through legal reforms in the justice sector, *inter alia* through revising discriminatory laws, such as laws concerning inheritance, family relations, property and employment, and through empowering women to access rule of law and economic and social justice institutions.

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10. The Council emphasizes the importance of including measures against sexual and gender based violence in transitional justice mechanisms. All peace building and reconstruction plans should include comprehensive victim-protection and support mechanisms. The Council notes that the mandates of ESDP missions and operations could also address the possibilities to assist, if so requested, the ICC or other specialised courts and accountability mechanisms (e.g. truth commissions) in carrying out their work, including in cases relating to systematic sexual exploitation and gender based violence. In this context, the Council recalls that on 10 April 2006 the EU and the International Criminal Court (ICC) have concluded an agreement on cooperation and assistance. The Council also highlights the responsibility of all states to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for sexual and gender based violence."
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