



UNECE meeting on Beijing+15.

Oral Statement WILPF & FAS:
Critical Area E: Europe has a crucial role to play!

Thank you Chairperson,

We are gathered here these two days to prepare information and advices for the Commission on the Status of Women for their Beijing+15 Review and Appraisal. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom & Femmes Africa Solidarité would like to request your attention to one underrepresented Critical Area of the Beijing Platform of Action.

Critical Area E focuses on women and armed conflict and is of clear interest to the UNECE; economic prosperity is inextricably linked to peace and peace in its turn is inextricably linked to the equality between women and men. Furthermore, many UNECE Member States continue to deal with conflict and post-conflict situations.

We would like to recall the main Specific Objectives and recent developments:

- The first Specific Objective: To increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and to protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
Currently only 1 out of 10 European Security and Defense Missions is staffed by women¹ and women form a minority at peace negotiation tables all around the world.
- The second Specific Objective: To reduce excessive military expenditures and control the availability of armaments.
Almost fifteen years later we still have not seen sufficient disarmament, sufficient shifting of funds toward peaceful purposes or sufficient advancement of women. Still, recent developments allow us to step up to what we aimed for.
- (E.3): To promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations.
States need to invest in the United Nations as the only legitimate international forum to mitigate conflicts. The backlog of UN payments among UNECE Member States must be dealt with, in order to deal with

These three Specific Objectives can be linked to the most recent developments. The new Security Council Resolutions 1888 and 1889 further the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. Furthermore, on September the 14th the General Assembly adopted a resolution to bring together UNIFEM, DAW, OSAGI and INSTRAW into a new UN agency which will be led by a to-be appointed Under-Secretary General for Women.

¹ http://www.operation1325.se/images/stories/rapport_konsfordelningeu_eng2.pdf

Substantial funding, a strong mandate and the full support of Member States is necessary for this new Gender Agency and new Security Council Resolutions in order to achieve success and true implementation. We back the Committee on the Status of Women in urging Member States during their 52nd meeting to ensure allocation of adequate resources to target persistent obstacles to the advancement of women in armed conflict.

In the world today, 1464 billion dollars in total or 216 dollars per person are spent every year on weapons and military infrastructure². Arms build-up holds up resources needed for improved protection of human rights. Funds need to be reassigned from military purposes to further the advancement of women's issues, specifically in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Funds not used for military expenditures can be spent as demanded by the Security Council to ensure sufficient participation and protection of women; to bring perpetrators of sexual violence to justice, to ensure access to justice for conflict survivors and gather timely, objective, accurate and reliable information.

Thank you Chairperson.

² SIPRI Yearbook 2009