

56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the
Twenty-first Century

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Estonia

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... and the members of delegations and the civil society,

... on behalf of the European Union and would like to make the following comments in our national capacity as gender equality continues to be one of the priority areas of Estonia's activities in the field of human rights, both domestically and internationally. We remain committed to the principle of equality between women and men, established in the Estonian Constitution and the Law on the Equality of Women and Men, which dates back to the granting of women's suffrage in Estonia.

Madam Chair,

... the importance of gender equality and has carried out different activities and methods to promote it. Examples include equal pay day, which was established in 2007, and budgeting project, which aims to change attitudes of the traditional role of women in the household. As a result of those and other efforts at the end of 2011, Estonian Parliament has tasked our Government to prepare an action plan to reduce gender pay gap.

... Estonia has developed a national action plan that has enabled more coordinated approach to the violence prevention through the creation of network of government and non-governmental organisations. Another priority for our society has been the reconciliation of work and family life. Support measures, such as job centres and nurseries, are comprehensively dealt in the new Children and Families Development Plan, adopted by the Government last December.

Madam Chair,

... we have special programmes to improve the attractiveness of rural living and quality of life. The employment of women in rural areas is still much more significant problem among the women than it is among the men. To overcome this gap, the Estonian Rural Development Plan (2007-2015) has special indicators to promote gender equality. For example, the decision making on the financial support for small enterprises requires that in addition to the criteria of profitability of the project and market majority of women in the management is also taken duly into account.

... focus on the participation in international organisations, development co-operation and humanitarian aid. Estonia continues to advocate the incorporation of the gender dimension in all UN activities, so that our pledges for gender equality would become a reality. As women still amount to the largest group of victims in military and political conflicts, Estonia places great importance on the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 "women, peace and security". We are implementing our international cooperation in UN and support related activities in the UN bodies and regional organisations, where we are members.

Madam Chair,

... of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is the poverty reduction, the gender inequalities within the poor are worrisome and should not be overlooked.

Estonia contributes to gender equality and empowerment of women through UN programs and funds, including UN Women, UNEP, UNHCR and UNICEF, also through several humanitarian aid projects, most recently in Central African Republic, South Sudan and Chad.

Though UN documents are essential to improve the situation of women and girls, we all need to do more on the ground. In addition, bilaterally, Estonia has launched several development cooperation projects for women. In this context, I would like to refer to the particular expertise that we have gained in Afghanistan and in Georgia. In Afghanistan we work in Helmand Province on educating girls and on providing training for local women on midwifery and other first aid skills. In Georgia we mainly protect the team at eliminating gender-based violence. This has included support to a psycho-social rehabilitation centre in the war-ravaged region of Abkhazia and capacity building to prevent and tackle domestic violence.

For the conclusion, I would like to reconfirm that while being a member of the Committee on the Status of Women (C.S.W.) We continue to stay committed to the promotion of gender equality both domestically and internationally.

Thank you.

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