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### OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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To: Delegations

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Subject: Women, Peace and Security  
- Council conclusions (10 December 2018)

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Delegations will find attached the Council conclusions on Women, Peace and Security as adopted at the 3662nd meeting of the Council on 10 December 2018.

**COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY**

THE COUNCIL adopted the following Conclusions:

1. Gender equality and Human Rights are at the core of European values and constitute stand-alone priorities mainstreamed across all European Union policies. The Council recalls the commitments of the European Union and its Member States to the full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, which consists of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and its follow-up resolutions, ensuring that it is fully integrated into all EU efforts in support of sustainable peace, security, human rights, justice and development, in the context of EU cooperation with other regional and international organizations as envisaged by the EU Global Strategy. This shall be done by integrating gender perspectives into all EU policies, including security, conflict prevention and resolution, as well as long-term peace building. In this respect, the EU and its Member States support the implementation of the WPS agenda in the UN.
2. The Council welcomes the new EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security (EU Strategic Approach to WPS), which builds upon and replaces the 2008 Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security. The EU Strategic Approach to WPS emphasizes the need for concrete commitments and actions as well as the need to engage, empower, protect, and support women and girls in order to achieve sustainable and lasting peace and security as intrinsic components of human rights and sustainable development, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals and the Consensus for Development. In addition, the Council welcomes the approach of the WPS Agenda in addressing conflict-related sexual violence as part of a continuum of gender-based vulnerabilities and violence closely intertwined with persistent inequalities and broader attacks on gender equality, women's and girls' human rights, including online, digital and cyber violence.

3. The Council reaffirms that the WPS Agenda is to be given effect in all EU external action and as such is an important element of the Integrated Approach to external conflict and crises, given the challenges as laid out in the UN Global Study on UNSCR 1325. The Council recalls the commitment of the European Union and its Member States to continue to use gender analysis, collect disaggregated data (including but not necessarily limited to sex, age and disability) and mainstream gender perspectives as a key strategy, together with gender balance and specific actions to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, throughout all relevant policy frameworks including in the areas of foreign and security policy, development, trade, finance, humanitarian aid, migration, justice and education, as well as preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism.
4. The EU Strategic Approach to WPS identifies actions under the key areas of prevention, protection, relief and recovery and under the two overarching and cross-cutting aspects of gender mainstreaming and participation. These actions are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. The Council also welcomes that the diversity and intersecting elements of identities are acknowledged in the EU Strategic Approach to WPS including the emphasis put on its implementation by and for the benefit of all. In this context, it is important to continue to engage men and boys as positive agents for change.
5. The Council affirms that the implementation of the EU Strategic Approach to WPS should be achieved through political and diplomatic engagement of EU leadership, enabling women's equitable and meaningful participation in all EU external action, not only on topics of women's rights, but all action including on peace and security.

6. The Council reaffirms that the WPS Agenda aims to ensure that the rights, agency, and protection of women and girls are always observed and upheld before, during and after conflict. Thus, the WPS Agenda is universally applicable and must therefore be implemented internally within the European Union and its Member States, as well as in the external action so that actions can be coherent, credible and impactful. This will be achieved by integrating a gender perspective and women's participation in all contexts, from conflict analysis to subsequent actions, including dialogue facilitation, mediation, peace negotiations and other conflict prevention and resolution tools. It will also be achieved by implementing specific measures, including training of military and police forces, aimed at gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
7. The Council recalls that the responsibility for the implementation of the WPS Agenda lies with the Member States as well as all other European Union actors, including the European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Delegations, the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and WPS, the Commission services, EU Special Representatives, and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations, which is crucial in the promotion and implementation of the EU Strategic Approach to WPS. It is important that the EU Strategic Approach to WPS is implemented by entities maintaining links with the EU, such as contractors or organisations funded by the European Union. The Council underlines the importance of reflecting the EU Strategic Approach to WPS in the development of National Action Plans by Member States.
8. The Council welcomes the complementarity and synergies between the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP II) and the EU Strategic Approach to WPS. The Council underlines that the EU Strategic Approach to WPS and GAP II are both relevant policy frameworks for eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence that women and girls suffer from. Furthermore, the Council encourages the EEAS and the Commission services to continue to explore simplified, user-friendly and effective ways of measuring, monitoring, evaluating and reporting progress in this area.

9. The Council further looks forward to the establishment of a concise, specific, measurable and achievable Action Plan by the first quarter of 2019 for the effective implementation and promotion of the EU Strategic Approach to WPS. This Action Plan is to be synchronised with the GAP II.
10. The Council welcomes the prospect of strengthening and establishing partnerships and alliances with other international, multilateral and regional organisations, and in particular, the proposal to establish formalised platforms for cooperation at all levels. These should include the setting-up of appropriate fora to exchange experiences, best practices and foster interaction amongst practitioners, including gender advisors and WPS focal points, as well as supporting existing networks of women mediators for the effective and sustainable implementation of the EU Strategic Approach to WPS.
11. The Council welcomes the inclusive process followed for the preparation and drafting of the EU Strategic Approach on WPS through dialogue with Commission services, EU Member States, Gender Advisors from the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations, civil society partners, representatives of academia and other multilateral and regional partners. An inclusive approach should remain as the standard working practice also for future drafting processes.
12. The Council underlines the importance of the close engagement and cooperation with third countries, partners, and civil society, including local, regional and international civil society organisations, grassroots activists and women's rights organisations, at all stages of implementation of the EU Strategic Approach to WPS and throughout the policy cycle, from design to evaluation. Such cooperation should take place in an inclusive and objective manner.
13. The Council invites the High Representative to come back to report on the activities and progress of the EU Informal Taskforce on Women, Peace and Security and on the most effective ways and concrete steps to achieve the overarching EU objectives on gender equality, women's empowerment and the full implementation of the WPS agenda.

**EEAS, November 2018**  
**EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security**  
**2018**

**Executive Summary**

The EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security was prepared at the request of the Member States of the European Union and coordinated by the European External Action Service (EEAS) in consultation with all relevant stakeholders at the EU institutional level. It represents the EU's ever-lasting commitment and efforts to the effective implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and its follow up resolutions, on gender equality and women's empowerment. The EU Strategic Approach incorporates expertise, best practices and lessons learned from across the field and it is intended to nourish all stages of this endeavour which will lead to more concrete and holistic actions to strengthen and implement the WPS agenda, both internally and in all the EU's external relations. It also demonstrates how the WPS is reinforced by all EU policy frameworks on gender equality.

Gender equality is a principle that flows through the engagements of all EU Institutions in all their internal and external activities and it is mainstreamed throughout the different stages of EU policies, strategies, action plans and projects on development, humanitarian aid, education, migration, etc.

The EU Strategic Approach recognizes gender equality and women's empowerment as a prerequisite for dealing with the conflict cycle (prevention, management and resolution); it analyses and provides examples of EU activities and it also sets out the means for the most effective implementation of the WPS agenda.

The EU Strategic Approach provides a solid basis for realising equality between women and men - a fundamental value of the European Union - by engaging, empowering, protecting, and supporting women and girls to achieve peace and security.

The EU Strategic Approach emphasises the importance of women’s leadership and agency in all areas of policy and programming related to peace and security. It aims to ensure that women and girls from diverse and variable backgrounds are entitled to participate equitably and substantially in preventing and resolving conflicts, and in preventing conflict-related violence, including all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. Furthermore, the EU Strategic Approach engages men and boys as positive agents for change, addressing the need to address and transform gender stereotypes and societal exclusion mechanisms.

The first part of the document sets out the basic principles of the EU Strategic Approach to the WPS agenda. It highlights the universality of the WPS, its binding character to be implemented by all EU actors and all Member States, as well as in all interactions with non-EU countries. It also establishes the foundational components of gender mainstreaming, participation, prevention, protection and relief and recovery. The centrality of gender analysis and the mainstreaming of gender perspective are firmly emphasized together with the reinforcement of the EU normative frameworks on full equality between men and women.

The second part identifies specific areas where enhanced implementation of the WPS agenda is required, including –among others- the strengthening of local, national and regional ownerships, capacity building and training as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting procedures.

The following aspects of the EU Strategic Approach are fundamental:

- The emphasis on women's leadership, rights and agency in all areas of policy and programming related to peace and security, acknowledging the roles that women, men, girls and boys from diverse and variable backgrounds play in furthering peace and gender equality and in preventing and resolving violent conflict, as well as the prevention of all forms of violence including sexual and gender-based violence. This applies to peace- and decision-making processes in all EU external instruments, including CSDP missions and operations, and all policy areas.
- The commitment to analyse and address gendered root causes of conflict and of gender inequality, inside and outside the EU, at the early planning of all EU external actions.
- Full support (political and financial) to local, national, and international civil society organisations, including women's groups and grassroots activists, who help build peace, challenge violent gender norms and prevent sexual and gender-based violence, will be central to EU success in this field. This includes EU engagement with CSOs where women are in leadership roles, define strategy formulation, promote local ownership and contribute to building national capacities.
- The commitment to systematically integrate a gender perspective, based on gender analysis, into all fields and activities in the domain of peace and security, including all political and strategic dialogues, human rights dialogues, all related policy formulations and policy-making processes, research, analysis and assessment, planning and conduct, as well as the relevant monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes.

- Gender equality as a key objective of all EU external action, including, but not limited to, development, preventing and countering violent extremism, counterterrorism and migration.
- Systematic integration of a gender perspective into all EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding interventions/mechanisms, as well as into the EU requirements for implementing partners. Ensure that potentially different situations, experiences and needs of women and men, girls and boys from diverse backgrounds are taken into account throughout the project cycle.

In this way, the EU Strategic Approach places the WPS Agenda at the centre of the full spectrum of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, as an essential tool in ensuring that the rights, agency and protection of women and girls are observed and upheld at all times, and to confirm that a meaningful and equitable role in decision-making is secured for women of all ages during all stages of conflict prevention, peace-making, peacebuilding and post-conflict rehabilitation.

## Introduction

1. Equality between men and women is one of the EU's foundational values under the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU<sup>1</sup>, which specifically prohibits discrimination. The Gender action plan for 2016-2020 (GAP II<sup>2</sup>) states that the EU must promote equality between men and women in all its activities and must ensure that this requirement is implemented in all policy areas. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA, 1995<sup>3</sup>) states that gender balance and mainstreaming of a gender perspective are key to achieving gender equality. The Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW<sup>4</sup>) provides the basis for making equality between women and men a reality by ensuring that women have equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life, as well as education, health and employment. The EU's policy on the global, regional and national implementation of the 'women, peace and security' agenda (WPS Agenda<sup>5</sup>) is fully consistent with the values and obligations set out in these instruments.

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<sup>1</sup> Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2012/C 326/02), (OJ C 326/391 of 26.10.2012).

<sup>2</sup> Gender equality and women's empowerment: Transforming the lives of girls and women through EU external relations 2016-2020, (SWD(2015) 182 final), 21 September 2015 (the EU Gender Action Plan for 2016-2020' (GAP II)) GAP II sets out the requirements of implementing EU commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment with partner countries and in all EU external relations. It covers Commission and European External Action Service (EEAS) activities involving partner countries, especially in developing, enlargement and neighbourhood countries, including in fragile, post-conflict and emergency situations, as well as action undertaken by the EU Member States.

[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/150921\\_final\\_swd\\_gap.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/150921_final_swd_gap.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for equality, development and peace in 1995. Conference Declaration: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations resolution 34/180, adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly.

<sup>5</sup> According to the EU informal Task Force on women, peace and security, the following UNSCRs are included when referring to the work on the WPS Agenda; UNSCR 1325 (2000), 1820 (2009), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2010), 1960 (2011), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2272 (2016) and 2331 (2016).

2. The global strategy for the EU's foreign and security policy (Global Strategy<sup>6</sup>) reaffirms that the EU recognises and will promote the role of women in peace efforts, including the need for women's leadership, from implementing the UN Security Council resolutions on WPS to improving the EU's internal gender balance. The Global Strategy also aims to increase women's participation in foreign policy-making. Furthermore, the European Council has agreed that WPS, as well as gender equality and women's empowerment, should continue to be mainstreamed into all policy areas when implementing the Global Strategy. This includes the areas of security and defence, investing in the resilience of states and societies and developing an integrated approach to conflicts and crises<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Council of the European Union. A Global Strategy for the European Union's foreign and security policy (10715/16), 28.6.2016.

<sup>7</sup> The integrated approach is introduced in the EU Global Strategy. EEAS (June 2016). Shared vision, common action. A stronger Europe: A Global Strategy for the European Union's foreign and security policy.

3. In the European Consensus on Development<sup>8</sup>, the EU and its Member States recognise women and girls as key agents of development and change, including their roles in peacebuilding, conflict resolution and humanitarian response. Similarly, the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid<sup>9</sup> highlights the importance of integrating gender considerations into humanitarian aid and recognises that the active participation of women in humanitarian aid is essential, and that the EU commits to promoting this involvement. The Consensus on Humanitarian Aid also states that protection strategies against sexual and gender-based violence must be incorporated into all aspects of humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, the Consensus on Development<sup>10</sup> commits the EU and its Member States to addressing all aspects of preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, and to supporting women as positive agents for conflict prevention, conflict resolution, relief and recovery and building sustainable peace. Finally, the Consensus on Development asserts that the EU and its Member States will ensure that a gender perspective is systematically integrated into all policies. This will help achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development<sup>11</sup> and the sustainable development goals (SDGs), including SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies. Based on all these commitments, the EU will accelerate its efforts to achieve gender equality and empower women for example by ensuring and enabling the influential and active participation of women and women's organisations in decision-making.

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<sup>8</sup> The new European Consensus on Development 'Our world, our dignity, our future'. Joint statement by the Council and the representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission (OJ C 210 of 30.6.2017, p. 1) (the European Consensus on Development). The European Consensus on Development identifies gender equality and women's empowerment as a critical cross-cutting issue of EU development cooperation. Agenda 2030 has put gender equality firmly at the centre of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), not only through the stand-alone SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 16 on peaceful societies, but also as a cross-cutting element central to the achievement of all 17 SDGs.

[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/european-consensus-on-development-final-20170626\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/european-consensus-on-development-final-20170626_en.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Joint Statement by the Council and the Representatives of the governments of the Member States meeting within the Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission: The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (2008/C 25/01), 30.1.2008.

<sup>10</sup> See footnote 8.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1.

## Understanding the ‘Women, Peace and Security’ (WPS) agenda

4. The new EU Strategic Approach to WPS (henceforth to be called the Strategic Approach) sets out the basic principles and priorities of the EU’s policy on WPS, its overall objectives, common definitions and the EU’s common approach to its implementation. This ensures coherence between and within the various EU external action instruments as well as continuity in external action such as conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction and development. Furthermore, the Strategic Approach provides guidance on how to ensure that the EU’s external action fully respects the EU’s comprehensive policy framework on gender equality, women’s empowerment and WPS. It involves all relevant EU actors in its implementation: the High Representative/Vice President of the European Commission, assisted by the European External Action Service (EEAS) (including the EU delegations); the relevant services of the European Commission; the common security and defence policy (CSDP) missions and operations; and the EU Special Representatives. In addition, all actors with whom the EU maintains links, such as contractors, EU-funded organisations and implementing partners, are expected to respect the Strategic Approach to the greatest extent possible.

5. The WPS Agenda, consisting of UNSCR 1325 (2000) and its follow-up UNSC Resolutions<sup>12</sup>, broadens the scope of traditional security policy by highlighting the importance of the gender dimension in peace and security. As such, it embodies and catalyses an important paradigm shift in how security and peace should be achieved and sustained. It focuses not only on protecting women and girls from conflict-related violence but also on women's right to participate in decision-making processes. The WPS Agenda stresses that gender equality is embedded in peace and security issues, and that gender perspectives are integral to peace and security. In addition, it states that addressing the gender-related root causes of violence is critical to preventing conflicts.
6. The WPS Agenda strives to cover all aspects of the connection between gender and conflict but its relevance is not limited to conflict situations. It aims to ensure that the rights, agency<sup>13</sup> and protection of women and girls are observed and upheld before, during, and after conflict, and that a meaningful and equitable role in decision-making is secured for women of all ages during all stages of peace making and peacebuilding. Therefore, the WPS Agenda is centrally placed in the full spectrum of the EU's common foreign and security policy<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> The following UNSCRs are included when referring to work on the WPS Agenda within the implementation of the new EU Strategic Approach to WPS; UNSCR 1325 (2000), 1820 (2009), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2010), 1960 (2011), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2272 (2016) and 2331 (2016).

<sup>13</sup> The World Bank defines agency as an individual's (or group's) ability to make effective choices and to transform those choices into desired outcomes. Agency can be understood as the process through which women and men use their endowments and take advantage of economic opportunities to achieve desired outcomes. Promoting women's agency, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2012/Resources/7778105-1299699968583/7786210-1315936222006/chapter-4.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Including, but not limited to, early warning, conflict prevention, mediation, conflict resolution and reconciliation, crisis response and stabilisation, state building/security sector reform, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, preventing and countering violent extremism and terrorism, humanitarian and development assistance and political engagement in relation to situations of conflict and fragility.

7. The WPS Agenda is universally applicable and must therefore be implemented by all EU actors and all Member States, as well as in the framework of interactions with non-EU countries. This commitment must be respected and consistently pursued also in the context of bilateral cooperation and in international forums. Endorsing both the internal and external dimensions of the WPS Agenda is necessary for internal and external EU policy to be coherent and, therefore, for credible and impactful EU external action. The WPS Agenda will be realised by integrating a gender perspective into all peace and security analysis and subsequent actions and by implementing specific measures that support gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
8. The WPS Agenda calls for systematically incorporating gender considerations into peace and security-related matters. It addresses the importance of women's meaningful and equitable participation in all forms of conflict prevention, not just those directly related to women or gender-related matters. This includes conflict resolution, mediation, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and humanitarian response and post-conflict reconstruction, including demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration and security sector reform. The WPS Agenda also emphasises the need to prevent and protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence. It considers that sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity or an act of genocide (under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court<sup>15</sup>). Thus, the WPS Agenda focuses on victims' rights to justice and redress for sexual and gender-based violence and stresses the importance of ending impunity for such crimes. Furthermore, it gives every person who has suffered due to sexual violence, including children born out of rape, the right to access comprehensive healthcare information and healthcare services. This includes access to reproductive health, justice and reparations and the right to safety and to not being re-victimised, rejected or ostracised.

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<sup>15</sup> Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The Statute was adopted on 17 July 1998 by the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the establishment of an International Criminal Court. It entered into force on 01 July 2002.

9. Although the EU's comprehensive approach to implementing UNSCRs 1325 and 182016 has led to success stories and an increased focus by the EU on gender equality in its efforts on conflict prevention, resolution and crisis management, there is still much to be done through: the robust engagement at EU senior level, women's meaningful participation in these processes and the systematic integration of the gender perspective throughout all policy areas. For example, the aim of all EU Member States to have a National Action Plan (NAP) that addresses internal as well as external dimensions of the WPS Agenda, allocate a specific budget, and provides for parliamentary oversight, is not yet realised. Furthermore, key policy areas for external action inter alia preventing and countering violent extremism (PCVE), counterterrorism (CT) and general issues relating to migration remain prioritised areas for enhanced action.
10. The roles of many women, particularly young women, in society continue to be restricted. While women's security and safety remain the key objectives, an exclusive focus on protection potentially reinforces the exclusive perception of women and girls as passive victims of conflict and overlooks gender-related root causes of violence. While it is important to acknowledge and address women's and girls' differentiated experiences of conflict, including sexual and gender-based violence, it is imperative to support their peacebuilding work and engage them as actors and agents for peace. However, women should not automatically be assumed to be peacemakers, as they play diverse roles in conflict and can also be combatants and perpetrators of violence. A differentiated approach to conflict is necessary.

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<sup>16</sup> Comprehensive Approach to the EU's implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security (15671/1/08 REV 1), 01 December 2008 (the Comprehensive Approach to EU implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on WPS).

11. While the ultimate responsibility for implementing the WPS Agenda rests with EU Member States, all EU actors, including delegations, play an important role, in line with the EU Strategic Approach to WPS.
12. This document draws on lessons learned and experience from the comprehensive approach to the EU's implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on WPS, as well as from lessons learned and experience gathered from the EU Member States, partners and civil society organisations.
13. The EU is committed to continuing to act as a global leader when it comes to fully implementing the WPS Agenda. It is also committed to analysing the gender-related root causes of conflict and the root causes of gender inequality, and to facilitating and supporting the transformation of norms that fuel conflict and gender inequalities.

### **Key objectives and requirements**

14. The EU Strategic Approach to WPS emphasises the importance of women's leadership and agency in all areas of policy and programming related to peace and security. It ensures that women and girls from diverse backgrounds are entitled to equitably and substantially participate in preventing and resolving conflict, and in preventing conflict-related violence, including all forms of sexual and gender-based violence. Furthermore, the EU Strategic Approach to WPS also engages men and boys as positive agents for change, addressing the need to address and transform gender stereotypes and societal exclusion mechanisms.
15. The EU will promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights of all women and girls and will empower women and girls in accordance with its values and principles. This is an intrinsic component of peace, security, human rights and sustainable development, also in light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its sustainable development goals.

16. This includes:

- a. Emphasising that gender equality, human rights and women’s meaningful and equitable participation is a central objective of all EU external action. This includes understanding and addressing structural inequalities in programming and engaging men and boys as well as women and girls in programming design, decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- b. Encouraging and supporting the building and safeguarding of the political will and commitment to implement the WPS Agenda in non-EU countries in which the EU and its Member States are engaged.
- c. Continuing efforts to understand the reasons underlying violence and discrimination against women and to reduce all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls within and outside the EU, while emphasising women’s agency over victimhood as a first step to engaging meaningfully and equitably with women from fragile settings.
- d. Promoting the elimination of all harmful practices, in particular female genital mutilation which constitutes a severe breach of human rights and a violation of women’s physical integrity, as well as child, early and forced marriage<sup>17</sup>.
- e. Securing adequate and accessible funding for conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives throughout the world, including for long-term approaches to conflict transformation.

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<sup>17</sup> With reference to Sustainable Development Goal/SDG 5.3.

- f. Guaranteeing women’s meaningful and equitable participation in peace and decision-making processes in the context of all EU external instruments, as well as in EU common security and defence policy missions and operations, while avoiding gender-stereotypical expectations of male and female roles.
- g. Establishing a common EU understanding and plan for WPS priorities and focus areas based on the main opportunities and challenges in implementation, ownership and leadership. The Strategic Approach strives for coherence, synergies and complementarity across the implementing structures at the EU and Member State levels, including in the implementation of the EU Gender Action Plan for 2016-2020 (GAP II<sup>18</sup>).
- h. Supporting and enabling the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 to effectively contribute to and coordinate the implementation of the EU Strategic Approach to WPS.
- i. Promoting engagement on positive masculinity<sup>19</sup> and supporting activities that challenge gender stereotypes.
- j. Investing in gender-sensitive youth peacebuilding<sup>20</sup> work focused on both young women and young men. Promoting positive, gender-equitable and non-violent masculinity, an essential step towards fostering peaceful and inclusive societies. Youth is a vital phase when young people’s views of themselves are shaped, and families, elders, educators, religious leaders and peers all exert great influence.

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<sup>18</sup> As well as the continuation of GAP II, after the final evaluation of GAP II implementation, as requested by the GAP II itself, which will form the basis for the continuation of GAP II.

<sup>19</sup> The term ‘positive masculinity’ means behaviours and models that broaden the stereotypical image of masculinity as e.g. hard, violent or non-emotional. Positive masculinity contributes to deconstructing gender stereotypes and thus removing gender inequalities in social structures.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2250 (2016) and 2419 (2018) on youth, peace and security.

- k. Providing transparent and inclusive political and financial support to local grassroots civil society organisations, including local women’s groups, movements and initiatives whose aim is peacebuilding, and challenging those gender norms which favour violence in a way that is adapted to the needs of the civil society actors and beneficiaries concerned.
- l. Actively engaging civil society organisations, including women’s rights organisations and local and international women’s groups, throughout the policy cycle (from design to evaluation) as opposed to a ‘tick-the-box’ exercise for consultation or implementation only.
- m. Increasing support for identifying and addressing the gender-related drivers of fragility and violent and armed conflict. To date, research on gender and peacebuilding has focused primarily on the gender-related impacts of violent conflict, but relatively little attention has been given to the gender-related drivers and root causes of violent and armed conflict. An example is the key understanding of how gender norms and roles feed into conflict, as is focusing more deeply on the interplay between different intersecting elements of identities such as age, race, ethnicity, nationality, social class, sexual orientation, ability, religion or belief, urban/rural setting and gender.
- n. Addressing challenges linked to institutional approaches to gender mainstreaming, including resistance, lack of understanding and training, and maintenance of the status quo.
- o. Avoiding instrumentalisation by recognising women’s rights in their own right, while ensuring that all programming is evaluated against, and shows verifiable contributions to, gender equality.
- p. Acknowledging that women, men, girls and boys all play important roles in achieving peace, security and gender equality.

## Principles of the EU Strategic Approach to WPS

### Combining internal and external policy

17. The WPS Agenda is universally applicable and therefore must be systematically implemented by all EU actors and Member States, both in their internal (e.g. domestic, judicial and human resources) and external (e.g. foreign and security, trade, and migration) policies, programmes and actions.
18. Many national frameworks for implementing the WPS Agenda in the EU, such as national action plans and equivalent strategic documents, are perceived as leaning more towards external implementation, particularly in conflict-related situations such as conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Whether voluntary or involuntary, this overshadows an important aspect of WPS, the fact that the overwhelming majority of issues involved have a direct domestic application. There are many practical examples that illustrate the internal relevance of the WPS Agenda, from supporting domestic women's organisations and movements, including refugee and migrant women associations and human rights defenders, to making it possible for them to engage with the WPS Agenda<sup>21</sup>. Other examples include integration of a gender perspective into early warning systems and structures to strengthen the link between the WPS Agenda and for example counterterrorism and countering violent extremism agendas and partnerships with domestic civil society actors, the private sector and academia. In addition, the national action plans rely on Member States' internal commitments to implementing gender equality in line with relevant EU policies, for example gender equality in national security forces (police, armies, etc.).
19. The EU will ensure that the protection of refugees, internally displaced people, stateless people and asylum seekers meets the different gender-related protection needs of women, men, girls and boys.

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<sup>21</sup> For example, funding, effective consultations and participation in the monitoring of implementation.

## **Applying a holistic perspective**

20. The common EU understanding is based on the recognition of the fact that women and men fulfil many diverse roles in their communities and across the peace and conflict cycle.
21. Gender equality, peace, security, development and human rights are closely linked. This means that the EU must continue to prioritise conflict prevention as one of several ways to prevent conflict-related and calamitous security, economic, environmental and social consequences of violent conflict on women, men, boys and girls. Preventing violence against women and girls, including but not limited to sexual and gender-based violence, is important in its own right but is also a critical component of conflict prevention, because understanding the root causes of this violence provides an evidence base from which to contribute both to women's rights and empowerment and to conflict prevention.

22. Not only is there a need to protect women in conflict situations and promote their participation in all aspects of peace and security, including peacebuilding, there is also a need to ensure that these actions are supported by wider development considerations, such as the promotion of women's rights, economic security and access to healthcare services, including the right to access reproductive health and education. This is particularly important in light of the long-term negative impact that violent conflict has on a country's or region's development and the need to plan for human security as the basic condition for attaining long-term peace and development<sup>22</sup>. All EU policy frameworks<sup>23</sup> related to gender equality and women's empowerment are linked with the WPS Agenda, and, therefore, the Agenda must guide how work addressing these issues is organised, carried out and followed up.
23. Gender equality is a central objective of all EU external action, including development, preventing and countering violent extremism, counterterrorism and migration. This ensures that women and girls in conflict-affected and fragile settings can fully participate in their societies' political, economic, security and social life. It is a prerequisite of sustainable development and peace.
24. The EU will engage, empower, protect and support women and girls in conflict-related situations and through long-term development cooperation, with the aim of achieving gender equality. It recognises that gender equality is an intrinsic component of peace, security, human rights and sustainable development, including in light of the sustainable development goals. It will ensure that the first step of any action is based on gender analysis and early engagement with and inclusion of all participants and beneficiaries.

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<sup>22</sup> Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Capacity building in support of security and development — Enabling partners to prevent and manage crisis, (JOIN (2015) 17 final), 28.4.2015.

<sup>23</sup> Including: (i) the EU Gender Action Plan for 2016-2020 (GAP II) (see footnote 1); (ii) Commission Staff Working Document on Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019 (SWD (2015) 278 final), 3 December 2015; (iii) the Global Strategy for the EU's foreign and security policy (see footnote 3); (iv) the new European Consensus on Development (see footnote 4); (v) the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Action plan on human rights and democracy. 'Keeping human rights at the heart of the EU agenda' (JOIN (2015) 16 final), 28 April 2015.

25. The EU Strategic Approach to WPS identifies actions under the key areas of prevention, protection, relief and recovery, grouped under two overarching areas: gender mainstreaming and participation. These actions are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. For example, the meaningful and equitable participation of women in decision-making will contribute to breaking the continuum of violence and discrimination against women and girls and vice versa.
26. The EU Strategic Approach to WPS and its implementation is rights-based. It encompasses all human rights while additionally pursuing a needs-based approach to humanitarian aid.

### **Gender mainstreaming**

27. As agreed in the Beijing Platform for Action, mainstreaming the gender perspective is a key strategy for achieving equality between women and men. In line with the EU comprehensive policy framework and primarily the 2016-2019 Strategic Engagement on gender equality<sup>24</sup> and the EU Gender Action Plan II, gender analysis and a gender perspective should be systematically integrated into all EU action aiming to prevent conflict and respond to threats faced by civilians before, during and after conflict. Gender analysis is a foundation of effective conflict prevention, stabilisation, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction, governance and institution building. Moreover, a strengthened commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in the EU's activities can improve their efficiency and effectiveness. Neglecting to carry out gender analysis and to integrate a gender perspective would negatively impact on the EU's leading role as a gender equality promoter and catalyst.

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<sup>24</sup> Commission staff working document: Strategic engagement for gender equality 2016-2019 [SWD(2015) 278 final], 03 December 2015.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Ensure that all EU actions involving non-EU countries are based on a conflict and gender analysis and consider the power relationships between different parts of the population, including women and men, within both formal and informal institutions in the society.
- Integrate a gender perspective into all EU actions, i.e. take into account the different needs, experiences and rights of women, men, girls and boys of all ages and from diverse backgrounds. This is to ensure that EU action does not generate additional harm in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.
- Promote gender mainstreaming as a key strategy, together with gender balance, specific actions and dialogue, to achieve gender equality. Do this by integrating a gender perspective into all policy frameworks, including common foreign and security policy, development, trade, migration, justice, education, preventing and countering violent extremism, counterterrorism, finance and humanitarian policies.
- Acknowledge and promote the fact that gender mainstreaming and the implementation of the WPS Agenda are recognised as formal leadership and managerial responsibilities, with clear accountability lines.
- Actively promote and support the building of women's and men's skills and capabilities related to conducting gender analysis and integrate a gender perspective throughout all planning, programme and conduct cycles.
- Systematically integrate a gender perspective, based on gender analysis, into all fields and activities in the domain of peace and security, including all political and diplomatic dialogues, human rights dialogues, all related policy formulation and policy-making processes, research, analysis and assessment, planning and conduct as well as monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes.
- Systematically reflect WPS perspectives in the design and implementation of the EU's integrated approach to conflict and crisis.

- Systematically integrate a gender perspective into all aspects of conflict prevention and sustaining peace to reinforce context-specific, inclusive and participatory approaches to: conflict analysis, early warning, mediation, preventive diplomacy, crisis management, stabilisation and humanitarian interventions, peacemaking, peacebuilding and development cooperation, the promotion and protection of human rights as well as to strengthening community, state and societal level resilience. This should also be required from implementing partners.
- Systematically integrate a gender perspective into EU action that aims to support non-EU countries' defence and security sector reform, justice sector reform, transitional justice initiatives, governance reform, demobilisation and reintegration, stabilisation, state building, civil protection, counterterrorism and the prevention of radicalisation leading to violent extremism and terrorism, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, arms trade, migration, the protection of refugees, internally displaced persons and asylum seekers, trafficking in human beings, and humanitarian work, including the reinforcement of human security.
- Systematically integrate a gender perspective into trade in and with conflict-affected situations and/or where there are serious violations of human rights and International humanitarian law. This applies particularly to trade in natural resources, including conflict minerals.
- Ensure that the particular situations and specific priorities, capacities, needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls are prioritised and addressed when responding to fragile and conflict-affected situations and in development cooperation and humanitarian response. Do this for example by ensuring access to comprehensive health information and services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare services.

- Systematically integrate a gender perspective as a core element of planning and conducting common security and defence policy missions and operations and humanitarian response, including into (humanitarian) civil-military coordination.
- Ensure that all common security and defence policy missions and operations deployed in fragile and conflict-affected situations and in humanitarian emergencies and civil protection interventions include sufficient capacity and resources to integrate a gender perspective, through accountability processes and the inclusion and adequate resourcing of gender expertise in the form of gender advisors and gender focal points. Moreover, ensure that all EU-deployed military and civilian personnel are sufficiently trained on gender equality and WPS from induction, specifically on how to integrate a gender perspective into their responsibilities and tasks.
- Promote an interactive dialogue and mutual learning process on gender mainstreaming among policymakers, practitioners and scholars.
- Systematically integrate a gender perspective into research in the domain of peace and security. This includes the systematic collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data.
- Systematically integrate a gender perspective into all EU-funded conflict prevention and peacebuilding interventions, as well as into requirements for implementing partners. Ensure that potentially different situations, experiences and needs of women and men, girls and boys from diverse backgrounds are taken into account throughout the project cycle.

## Participation

28. Equal and meaningful participation of women and girls, men and boys from a range of backgrounds (e.g. economic, social, ethnic, religious, geographic) in politics, the economy and society is both an objective in its own right and a prerequisite of peace, security and sustainable development. Gender equality is therefore an integral, not peripheral, objective of EU action.
29. When addressing societies, EU actions should engage women from diverse backgrounds with a full range of political, economic, security and social questions. Women are often expected to speak with one voice, as if they were a homogeneous group, rather than expressing the wide range of experiences, fields of expertise and opinions one would expect from any diverse group of people with different interests, aspirations, ideals, values, motivations and needs. While (some) women may be consulted, too many are (still) excluded from any meaningful and equitable decision-making processes, locally, nationally, regionally and internationally. In the confined cases where women's voices have been listened to and considered, this has too often been limited to so-called 'women's issues', often addressing the aftermath of sexual and gender-based violence. It has also often been restricted to certain groups of elite urban women, with limited constituencies.
30. Gender equality and women's empowerment supported by enhanced participation of women in the EU's conflict and crisis prevention structures, and across EU institutions, is a priority. The EU's internal gender balance should be addressed in parallel to the implementation of specific gender equality measures and the integration of gender perspectives across all EU actions abroad, and in all engagements with civil society, particularly in conflict- and crisis affected areas.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Support women's leadership and participation in all stages of peace processes both through diplomacy and financial support. The EU will strive to include and enable the participation of more women as mediators, chief negotiators and political representatives, including within its own structures. Recognising that women's peace efforts at the local and national levels are critical for conflict resolution, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, the EU will support these initiatives, including at the grassroots level.
- Promote gender equality and diversity by recruiting, retaining, appointing and supporting the career development of more women at all levels. This must aim to achieve a gender balance, including at senior and decision-making levels, in national, regional and international institutions working in the peace and security area.
- Promote the meaningful and equitable participation of women security (military/police) personnel in security/military operations, including common security and defence policy missions and operations, without re-enforcing gender stereotypes of the expectations of women and men.
- Identify and remove barriers to women's and men's equal participation in EU delegations and common security and defence policy missions and operations, for example by promoting family duty stations and flexible working hours where applicable.
- Enable and promote the meaningful and equitable participation of women from diverse backgrounds by establishing participatory mechanisms throughout the project and programme cycles. These mechanisms are to inform the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of protection policies and responses, as well as of conflict-relevant development cooperation interventions.

- Promote and support women’s right to participate in public affairs and their right to freedom of peaceful assembly, expression and association.
- Promote participation, partnerships and networking with civil society, in particular women’s organisations, including grassroots organisations and movements, human rights defenders, peace activists, indigenous peoples and economic actors through appropriate consultation mechanisms. This is to ensure their participation and to draw on their knowledge, capacities and comparative advantages.
- Monitor and counteract tendencies of shrinking space for civil society including women’s organisations, activists and human rights defenders<sup>25</sup>. Take specific steps to protect them, making sure to avoid doing harm in the process, acknowledging that they may be subject to gender-specific forms of intimidation by state and social actors, in person as well as through social media. Promote the involvement of youth, religious, traditional and cultural leaders, including men and boys, in all aspects of implementing the EU Strategic Approach to WPS.
- Promote initiatives to address structural obstacles to women’s meaningful and equitable participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in post-conflict public life. These initiatives should address factors of (threats of) violence and intimidation, insufficient and gender-biased security, the rule of law, access to justice and socioeconomic factors including the unequal gender-related distribution of care roles and responsibilities and lack of access to education.
- Promote a balanced representation of women and men from diverse backgrounds, including at senior and decision-making levels, in national diplomatic services, bodies of representative democracy, ministries of defence, armed forces, the rule of law and other security sector institutions, as well as in the EU institutions.

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<sup>25</sup> Ensuring protection — European Union Guidelines on human rights defenders (doc. 16332/2/08).

## Prevention

31. Inequalities and exclusion from access to power, opportunities, services and security creates fertile ground for mobilising group grievances to violence, especially in areas with weak state capacity or legitimacy or in the context of human rights abuses. Gender-responsive early warning and conflict analysis that pays greater attention to the gender-related root causes of violence make conflict prevention more effective. Inclusion is key to conflict prevention in institutions and development policies, and to providing human security and justice. Preventive actions should adopt rights-based (encompassing all human rights), people-centred and whole-of-society approaches that include citizen engagement.
32. Since a shrinking civic space might have a disproportionately negative effect on women and girls, it needs to be countered to prevent the restriction of women's rights.

33. Mediation efforts that involve only armed groups and do not promote respect for human rights may send a signal that violence is rewarded. In addition to generating resentment within other sectors of society, this could encourage others to take up arms in order to secure a place at the negotiating table. Civil society actors can play a critical role in increasing the legitimacy of a peace process and are potentially important allies. Women leaders and women's groups are often effective in peacemaking at community levels and should therefore be strongly linked to the high-level mediation process. In addition, women's access to leadership within civil society may be a challenge. The EU should therefore support the meaningful participation of inclusive civil society and women's associations in peace processes.
34. Climate change, biodiversity loss, land degradation, desertification and drought are drivers of conflict which can particularly affect women as they are too often disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As key providers of daily livelihood, as farmers and educators, women can use their voices and influence to accelerate lasting transformational solutions for sustainable development and shape equitable policies and resource allocation. Empowering women as drivers of economic growth strengthens societal resilience.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Promote gender equality and women's empowerment systematically and in the long term in stages of fragility, conflict, relief and recovery. Furthermore, the EU will maintain its focus on gender-related root causes throughout its implementation of the WPS Agenda, and will continue to address prevention in parallel to response.
- Support efforts that address the root causes of violence, such as exclusion, discrimination, structural inequalities and sexual and gender-based violence including violence against women and girls.
- Support inclusive civil society initiatives at the community, national, regional and global levels to build sustainable peace and to transform gender-based inequalities. Also support initiatives that aim to challenge and transform socialised gender norms and stereotypes.

- Ensure that gender analysis is systematically integrated into the EU's early warning system for conflict and into other current and future concepts of and approaches to early warning and conflict analysis and related indicators.
- Support and promote prevention of and victim-centred responses to sexual and gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse that could occur in the crisis context or arise from or within security, military, development or humanitarian operations. Support and promote risk mitigation in this area.
- Ensure that there are inclusive mechanisms that will allow greater coherence, effectiveness and synergy to be achieved: (i) among the various stakeholders, including states, international and regional organisations and civil society organisations; and (ii) in the various tools and instruments used in prevention, in particular diplomacy, including both bilateral and multilateral mediation, early warning, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction, security and development.
- Support locally initiated and locally owned gender-responsive prevention activities undertaken by local or national actors. Promote inclusive and transparent processes.
- Empower communities to be resilient to violent conflict. Women's meaningful and equitable participation is both critical for effective prevention policies and their implementation, and to sustaining peace at all levels. Transparency and access to information should be ensured to the largest extent possible.
- Promote gender analysis and the systematic integration of gender perspectives into all mediation and conflict prevention activities.

## Protection

35. The experiences and actions of women, men, girls and boys from diverse backgrounds in the context of armed conflict, prevention, protection, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and reconstruction are sometimes similar and sometimes different. This must be analysed, assessed and addressed to ensure adequate and sufficient response from EU actors. Women, men, girls and boys all face risks of trafficking. Although women and girls face a higher risk of sexual violence, of becoming the domestic and sexual slaves of combatants and of being forced into marriages, men and boys can also be targeted as victims of such violence. In addition, men and boys may face further risks of forced recruitment and targeted killings.
36. Women are not only victims of war and violence. They also play diverse roles as, for example, combatants, peace builders, politicians, economic actors and activists. The equal participation of women and men is both an essential end and a way to prevent and resolve conflicts and promote a culture of inclusive and sustainable peace. Women, men, girls and boys have often become targets, sometimes on a massive scale, of sexual and gender-based violence, and used as means to political, economic or military ends. There are multiple ways in which violence against women and girls evolves and worsens during and after conflict, increasing their risk of experiencing physical, psychological, sexual and structural violence within their own homes and in the public sphere. Despite prohibitions in international humanitarian, human rights and criminal law, crimes of sexual and gender-based violence committed in the context of inter- and intra-state conflict remain largely unchecked and impunity for these crimes needs to be addressed.

37. Although men and boys can also be victims, sexual and gender-based violence disproportionately affects women of all ages across every phase of the peace and conflict continuum (although this is often exacerbated during violent conflict). Women are at risk of violence in both the public and the private sphere. The closing of civic spaces, and in particular the silencing of the voices of women in general and of women and men who do not conform to society's social norms, can be an indicator of sexual and gender-based violence. Hate speech, threats, defamation campaigns, repression and violence against human rights defenders can manifest itself in different ways linked to sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, age, ethnicity, class, religion or belief, among others.
38. The reach of the internet, the rapid spread of communications technologies, and the wide diffusion of social media have presented new opportunities for women to make their voices heard and to raise awareness on a number of issues. However, while technology may have the power to connect and empower, it can also reinforce and normalise gender roles and cultural customs and create new pathways for violence and abuse. The online world is not just a mirror image, but a 'hall of mirrors' of the offline world, reflecting and amplifying the positive and negative. For women and girls, this mirror image often reflects a culture of misogyny, marginalisation and violence.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Continue to promote full respect of international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls in conflict, especially as civilians.
- Continue to implement the following: (i) ‘EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them’; (ii) ‘EU Guidelines on promoting compliance with international humanitarian law<sup>26</sup>’; (iii) ‘Ensuring protection — European Union guidelines on human rights defenders<sup>27</sup>’; and (iv) ‘EU human rights guidelines on freedom of expression online and offline<sup>28</sup>’.
- Promote a system-wide approach to preventing, reporting and punishing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse<sup>29</sup> (SEA) and sexual harassment<sup>30</sup>.
- Promote the protection of the physical and mental health and dignity of women, girls, men and boys, in particular in fragile and conflict-affected situations, humanitarian emergencies and post-conflict settings, including by putting in place mechanisms that implement and monitor protection commitments.
- Adopt, implement and promote internal and external policies of zero tolerance to discrimination, sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking in human beings, sexual assault and sexual harassment. Ensure that adopting related policies is considered a formal leadership responsibility<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> EU Guidelines on promoting compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL) — Technical update (doc. 16841/09).

<sup>27</sup> Ensuring protection — European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders (doc. 16332/2/08).

<sup>28</sup> EU Human Rights Guidelines on Freedom of Expression Online and Offline (doc. 9647/14).

<sup>29</sup> In line with UN standards (ST/SGB/2003/13). Sexual exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another; while sexual abuse means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

<sup>30</sup> The European Commission policy on protecting the dignity of the person and preventing psychological harassment and sexual harassment C(2006) 1624/3, applicable also for EEAS.

<sup>31</sup> ST 6877 2018 INIT, Upgraded Generic Standards of Behaviour for CSDP Missions and Operations.

- Support women, men, girls and boys who are survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and their families, in accessing justice and due remedy, including healthcare information and services and psychosocial support to prevent their (re)stigmatisation and (re)victimisation and to facilitate their safety and reintegration.
- Promote efforts that aim to end impunity for crimes of sexual and gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence. This includes but is not limited to supporting gender-sensitive transitional justice processes and building capacity of law enforcement and justice system practitioners to handle cases in a gender-sensitive way, as set out in the EU's transitional justice framework<sup>32</sup>.
- Implement the 'Non-paper on ending sexual violence in conflict — A guide to practical actions at EU level<sup>33</sup>'.
- Pay specific attention to the human rights of children, young and older people, those living in poverty, people with visible and non-visible disabilities, people belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced people and asylum seekers in vulnerable situations/contexts.

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<sup>32</sup> European Commission. Joint staff working document: The EU's framework on support to transitional justice (SWD(2015) 158 final), 29.7.2015.

<sup>33</sup> The 'Non Paper on ending sexual violence in conflict — A Guide to practical actions at EU level' (MD 155/14), 25.11.2014.

- Enforce a prevention-based zero-tolerance policy for all forms of sexual and gender-based violence committed by EU staff or staff deployed in common security and defence missions and operations, as well as commanders/managers, contractors and partners. Whenever the EU deploys staff, including in common security and defence policy missions/operations and humanitarian interventions, it will ensure that clear instructions have been provided to this effect and that proper structures are in place to enforce this policy, including through a robust reporting mechanism, complaint mechanism for victims and accountability and sanctions for perpetrators.
- Ensure that children born out of rape are considered eligible for citizenship and support. Combat the stigma associated with this type of sexual violence surrounding women who have been raped and their children, also long after the crime took place. Continue to support the parents who raise these children.
- Implement improved protection measures for women and girls when analysis and assessment show that this is required, for example for political candidates, human rights defenders and civil society organisation activists.

- Address conflict-related sexual violence as part of a continuum of gender-based violence closely intertwined with persistent inequalities and broader attacks on gender equality and women’s human rights, including, but not limited to, digital and cyber violence.
- Promote humanitarian gender- and gender-based violence standards and guidelines, including for instance the Inter-agency standing committee (IASC) gender-based violence guidelines<sup>34</sup> and the IASC Gender Handbook<sup>35</sup>, as well as the work of the Call to action on protection from gender-based violence in emergencies<sup>36</sup>.
- Promote implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, with particular attention paid to Article 7(4<sup>37</sup>) requiring states to take into account the risk of arms or other items being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence.

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<sup>34</sup> Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC): Guidelines for integrating gender-based violence interventions in humanitarian action. 2015. ([https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-IASC-Gender-based-Violence-Guidelines\\_lo-res.pdf](https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-IASC-Gender-based-Violence-Guidelines_lo-res.pdf)).

<sup>35</sup> Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC): The Gender Handbook for humanitarian action. 2017. [https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/communities/sites/jrccties/files/2018-iasc\\_gender\\_handbook\\_for\\_humanitarian\\_action\\_eng\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/communities/sites/jrccties/files/2018-iasc_gender_handbook_for_humanitarian_action_eng_0.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> The Call to Action on protection from gender-based violence in emergencies (Call to Action) is a multi-stakeholder initiative to fundamentally transform the way gender-based violence is addressed in humanitarian emergencies. The EU (through Commission services for European civil protection and humanitarian aid operations, DG ECHO) is an active partner of the Call to Action initiative since its creation in 2013. The EU also took on the responsibilities of being the global lead of the initiative in 2017-2018.

<sup>37</sup> ‘The exporting State Party, in making this assessment, shall take into account the risk of the conventional arms covered under Article 2 (1) or of the items covered under Article 3 or Article 4 being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.’

## Relief and Recovery

39. The relief and recovery pillar of the WPS Agenda focuses on ensuring that relief, recovery and reconstruction are inclusive and takes into account the specific needs of women and girls. Special attention is paid to the most vulnerable groups taking part in processes linked to peacebuilding, such as repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction. This includes displaced women and girls, survivors of gender-based violence, older people, people with disabilities, minorities and indigenous peoples.
40. The relief and recovery pillar also calls for more efforts to support women's active participation and activities in relief and recovery efforts, including providing women with equal access to livelihood opportunities and justice. Women and women's organisations delivering humanitarian assistance are often the first responders to crisis situations. However, women's leadership and priorities are often excluded from humanitarian- and development-related decision-making, programming, planning and budgets.
41. Relief, recovery and reconstruction may be a unique window of opportunity to transform discriminatory social structures and to promote women's human rights, participation and meaningful engagement.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Promote women's participation and leadership in humanitarian action and development programmes, in both formal and informal decision-making and priority setting spaces.
- Promote initiatives that strengthen links across WPS, relief, rehabilitation, resettlement, reconstruction and sustainable development policies, including support for gender mainstreaming in humanitarian and development aid. This includes women's and girls' equal and safe access to development assistance and encompasses sexual and reproductive comprehensive health information and healthcare services.

- Ensure that every person who has suffered from sexual or gender-based violence has the right and access to comprehensive healthcare information and services, justice and reparations. Ensure that victims are not re-victimised, rejected or ostracised.
- Ensure that all organisations receiving EU funding and support comply with EU gender equality policies including a rights-based approach and gender-based violence minimum standards and guidelines.
- Support psychosocial initiatives for all survivors of violent conflict irrespective of their roles: women, girls, men, boys and older people.
- Support the relief, recovery and rehabilitation of women and girls affected by conflict, also within the EU. This includes ensuring that asylum law, policies and procedures respect and guarantee that all women, girls and all gender-based violence survivors benefit from equal rights and standards during proceedings.
- Continue to promote justice systems in non-EU countries where the EU conducts support action, in line with best standards. This is to strengthen national criminal jurisdictions in line with the principle of complementarity with the International Criminal Court, for example gender-sensitive transitional justice mechanisms and processes.
- Ensure, through adequate resourcing, that women are at the centre of humanitarian response, relief and recovery work and of development assistance and programming. They must be included in the design, planning and implementation of relief, recovery and reconstruction activities and be consulted about needs at the beginning of each emergency.

- Ensure that policy development and implementation builds on grassroots experience of facilitating substantial change and on progress made during the relief and recovery phase. Ensure that inclusive civil society and women’s associations participate meaningfully and equitably in all phases of the cycle, including in donor conferences<sup>38</sup>, which help build partnerships.
- Ensure that crisis preparedness and post-disaster and post-conflict recovery planning and action, including the training of government officials and civil society organisations, are based on a gender-inclusive and participatory approach, taking due account of the gender impact of risks assessment (Gender Index of Risk<sup>39</sup>).

### **Normative framework on equality between women and men**

42. Equality between women and men is a fundamental human right, a common value of the EU enshrined in EU policy frameworks and a necessary condition for the achievement of objectives related to eliminating poverty, increasing growth, employment and social cohesion and promoting peace and security. It is also included in international obligations and commitments, such as the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, the Beijing Platform for Action, Agenda 2030 for sustainable development and the European Consensus for Development. The EU’s common foreign and security policy objectives form the principles that guide work in this area.

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<sup>38</sup> In the reconstruction phase, there is an opportunity to facilitate greater gender equality using a rights-based approach, for example in relation to economic development, access to land and natural resources.

<sup>39</sup> Service for foreign policy instruments — Instrument contributing to stability and peace. Manual of indicators for the instrument contributing to stability and peace — IcSP. [https://ec.europa.eu/fpi/key-documents\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/fpi/key-documents_en)

Therefore, the EU will:

- Continue to monitor follow-up to the Beijing platform for action and in particular the critical area concerning women and armed conflict.
- Continue to promote the ratification and implementation of key UN human rights instruments and their optional protocols, particularly the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) and its optional protocol and to strengthen the link between CEDAW and the WPS Agenda through General Recommendations (GR) 30 and 35.
- Continue to strongly support the International Criminal Court (ICC), especially in the domain of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, in order to foster accountability and combat impunity. The ICC is the world's first and only permanent international criminal court for the investigation and prosecution of the most serious crimes.
- Continue to support work undertaken by the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals and other international tribunals.
- Continue to implement its policy set out in the 'EU Guidelines on promoting compliance with international humanitarian law', with particular attention paid to respecting the prohibition of rape and other forms of sexual violence.
- Continue to implement the 'youth, peace and security' agenda, as set out in UNSCRs 2250 and 2419. This includes addressing (persistent) inequalities that put young women and men at particular risk and paying particular attention to increasing the inclusive representation of young women in conflict prevention and resolution.

## **Strengthening local, national and regional ownership**

43. An inclusive peace process is more likely to identify and address the root causes of conflict and ensure that the needs of the affected sectors of the population are addressed. Therefore, strengthening local, national and regional ownership while ensuring consultation and cooperation with local stakeholders, including civil society, is vital. Inclusivity also increases the legitimacy and national ownership of a peace agreement and its implementation. In addition, it reduces the likelihood of excluded actors undermining the process. An inclusive process does not imply that all stakeholders participate directly in the formal negotiations, but can facilitate the interaction between the conflict parties and other stakeholders and create mechanisms to include all perspectives in the process. Specific mechanisms may be required to ensure that women peacebuilders and women's organisations are meaningfully included in the process.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Support capacity-building for and information sharing between partners and non-EU countries, including national gender mechanisms and institutions.
- Consult women's organisations, women peacebuilders and human rights' defenders and support their inclusion in, and -where relevant- leadership of, formal and informal peace processes.
- Ensure that the EU meaningfully and equitably engages with inclusive civil society organisations, that is, civil society organisations in which women play leadership roles, contribute to strategy, and in which different women's voices are heard and represented on the range of issues facing the society.
- Ensure support for international and regional non-governmental organisations that promote local ownership and inclusion and contribute to building national capacities.

## **Strengthening cooperation and dialogue with other actors**

44. Cooperation with international actors is critical to implement the WPS Agenda effectively and to avoid duplication of efforts and competition over resources. Cooperation is also needed to share analysis, lessons learned and resources, as well as to ensure coherence between programmes' output and policy development at global, regional and national levels. It is important that dialogue between different actors is conducted at all levels (local, national, regional and international), as well as between them, and that it includes civil society. It is also important that international organisations do not compete with local civil society organisations when those civil society organisations can provide similar input into policy or programmes (for example the production of studies).

Therefore, the EU will:

- Promote inclusive partnerships and improved sharing of experiences, lessons learned and best practices among all stakeholders on all aspects of implementing the WPS Agenda. This includes identifying joint interests, particularly taking into account challenges and opportunities encountered.
- Continue to work together with relevant international and regional organisations, particularly the UN but also others such as: the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organisation of American States (OAS), the G20, the G7, the African Union (AU), the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Union for the Mediterranean (UFM). Also continue to work together with other regional organisations willing to advance work towards gender equality, peace and security while building on existing initiatives and experience, with the aim of creating synergies in situations where the EU and UN or other international organisations play significant roles.

- Promote and support the initiative of the WPS national focal points, which serve as a cross-regional forum and provide space to exchange experiences and best practices to advance implementation of the Security Council resolutions on WPS and to improve coordination of funding and assistance programmes.
- Promote and support the initiative on regional acceleration of UNSC Resolution 1325 (RAR1325), which is aimed primarily at technical level exchanges among gender advisors and other practitioners in multilateral and regional organisations. It aims to create a forum that improves the implementation of the WPS Agenda and to promote synergies between participants from the EU, UN, NATO, AU and OSCE.
- Promote and encourage inclusive practices that aim to improve coherence, coordination and efficiency.
- Promote dialogue between civil society organisations and the EU, coordinated by the EEAS and in non-EU countries coordinated by EU delegations.

## **Supportive measures**

### **Political Support to implementation the WPS Agenda effectively**

45. Implementing the WPS Agenda in an effective way means taking a holistic approach. It is of utmost importance that exclusionary approaches and those based on silos are transformed into inclusive and comprehensive ways of engaging and working. There is still limited understanding and sometimes limited acceptance of this. Therefore, implementation of the WPS Agenda must be supported by the strongest possible political leadership and commitment.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Promote the implementation of the WPS Agenda in all contexts, including multilateral fora and bilateral engagement, through political and human rights dialogues, partnerships, declarations, multilateral exchanges, communications and joint statements with partner countries.
- Ensure the continued effective implementation of the WPS Agenda within the EU by implementing and monitoring the EU strategic approach to WPS, the strategic engagement on gender equality and the EU Gender action plan II.
- Promote and support implementation of the WPS Agenda through the mandate of the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.
- Incorporate a coherent approach to gender and WPS into EU common foreign and security policy, and promote it.
- Promote understanding of and creative thinking on the WPS Agenda, including in the broader public sphere.
- Ensure that the WPS Agenda is a key theme of political and diplomatic engagement on emerging challenges and on situations of crisis, fragility, conflict and post-conflict, bearing in mind the priority of preventive diplomacy in relation to all such situations.
- Promote enhanced and inclusive cooperation on WPS implementation with all stakeholders, including national governments, legislative bodies, national human rights institutions, gender equality bodies, local authorities, civil society actors, non-state actors, the private sector, development actors, humanitarian actors and international and regional organisations.

- Promote the implementation of international standards of gender-responsive mediation support. Continue to consider peace processes as opportunities to promote women's empowerment, gender equality, gender mainstreaming, the meaningful and equitable participation of women and respect for women's rights in negotiations and the resulting peace agreements.
- Ensure that all involved in EU mediation address these issues during peace pre-negotiations and negotiations and that they seek to ensure their integration and prioritisation in the subsequent peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction phase, including via sufficiently resourced gender expertise positions in all EU mediation interventions.
- Ensure that all EU deployments to fragile and conflict-affected situations and humanitarian emergencies include sufficient capacity to implement the WPS Agenda, including via the participation of adequately resourced gender experts and advisors in all common security and defence missions and operations, EU delegations and EU Special Representatives. Ensure that all EU-deployed military and civilian personnel, including personnel holding senior positions, are sufficiently trained on gender equality and WPS and more specifically on how to integrate a gender perspective into their respective activities.

## Funding and resourcing

46. Funding is necessary to make gender mainstreaming, gender balance and other specific actions to achieve gender equality possible. In light of this and based on numerous evaluations and reports<sup>40</sup>, the global lack of and/or limited funding remains a main obstacle to the effective implementation of the WPS Agenda. Both in the EU and globally, funding is needed for projects/programmes with gender equality and WPS as their main objective, as well as for the mainstreaming of gender aspects and perspectives into other projects/programmes. The lack of resources, including in-house capacity building, for work on gender equality and implementing the WPS Agenda remains a key challenge and therefore must be addressed. Moreover, an enabling macroeconomic environment is needed to tackle the root causes of gender inequality.

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<sup>40</sup> Goldberg, D. B. (2015). Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Survey for the global study on women, peace and security: CSO perspectives on UNSCR 1325 implementation 15 years after adoption. The Global Network of women peacebuilders.  
<http://peacewomen.org/sites/default/files/CSO%20Survey%20Report%20FINAL.pdf>  
Coomaraswamy, R., & UN Women. (2015). Preventing conflict, transforming justice, securing the peace: a global study on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325. (<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/UNW-GLOBAL-STUDY-1325-2015.pdf>)  
United Nations Development Program. (n.d.). Trust Fund Factsheet — Global Acceleration Instrument. (<http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00>).

47. Meaningful and lasting progress requires a rights-based approach to ensure that women not only acquire skills and assets but exercise choice and control over opportunities and resources, and are able to shape economic decision-making at all levels. Specific attention will be paid to women's roles and positions within the formal and informal economies. The work of implementing the WPS Agenda, including in conflict and post-conflict countries, has long been under-resourced. Direct, reliable and predictable funding delivered through flexible grants or long-term financing can make a difference in creating the conditions for grassroots movements and civil society organisations to implement the WPS Agenda.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Work to include gender equality and the WPS Agenda in applicable EU external action financing instruments.
- Make it a requirement to include a budget for gender expertise and/or advisors in all CSDP operations and missions as well as in EU delegations.
- Ensure adequate, sustained and predictable funding through programming and mainstreaming in non-programmed actions to implement the WPS Agenda.
- While recognising the needs-based approach established in EU Member States and in EU external action financing instruments, when possible prioritise (direct) action grants for gender equality and WPS projects run by local civil society organisations, in particular women's organisations.
- Encourage the practice of gender analysis as a requirement for EU external action financing.
- Encourage dedicated funding for the external and independent evaluation of the EU strategic approach to WPS. Also encourage that evaluations of all EU external action and policy are gender-responsive.
- Ensure minimal administrative constraints for access to funding by local civil society organisations, within the limits of the EU Financial Regulation.

- Promote dedicated funding for WPS research.
- Assess, monitor and, when applicable, counteract the EU's, EU Member States' and EU partners' counterterrorism measures, including anti-terror financing laws, so that these do not negatively affect, limit or impact women's rights.
- Ensure the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on financing for development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda).

### **Capacity building and training**

48. Effective implementation of the WPS Agenda depends on the awareness and knowledge, skills, capacities and resources of women and men at all levels of decision-making processes. Given the complexities of today's security environment and the expansion of the WPS Agenda, building capacities and improving training and education towards sustainable peace, security and gender equality underpins the implementation of the whole WPS Agenda.
49. Targeted training is a key component of implementing the WPS Agenda. The new EU policy on CSDP training<sup>41</sup>, adopted on 15 March 2017, establishes mandatory and standardised pre-deployment training as a prerequisite of deployment for both seconded and contracted staff. While pre-deployment training is already available for personnel deployed to CSDP missions and operations, it is not yet mandatory for all. Other types of intervention (for example mediation support) still lack such a structured and mandatory approach to training. According to this new training policy, all CSDP training should reflect the EU's basic principles, including gender equality and WPS goals. Furthermore, gender-related components will continue to be integrated more systematically into internal CSDP training and seminars.

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<sup>41</sup> EU policy on CSDP training (5197/2/17 REV 2), 15 March 2017.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Continue to improve its understanding of issues related to the WPS Agenda through intensified and consolidated training at all levels, including the senior management level. Request that Member States offer relevant training courses as part of the annual EU training programme to train their nationals, and encourage them to open these courses to participants from other Member States when possible.
- Ensure that the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) continues to advance on mainstreaming the gender perspective in all of its training activities, including all existing courses and training and those provided locally in Member States.
- Ensure that the gender perspective is integrated in all crisis management activities for CSDP operations and missions and humanitarian and development-related external action.
- Ensure that the European Commission and the EEAS regularly include WPS in existing and future gender training courses in the EEAS, the Commission, EU delegations and CSDP structures. Such training should include how to practically integrate a gender perspective into daily work.
- Ensure that a WPS component/module is integrated in online training courses and that a gender component is systematically included in training courses related to all relevant sectors, such as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, security sector reform and electoral observation.
- Promote training for all EU mediation actors, including those supported financially or technically by the EU, on how to conduct and use gender analysis and integrate a gender perspective into mediation support.
- Provide training on gender equality and on how to transform conflict and socialised gender norms and roles to its personnel, and support training for governmental and non-governmental partners.

- Ensure that training is designed based on the needs of the recipients and that coaching or mentoring is used where appropriate, particularly for those in senior or managerial positions.
- Encourage Member States to prioritise capacity building and training as a priority in their national action plans and in activities that support non-EU countries.
- Encourage Member States to prioritise and invest in developing training tools such as computer-based training (web-based, podcasts) and other training packages. Such training modules developed for EU delegations and CSDP missions and operations could also be shared with partners and non-EU countries.

### **Exchange of information and best practices**

50. The EU informal task force on WPS has proven to be a useful forum for exchange and partnership between the EU institutions, Member States and civil society<sup>42</sup>.
51. The task force will meet four times a year, twice at a strategic level co-chaired by the EEAS and the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union, and twice at a technical/working level.
52. EU delegations should convene forums for exchanging information and good practice in their countries and regionally to bring together EU delegations, CSDP missions and EU Member States with civil society to provide solid contextual input.
53. The EU aims to establish partnerships and alliances with other international and regional organisations and in particular structured and formalised platforms for cooperation at all levels, from the political to the working-level. In order to be sustainable and effective, top-down approaches must be accompanied by measures conceived and implemented at all levels.

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<sup>42</sup> Including academia.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Support the setting-up of a forum<sup>43</sup> to exchange experiences and best practices and foster innovation among practitioners (gender advisors and gender focal points) at different levels, as ensuring that policy choices are informed by the experiences, knowledge and ideas of practitioners will be key to the effective and sustainable implementation of the new EU strategic approach on WPS. This will be applicable within the EU, between organisations and within and between already established and functioning networks, for example already established networks in in the European Commission.
- Guide towards implementation of the new EU strategic approach to WPS being conducted in an inclusive way and ensure that it comprises the broadest possible participation of different stakeholders.
- Support existing and new inclusive networks of focal points and experts aiming to improve gender equality and women's empowerment and implement the WPS Agenda.

### **Leadership and accountability**

54. Leadership and adequate resourcing at all levels is critical to the effective implementation of the WPS Agenda. This requires a solid understanding of gender equality and WPS so that leadership can be gender-responsive. In line with the overarching EU policy framework of gender equality, women's empowerment and WPS, responsibility for implementing the WPS Agenda rests with the Member States. Relevant EU institutions and bodies also play important roles in promoting and implementing the WPS Agenda.

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<sup>43</sup> One example of this is the cooperation with the Regional Acceleration of Resolution (RAR) 1325 with the United Nations, EU, NATO, the African Union and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Therefore, the EU will:

- Ensure that management staff actively promotes gender equality and WPS within their services by including this in the function descriptions of all leadership positions and by ensuring that these elements are part of the evaluation of management staff. This includes the mandates for Heads of Delegation, European Union Special Representatives and Heads/Commanders of CSDP missions and operations.
- Ensure that people employed or deployed by the EU in leadership positions have received advanced training on gender equality and WPS prior to deployment. Also ensure that leaders and management staff are well informed about the multi-faceted work of the gender advisors and gender focal points.
- Ensure that all employees, contractors and implementing partners engaged by the EU promote the effective implementation of the WPS Agenda and ensure that primary responsibility lies with the leadership and managerial levels and that accountability mechanisms are encouraged.
- Ensure that job descriptions, terms of references and requirements for tenders and contracts routinely include the requirement to address gender equality and WPS considerations in all areas of work, including the requirement to undertake specific training as necessary.

### **Support functions**

55. The work of gender advisors and focal points/persons is central to translating the EU policies on gender equality, women's empowerment and WPS into analysis, planning, conduct and evaluation. The people in these positions should therefore be strategically positioned, with close access to senior management and to strategic documents and processes. Gender advisors and gender focal points also play an important role in facilitating the integration of gender perspectives into daily tasks and operations. In civilian CSDP missions, gender focal point structures have been successfully developed to function as an extension of the gender advisor, ensuring wider reach of gender mainstreaming efforts.

56. In EU delegations, the gender focal persons are key stakeholders, responsible for advising on and coordinating all efforts and actions related to gender equality and women's empowerment. They are responsible for facilitating and supporting the implementation of the EU Gender action plan II (GAPII). The network of the gender focal persons meets in Brussels every year. The main focus of this event is to: (i) take stock of the existing knowledge and experiences; (ii) facilitate learning; and (iii) discuss progress on the GAPII, particularly in relation to the 'institutional culture shift' objective and to reporting.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Ensure that the gender advisors and focal points are strategically positioned and have sufficient resources.
- Continue to strengthen the gender advisory capability function and capacity in the EU, preferably together with all present multilateral and regional partners and through exchanges with expert civil society practitioners and academics.
- Encourage a gender balance among gender advisors and gender focal points by encouraging more men to take on these positions.
- Systemise the usage of gender focal points and build a gender balanced focal point network consisting of both national and international staff members.
- Ensure that when gender focal points are appointed/selected, this responsibility is made part of their job descriptions and subsequently of their annual evaluations. This work is as important as any other work and this must be reflected accordingly in annual performance evaluations.
- Encourage wider use of gender focal point structures as a way to facilitate and promote gender mainstreaming in daily tasks, making use of good practice from in particular civilian CSDP missions.

- Further facilitate the exchange of ideas and interconnection between EU gender advisors, gender focal points and gender focal persons, through for example physical or virtual meetings and the further use of existing online platforms such as ‘Together’, the virtual platform of the European network for gender focal points.
- Encourage exchange of good practice and lessons learned between advisors and focal points/persons.
- Encourage diversity among gender advisors and gender focal points/persons, particularly by engaging more men.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and reporting procedures**

57. The EU has a robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting system in place, not least as part of the EU gender action plan for 2016-2020 (GAP II) and the EU strategic engagement on gender equality. Enhanced WPS monitoring and evaluation and reporting procedures aim to further improve the overall follow-up of WPS Agenda implementation, including through streamlining and synchronising with relevant parallel reporting procedures. The WPS reporting system aims to focus not only on *what* to do, but also on *how* it is done.
58. Improvement of the current monitoring, evaluation and reporting system are sought both in terms of substance and in terms of process. The aim is to create the conditions for maximising quantitative and qualitative analysis and assessments, while minimising disruption for data providers and complexities for data processors. Furthermore, the EU aims to create an indicator-based monitoring process, based on progress markers. For the participation aspect of the WPS Agenda, this entails an increased focus on the quality of women’s inclusion in addition to the number of women included. This will make it possible to develop a more thorough analysis of women’s meaningful and equitable participation and actual influence in decision-making processes and positions.

59. Effective, inclusive and transparent WPS monitoring and evaluation requires exchange and partnership between the EU institutions, Member States and civil society. Effective participatory and transparent mechanisms and procedures should be established.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Further develop and use indicators for its actions to implement the strategic approach on WPS. Systematise sex-disaggregated data across the EU's external policies and ensure that the analysis of impact goes beyond the description/reporting of broad gender inequality data, by providing in-depth (case) studies conducted by independent civil society or academia, baseline studies and regular exchanges with EU representatives (including local civil society and in particular women's organisations).
- Collect WPS-related indicators from other frameworks (Beijing platform for action, Member State national action plans, EU gender action plan II, etc.) and integrate them as much as possible in the WPS indicator framework, to ensure that the same data are not requested in different reporting procedures (this will facilitate reporting).
- Aim to further improve the effectiveness, harmonisation and streamlining of all EU reporting related to gender equality, women's empowerment and WPS.
- Provide parameters, systems and guidelines for Member States to ensure that monitoring and evaluation processes can be aggregated at a regional level, while taking into account that each Member State has particular needs and priorities.
- Promote effective participation of inclusive civil society, including domestic women's rights groups and gender expertise, in monitoring and evaluation processes.

## National action plans

60. National action plans play an important role in streamlining the implementation of the WPS Agenda, primarily at national level.

Therefore, the EU will:

- Promote a whole-of-government approach to developing and implementing national action plans. This will help Member States in their efforts to prioritise a whole-of-government strategy and stay committed to encouraging all countries in and outside of the EU to develop and implement national action plans based on this principle.
- Ensure that there are sufficient resources supporting national action plans so that they can be implemented in an effective way.
- Promote participatory mechanisms as part of developing national action plans to ensure their local ownership and inclusivity, as well as resources.
- Promote the institutionalisation of parliamentary monitoring of the implementation of national action plans. Promote civil society participation in monitoring and evaluation.
- Encourage EU Member States to mutually support each other's development and implementation of national action plans.
- Will continue to support and promote the effective implementation of national action plans in countries where the EU external actions are carried out supported by the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.
- Ensure that the provisions of this EU strategy on WPS are found in future national action plans of EU Member States and non-EU countries.

## Annex I: Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in EU external policies

### WPS in the Common Security and Defence Policy

61. The importance of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the context of the common security and defence policy (CSDP) at all levels has been repeatedly confirmed by the Council since 2006<sup>44</sup>. Since the adoption of the ‘Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on WPS<sup>45</sup>’, CSDP-specific policy on WPS has been developed and continuously updated<sup>46</sup> to ensure gender mainstreaming and implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on WPS from early analysis and planning to the conduct of CSDP missions and operations, including their follow-up and evaluation.
62. In 2016, a baseline study was carried out as a stock-taking exercise of the integration of human rights and gender into the CSDP. Apart from setting baselines, the Baseline Study report<sup>47</sup> also highlights progress made and showcases examples of good practices.

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<sup>44</sup> Council Conclusions on promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in crisis management. 2760th General Affairs Council meeting in Brussels, 13 November 2006.

<sup>45</sup> Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security (15671/1/08 REV 1), 1.12.2008.

<sup>46</sup> Last updated in 2012: Implementation of UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security in the context of CSDP missions and operations (doc. 5799/12/12).

<sup>47</sup> This was the first time that a Baseline Study on integrating human rights and gender was conducted for CSDP. The study, which identified 21 baselines to assess the extent to which human rights and gender equality had been integrated into CSDP, comprises two parts: (i) planning and impact case studies carried out for seven CSDP missions; and (ii) five questionnaires to CSDP services — the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD), the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC), the Military Staff (EUMS) and the European Security and Defence College (EADC) — and all CSDP missions.

63. CSDP missions and operations have progressively increased their gender advisory capacity to increase gender mainstreaming and accelerate the implementation of EU policy on WPS. At the time of the approval of the EU Strategic Approach to WPS [December 2018] all civilian CSDP missions have gender advisors deployed either as single- or double hatted<sup>48</sup>. All EU military missions and one of the three military CSDP operations have full-time dedicated gender advisory positions and a double-hatted gender advisor in military planning and conduct capability (MPCC) / EU military staff (EUMS). However, none of these positions have yet been filled, which jeopardises the EU ability to achieve effective implementation.
64. The main role of the gender advisors in CSDP missions and operations is to provide advice to senior management on gender analysis and the integration of gender perspectives when implementing the mission's mandate. The responsibilities of the gender advisor can vary depending on the size and structure of the mission and the nature of the mandate. However, they always address both internal and external aspects. **Externally**, the gender advisors work directly or indirectly (e.g. through subject matter experts and mentors) with local counterparts from the host nation, for example in drafting legislation or in capacity-building for local institutions. **Internally**, the gender advisors work closely together with mission/operations management and other mission entities in strategic and operational planning and conduct capabilities. Overall, gender advisors are facilitators and catalysts: they identify, support and advise. However, they are not ultimately responsible for the work on gender equality and the systemic integration of gender perspectives into the mission/operation, as this is the responsibility of the Head of Mission or Commander.

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<sup>48</sup> Double-hatted is a term used to refer to an official that performs two roles.

65. In civilian CSDP missions, gender focal points structures have become a common tool used to enable gender mainstreaming in the delivery of the mission mandate. Gender focal points have gender equality and WPS-related responsibilities as a complement to their primary function. The gender focal points act as a point of contact and as a bridge between the gender advisor and the different mission entities. As in the case of gender advisors, the role of a gender focal point depends on the mission mandate and on their function and tasks in the mission.
66. To further close the gap between policy and practice, a set of operational guidelines on gender mainstreaming was developed and launched in 2018 for civilian CSDP missions<sup>49</sup>. The guidelines aim to: (i) facilitate the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective and adopt gender equality policies, including the implementation of EU policy on WPS; and (ii) foster a more uniform approach to gender equality, women's empowerment and the WPS Agenda in missions.

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<sup>49</sup> The Civilian Operations Commander issued Operational Guidelines for mission management and staff on gender mainstreaming (doc. EEAS (2018) 747).

## WPS in the European Commission

### Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid

67. The EU has adopted a gender approach to humanitarian aid, which recognises gender as a quality criterion that helps to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches the most vulnerable and responds effectively to the specific needs of women, girls, boys, men and older women and men. The Commission's staff working document on 'Gender in Humanitarian Assistance: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance'<sup>50</sup>, outlines the EU's approach to gender and gender-based violence in humanitarian aid. The staff working document refers to the WPS framework and the comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on WPS, as well as the 17 indicators adopted by the Council. The policy includes a chapter on sexual and gender-based violence and the EU supports targeted actions to eradicate such violence.
68. To support policy implementation of policies and consistency between them the EU has introduced a 'gender-age marker', which applies to all EU-funded humanitarian projects since January 2014. The gender-age marker is an accountability tool that uses four quality criteria to measure how strongly all EU-funded humanitarian actions integrate gender and age at proposal, monitoring and final report stage.
69. The WPS framework is therefore highly relevant to the EU's humanitarian work, particularly when it comes to gender mainstreaming and protection from sexual and gender-based violence in emergencies.

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<sup>50</sup> Commission staff working document 'Gender in Humanitarian Aid: Different Needs, Adapted Assistance' Brussels, 22.7.2013 SWD (2013) 290 final.

## International Cooperation and Development

70. As girls' and women's participation and voices at all levels of society are essential to achieving fair and inclusive societies, the European Commission's Directorate for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) will continue to strengthen its efforts, as part of the implementation of GAP II, the EU's 2016-2020 gender action plan, to contribute in a measurable manner to increasing girls' and women's agency, voice and participation in social, economic and political life, including in conflict and post-conflict situations.
71. GAP II provides the framework for result-oriented measures and coordinated action. It consolidates the context, rationale and priorities of a refreshed approach that reaffirms and translates the EU's policy and political commitments to gender equality into a more effective delivery of concrete results for girls and women, while promoting more efficient coordination, implementation and monitoring of EU activities in this area. It contains specific objectives on increasing women's agency and representation, as well as on eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence they suffer in all settings.
72. The 2017 GAP II implementation report<sup>51</sup> showed that the most selected objective by EU delegations in development partner countries was 'girls and women free from all forms of violence against them' both in the public and in the private sphere.

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<sup>51</sup> Annual implementation report 2017: EU Gender Action Plan II, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020 (SWD (2018) 451 final), 15.10.2018.

73. This objective includes a specific indicator about ‘Protection for all women and men of all ages from sexual and gender-based violence in crisis situations; through EU-supported operations’ where a list of indicators is suggested for measuring the impact of EU-led activities. These indicators include, but are not limited to: (i) the number of EU partner countries reporting a decrease in the incidence of sexual violence as a weapon of war; (ii) the number of individuals directly benefiting from EU supported programmes that specifically aim to support civilian in post-conflict peacebuilding and/or conflict prevention; and (iii) the percentage of peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions with specific provisions to improve the security and status of girls and women of all ages.
74. Under this particular thematic priority, 34 new initiatives to strengthen women’s representation and political voice were reported in 2017, although few focused on peace and security. Most were on women’s participation in policy, governance and electoral processes and on women’s organisations and empowerment of human rights defenders.

## Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality

75. As equality between women and men is one of the EU's fundamental values, the European Commission is dedicated to promoting gender equality in the Member States and across the world, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality. The work of the Commission, as evidenced in its strategic engagement for gender equality<sup>52</sup>, is centred on the following five priority areas: (i) increasing female labour market participation and the equal economic independence of women and men; (ii) reducing the gender pay, earnings and pension gaps and thus fighting poverty among women; (iii) promoting equality between women and men in decision-making; (iv) combating gender-based violence and protecting and supporting victims; and (v) promoting gender equality and women's rights across the world.
76. Currently, the labour market participation of women in the EU is about 10 percentage points lower than that of men. In addition, their pay is on average 16 % lower and they are less often promoted to supervisory and managerial positions. Most notably, less than 6 % of women hold a CEO position in one of the major publicly listed companies in the EU. The economic empowerment of women is an important step towards gender equality. This was also stressed in the Pillar of Social Rights endorsed by the European Council last November<sup>53</sup>. Gender-based violence remains a pervasive problem in the EU, with one in three women becoming a victim of physical violence, sexual violence, or both<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>52</sup> Commission Staff Working Document: Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019 (SWD (2015) 278 final), 3.12.2015.

<sup>53</sup> Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (European Commission). (April 2018). Report on equality between women and men in the EU.

<sup>54</sup> Gender-based violence remains a pervasive problem in the EU, with one in three women becoming a victim of physical violence, sexual violence, or both. Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (March 2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey. Main results report.

77. The Commission is using all instruments at its disposal to achieve the priorities set out in its strategic engagement. These include: (i) the monitoring of existing legislation, including on pay discrimination, access to goods and services, prohibiting sexual harassment at work, protecting pregnant workers, including from dismissal, minimum standards for the rights of victims, and European protection orders; (ii) proposing new legislation for example, on the introduction of paid paternity, parental and carer's leave for all workers, including non-transferable periods of parental leave for fathers and mothers and to improve transparency of the selection of board directors in the largest listed companies); and (iii) accession to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention<sup>55</sup>).
78. The Commission also applies and implements a range of policies, such as: (i) the action plan to tackle the gender pay gap<sup>56</sup>, which comprises a broad and coherent set of over 20 concrete actions to be delivered in 2018-2019; and (ii) the monitoring of Member States through the annual 'European Semester' economic surveillance process. The Commission funds civil society initiatives as well as national authorities' projects through its REC (rights, equality and citizenship) programme, and together with EUROSTAT and the European Institute for Gender Equality/EIGE, contributes to collecting quality comparable data on Gender Equality from all EU Member States.

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<sup>55</sup> Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, CETS No 210, 11.5.2011.

<sup>56</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee: EU Action Plan 2017-2019. Tackling the gender pay gap (COM(2017) 678 final), 20.11.2017.

## Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations

79. The review of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2015<sup>57</sup> specifically mentioned that further efforts will be made to mainstream and strengthen the implementation of UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security, its follow-up Resolutions and a gender perspective in Common Security and Defence Policy planning, implementation and review. In addition, the 20 deliverables for 2020 adopted in 2017 by EU Member States and the six Eastern European partner countries of the Eastern Partnership (EaP), state that gender equality is a cross-cutting issue. The issue is also targeted in a number of stand-alone objectives related to strengthening security cooperation, notably to support conflict resolution and crisis prevention.
80. The 2016 Communication on the EU Enlargement policy<sup>58</sup> underlined that ‘further work is required to ensure equality between women and men, notably on the labour market and to tackle gender-based violence’. All enlargement countries except one have ratified the Istanbul Convention, which has a specific article on situations of armed conflict as well as in times of peace (Article 2.3). More efforts are required by the EaP countries that have not yet ratified the Convention.
81. The WPS Agenda and GAP II are both relevant policy frameworks for eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence that women and girls suffer from. In response to unresolved conflicts and the degraded security situation in some parts of the Neighbourhood region, a number of actions are being implemented. These aim to: (i) increase women’s participation in peacebuilding initiatives; (ii) strengthen the capacity of local stakeholders in conflict prevention processes at local level; and (iii) strengthen in-house security expertise to lay down a comprehensive approach for the prevention of violent extremism.

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<sup>57</sup> Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy (JOIN (2015) 50 final), 18.11.2015.

<sup>58</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions: 2016 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy (COM(2016) 715 final), 9.11.2016.

## Foreign Policy Instruments

82. The Regulation establishing the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP<sup>59</sup>) identifies gender equality and the empowerment of women as a cross-cutting issue to be included where possible in all actions, including in programming. Recital 9 of the Regulation makes a specific reference to UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on WPS, highlighting the need to combat violence against women in conflict situations and promote the participation of women in peacebuilding.
83. Article 3 of the Regulation<sup>60</sup>, which covers the response to situations of crisis or emerging crisis to prevent conflicts includes specific provisions on supporting the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on WPS. These are intended to: (i) ensure that the specific needs of women in crisis and conflict situations are adequately met; (ii) ensure that the situation of women combatants are taken into account in actions related to the demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants and their families; and (iii) enhance the role of women in the development of civil society and their participation in political processes, and in civilian oversight over the security system.

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<sup>59</sup> Regulation (EU) No 230/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an instrument contributing to stability and peace Regulation (EU) No 230/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 establishing an instrument contributing to stability and peace. (OJ L 77, 15.3.2014, p. 1).

<sup>60</sup> Regulation (EU) No 230/2014

84. The addition of Capacity-Building in support of Security and Development<sup>61</sup> (CBSD), as a new type of assistance to the IcSP, allows the EU to support partner countries more effectively in building their capacity to prevent and manage crises on their own. The amendment to the Regulation establishing IcSP allows for assistance to be provided to military actors to perform development and security for development tasks, under exceptional and clearly defined circumstances: where non-military actors cannot perform them, where there is a threat to the existence of functioning State institutions or the protection of human rights, and where a consensus exists between the partner country concerned and the EU that military actors are key for preserving, establishing or re-establishing the conditions essential for sustainable development, including in crises and fragile or destabilised contexts and situations. Within the scope of Capacity Building in support of Security and Development (CBSD), actions consider the distinctive needs of women in specific crisis and conflict situations.

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<sup>61</sup> Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Capacity building in support of security and development — Enabling partners to prevent and manage crisis, (JOIN (2015) 17 final), 28.4.2015.

## **Annex II: Glossary**

**This glossary sets out how certain frequently used terms are used in this document.**

### **Dual approach**

Since 1996, the Commission has committed itself to a ‘dual approach’ towards achieving gender equality. This approach involves mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies, while also implementing specific measures to eliminate, prevent or remedy gender inequalities. Both approaches go hand in hand, and one cannot replace the other<sup>62</sup>.

### **Specific actions**

Measures targeted at a particular group and intended to eliminate and prevent discrimination or to offset disadvantages arising from existing attitudes, behaviours and structures. Action aimed at favouring access by members of certain categories of people, in this particular case, women, to rights which they are guaranteed, to the same extent as members of other categories, in this particular case, men<sup>63</sup>.

### **Gender**

Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialisation processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context.

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<sup>62</sup> <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>.

<sup>63</sup> [http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/concepts-and-definitions#Specific\\_actionmeasure](http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/concepts-and-definitions#Specific_actionmeasure)

Gender is not a synonym for the word ‘sex’. Sex goes back to the biological differences between men and women. These differences are universal and timeless. They do not vary either in space (different countries) or in time (different periods<sup>64</sup>).

In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as in decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group, religion and age. Gender roles and relations are often altered during and after armed conflict. It is important to note that gender is not only about women, but is about socially constructed differences in situations between women and men, which can lead to differences in access to power, health, knowledge etc. The gender perspective thus also concerns the role of men.

### **Gender equality**

This refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development<sup>65</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/concepts-and-definitions>

<sup>65</sup> <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/concepts-and-definitions>

## Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated into all policies at all levels and all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making<sup>66</sup>. Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a way to make women's and men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality<sup>67</sup>.

All EU external action in conflict-affected and fragile situations should be based on rigorous conflict analysis based upon robust gender analysis, with the ambition of transforming conflictual social relationships and social norms.

All conflict prevention and other policies implemented in conflict-affected or at-risk situations are to develop specific objectives regarding gender equality that will provide a sound basis for gender-inclusive approaches and monitoring of progress. An important part of gender mainstreaming is to ensure that all general objectives are gender-responsive (e.g. they install transparent and gender-responsive criteria for decision-making positions), which could lead to the integration of gender perspective in a general process.

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<sup>66</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/genderequality/what-is-gender-mainstreaming>

<sup>67</sup> <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/concepts-and-definitions>

## **Gender analysis**

Gender analysis is a critical examination of how differences in gender roles, activities, needs, opportunities and rights/entitlements affect men, women, girls and boys in certain situation or contexts. Gender analysis examines the relationships between females and males and their access to and control of resources and the constraints they face relative to each other. A gender analysis should be integrated into all sector assessments or situational analyses to ensure that gender-based injustices and inequalities are not exacerbated by the action being taken and that where possible, greater equality and justice in gender relations are promoted.

In order to ensure that they do not do harm, all EU action in conflict-affected and fragile situations need to be informed by conflict analysis that incorporates robust gender analysis, that is, the action takes into account the potentially different situation of women and men and the power relationships between different parts of the population throughout the formal and informal institutions in a society.

Gender analysis will reveal patterns of inclusion and exclusion, based on gender and the range of other factors such as socioeconomic class, ethnicity and religion, age, (dis)ability, geographical origin, sexual orientation, marital status, parenthood, level of education, etc. and is therefore a critical component of meaningful situation and conflict analyses.

## **Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)**

Sexual and gender-based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. Acts of sexual and gender-based violence violate a number of universal human rights protected by international instruments and conventions. Many — but not all — forms of sexual and gender-based violence are illegal and criminal acts in national laws and policies. Around the world, sexual and gender-based violence affects more women and girls than men and boys. It is important to note, however, that men and boys may also be victims of gender-based violence, including sexual violence.

There is no agreed definition of sexual violence. Commonly applied ones encompass any act of a sexual nature or attempt to obtain a sexual act carried out through coercion.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence, when committed in the context of an armed conflict either international or non-international, constitute violations under international humanitarian law. All parties to an armed conflict must abide by the prohibition of sexual violence.

All states have an obligation to prosecute the perpetrators. Rape and other forms of sexual violence are prohibited under treaty law (the Fourth Geneva Convention, as well as Additional Protocols I and II) and customary law applicable in both international and non-international armed conflict<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>68</sup> <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/sexual-violence-armed-conflict-questions-and-answers>  
<https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/statement/2013/united-nations-women-statement-2013-10-16.htm>

‘Gender-based violence’ and ‘violence against women’ are terms that are often used interchangeably as most gender-based violence is inflicted by men on women and girls. However, it is important to retain the ‘gender-based’ aspect of the concept as this highlights the fact that violence against women is an expression of power inequalities between women and men<sup>69</sup>.

Sexual violence is when the perpetrator commits an act of a sexual nature against one or more persons or causes such person or persons to engage in an act of sexual nature by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or persons or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment or such person’s or persons’ incapacity to give genuine consent<sup>70</sup>.

### **Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)**

Sexual exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power differential or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Sexual abuse means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions<sup>71</sup>.

The EU will ensure zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse. This will be achieved through established accountability mechanisms for all EU employed, deployed or otherwise supporting personnel, including those seconded or contracted. The mechanisms will deal promptly, effectively and fairly with any allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Mechanisms dealing with violations of codes of conduct and standards of behaviour are a matter for the management hierarchy and human resources, and not the human rights and gender advisors.

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<sup>69</sup> <http://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/what-is-gender-based-violence>

<sup>70</sup> Elements of Crimes of the International Criminal Court.

<sup>71</sup> In line with UN standards (ST/SGB/2003/13) and the definition used in the Upgraded Generic Standards of Behaviour from March 2018 (6877/18).

## **Monitoring**

An ongoing process of tracking information along specific parameters and ensuring objectives are met.

## **Review**

A periodic assessment of the performance of an intervention, with a particular focus on the operational dimensions.

## **Evaluation**

A systematic use of evidence to assess how well policies are achieving their objectives, and, importantly, why they are, or are not, effective.

### **Annex III: UNSCR 1325 and the subsequent UNSC Resolutions on WPS**

Adopted on 31 October 2000, UNSCR 1325 is the first Security Council resolution to address the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women. UNSCR 1325 reinforces prior international and regional legal commitments and conventions relevant to WPS<sup>1</sup> and establishes a series of new principles. It emphasises the necessity of women's equal and meaningful participation as active agents in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction. It calls on member states to ensure women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Furthermore, it urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all United Nations peace and security efforts, including demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) and security sector reform (SSR).

On 19 June 2008, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1820 on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SVC), which explicitly links sexual violence as a tactic of war with the maintenance of international peace and security. UNSCR 1820 reinforces Resolution 1325 in recognising that sexual violence is often widespread and systematic and can impede the restoration of international peace and security. The Security Council has now a clear mandate to address sexual and gender-based violence, including through sanctions and training to empower field staff to prevent and respond to these issues. The resolution highlights that sexual violence perpetrated by arms bearers against civilians constitutes a war crime and demands parties to armed conflict to immediately take appropriate measures to protect civilians from sexual violence, including training troops and enforcing disciplinary measures.

Adopted on 30 September 2009, UN Security Council Resolution 1888 reiterates that sexual violence exacerbates armed conflict and impedes international peace and security. The resolution also calls for leadership to address conflict-related sexual violence and calling for deployment of teams of experts where cases of sexual violence in conflict occur. The following UN Security Council Resolution 1889, adopted on 5 October 2009, focuses on post-conflict peacebuilding and on women's participation in all stages of peace processes and calls for the development of indicators to measure the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (2000).

On 16 December 2010, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1960, which reiterates the call for an end to sexual violence in conflict while setting up a listing mechanism. The resolution sends a direct political message that there are consequences for sexual violence including: listing in the Secretary-General's annual reports, referrals to UN sanctions committees and to the ICC, international condemnation and reparations.

UN Security Council Resolution 2106 was adopted on 24 June 2013 aiming at operationalising current obligations on UNSCR 1325 and following rather than creating new structures and initiatives. Moreover, it focuses on women's participation in combating sexual violence and supports recourse to avenues of justice.

On 18 October 2013, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2122 setting out concrete methods for combating women's participation deficit and recognising the need to address root causes of armed conflict and security risks faced by women, explicitly affirming the need for an 'integrated approach' to sustainable peace. The resolution also links disarmament and gender equality by mentioning the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

Adopted on 13 October 2015, UN Security Council Resolution 2242 encourages the assessment of strategies and resources with regard to implementing the WPS Agenda and calls for increased funding for gender-responsive training, analysis and programmes. At the same time, it highlights the importance of collaboration with civil society and insists that gender should be seen as a cross-cutting issue as part of countering violent extremism / counterterrorism agendas.

Furthermore, the WPS Agenda has been further broadened by two subsequent UNSC Resolutions, namely UNSCR 2272 (2016) on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and UNSCR 2331 (2016) on Trafficking in Persons in Conflict Situations.

#### **Annex IV: Non-exhaustive policy inventory on WPS**

- Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of the UNSCR 1325 & 1820 on WPS, Council of the European Union (2008 — doc. 15671/1/08)
- Indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security (2010 — doc. 11948/10)
- Report on the EU Indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security (2011 –doc. 9990/11)
- Implementation of UNSCRs on Women, Peace and Security in the context of CSDP missions and operations (2012 — doc. 7109/12)
- The EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2012 — doc. 11855/12)
- Second Report on the EU Indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security (2014 –doc. 6219/14)
- ‘Non Paper on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict — A Guide to Practical actions at EU level’ (2014 — doc. PSC MD 155/14)
- Report on the progress of the ‘Non Paper on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict — A Guide to Practical actions at EU level’ (2015)
- The EU input to the Global Study on WPS (2015 — doc. 7595/15)
- The Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 in EU external relations (2015 –doc. 13201/15) and the related Commission Joint Staff Working Document (2015 — doc. SWD (2015) 182 final)
- The Commission’s Strategic Engagement for Gender Equality 2016-2019 (2015 — doc. SWD (2015) 278 final)
- The EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015-2019 (2015 — doc. 10897/15)
- 15th anniversary and Global Review of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security — Commitments of the EU and its Member States (2015 — doc. 12904/15)

- The Global Strategy for the EU’s Foreign and Security Policy (2016)
- Council Conclusions on the Global Strategy on the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy (2016 — doc. 13202/16)
- EU Global Strategy Implementation Plan on Security and Defence (2016 — doc. 14392/16)
- Council Conclusions on implementing the EU Global Strategy in the area of Security and Defence (2016 — doc. 14149/16)
- Report on the Baseline Study on integrating human rights and gender into the European Union’s Common Security and Defence Policy (2016 — doc. 15726/16)
- Code of Conduct and Discipline for EU Civilian CSDP Missions (2016 — doc. 12076/16)
- Upgraded Generic Standards of Behaviour for CSDP Missions and Operations (2018 — doc 6877/18)
- Revised Indicators for the Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security (2016 –doc. 10805/16)
- Second Report on the progress of the ‘Non Paper on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict — A Guide to Practical actions at EU level’ (2016 — doc. PSC MD 17/16)
- Third Report on the progress of the ‘Non Paper on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict — A Guide to Practical actions at EU level’ (2016 — doc. 14329/16)
- 2017/NON-PAPER EEAS PAG informal ROADMAP & WORK PLAN on Gender/Gender Equality, Women’s Empowerment and the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2017 — doc. WK 665/2017 INIT)
- European Consensus on Development (2017 — doc. 9459/17) Joint Communication — A Strategic Approach to Resilience in the EU’s external action (2017 — doc. JOINT (2017) 21 final.

