

Action Plan of the Czech Republic for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and related resolutions for 2021 - 2025

I. Introduction

In 2000, the UN Security Council adopted the landmark Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security which became the cornerstone of the Women Peace and Security Agenda (further as “WPS Agenda”). Resolution 1325 (2000) calls on all States to secure the participation and involvement of women in their security policies and in peace-building, including increasing women's participation in peace and security processes, and to incorporate the gender perspective into all post-conflict reconstruction and international development efforts. The resolution further calls on all security actors to protect women and girls from violations of human rights, to give them access to justice and work actively to eliminate all forms of gender discrimination. During the twenty years of its existence, the WPS Agenda has become a universal agenda which is further elaborated in a number of subsequent resolutions¹.

In terms of security, the correlation between gender inequality in a country and the tendency for emergence of a national conflict is now widely recognized. However, women and girls are not only victims of wars but they are often actively involved as members of national armies, armed groups or terrorist organizations, where they actively fight or support war efforts as auxiliary personnel, and are also involved in civilian peacekeeping operations. Both the OSCE² and the UN³ agree that peace efforts are generally more effective and sustainable if women are actively and meaningfully involved⁴. Nevertheless, women's voices are often not heard once the conflict ends. Between 1992 and 2011, the representation of women in peace negotiation teams was only 9% and women constituted only 4% of peace treaty signatories. Yet, the participation of women in peace processes is essential not only for the sustainability of peace, but also for the more effective implementation of peace agreements.

Empowering women and closing the gender gap is one of the key prerequisites for fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see Goal 1. End poverty, Goal 2. End hunger, Goal 3. Healthy lives and well-being, Goal 5. Gender equality, Goal 8. Decent work and economic growth and Goal 10. Reduce inequality). The UN estimates that the gender gap costs the world economy 15% of GDP but according to a study by the International Monetary Fund⁵, closing the gender gap would increase an average country's GDP worldwide by as much as 35% (80% of this is labour force expansion, 20% productivity losses). Women are also more often

¹ Extant at 30 June 2020, these are the following UN Security Council resolutions: UNSCR 1820 (2008); UNSCR 1888 (2009); UNSCR 1889 (2009); UNSCR 1960 (2010); UNSCR 2106 (2013); UNSCR 2122 (2013); UNSCR 2242 (2015), UNSCR 2467 (2019), UNSCR 2493 (2019).

² <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/0/5/440735.pdf>

³ <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/conflict-prevention-and-resolution>

⁴ UN Women, Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace: A Global Study on the Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (New York, NY: UN Women, 2015)

⁵ <https://www.imf.org/~/media/Files/Publications/SDN/2018/SDN1806.ashx>

dependent on the so-called informal economy, and almost 40% of women worldwide have no social protection⁶. Strengthening (not only) the economic position of women and their resilience is thus undoubtedly a necessary precondition for ensuring prosperity and sustainable development for all.

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, millions of women worldwide continue to face discrimination, including unequal access to land, property and housing (only 12% of land is owned by women worldwide), sexual and gender-based violence (30% of women have experienced gender-based violence), restricting access to sexual and reproductive rights, or increasing attacks on female human rights defenders. Global studies also show that sexual violence before, during and after armed conflicts is a reality not only for women and girls, but also for men and boys and non-binary people. Discrimination is further exacerbated by the interconnection of social categories such as race, socio-economic status, and gender identity, together creating overlapping and interconnected systems of discrimination. Women constitute more than 50% of the world's population, and without their active and meaningful involvement, it is not possible to ensure security, prosperity and sustainable development, or human dignity.

Ensuring security, prosperity, sustainable development, and human dignity, including the protection of human rights, belongs on a long-term basis among the main objectives of the Czech foreign policy. The fulfilment of all these objectives is essentially linked to the support of gender equality and the implementation of the WPS Agenda. In 2016, a national contact person ("Focal Point") for the WPS at the level of the Director of the United Nations Department was appointed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. At the first meeting of the WPS Focal Points Network at the 71st session of the UN General Assembly, the Czech Republic was one of 41 countries to sign a joint communiqué reconfirming their commitment to increase women's participation at decision-making level in conflict prevention at national and international levels.

II. Legal framework for the submission of national action plans

The Czech Republic has been a party to the *UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women ("CEDAW")* since 1993. This fundamental international law document defines discrimination against women and obliges states to take measures to eradicate it. CEDAW commitments are also relevant to the implementation of Resolution 1325, the two documents complement and reinforce each other in a number of areas, such as conflict prevention, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and human trafficking, participation, access to justice, access to education, health services and employment, displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers, etc..

In 2013, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued *General Recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict*

⁶ UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures>

*situations, (further as "GR30")*⁷. GR30 represents a guideline for the CEDAW implementation in conflict prevention, during conflict and in the post-conflict period. This recommendation stipulates in Article 83 that states are obliged to report on the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000). The recommendation also includes an appeal for the adoption of national action plans for the implementation of Resolution 1325 and for the allocation of the relevant budget for their implementation.

At the end of 2016, the Czech Republic submitted its first Action Plan of the Czech Republic for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security and related resolutions for 2017-2020. In the years 2017-2019, an annual report was submitted to the Government on the implementation of the Action Plan.

III. Submission of the second National Action Plan of the Czech Republic for 2021-2025

The aim of the second National Action Plan of the Czech Republic for 2021-2025 is to maintain natural continuity with the first action plan, to ensure that the Czech Republic's efforts and activities in the field of peace and security adequately reflect current needs, priorities and rights of women and men both in the Czech Republic and in the world. This is the only way to achieve a sustainable future based on the three pillars of the UN - peace and security, human rights, and development. For this purpose, a set of specific measures was prepared, classified in relation to four basic interacting and interconnected strategic goals⁸, which the Czech Republic has defined:

- 1. Strengthen women's participation and leadership in all areas related to peace and security;**
- 2. Systematically strengthen gender mainstreaming in all areas related to peace and security;**
- 3. Actively participate in strengthening conflict prevention through the promotion of women's rights and gender equality;**
- 4. Provide and support adequate development and transformation cooperation, and humanitarian assistance geared towards the needs of women and girls.**

The National Action Plan of the Czech Republic for 2021-2025 will be coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and further implemented by the Office of the Government, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice with the contribution of non-governmental organizations and the academic sector. The successful implementation of the WPS Agenda is also linked to the Czech Republic's intention to

⁷ See <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/GComments/CEDAW.C.CG.30.pdf>

⁸ These objectives largely reproduce the four basic pillars of the WPS Agenda, i.e. participation, protection, prevention and assistance, and recovery.

systematically defend "strong language" in international fora aimed at promoting gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The National Action Plan of the Czech Republic for 2021-2025 must be viewed in the context of other fundamental documents, to the creation of which the Czech Republic contributed in the framework of its membership in the EU, NATO and other organizations and to which it has committed itself. The first such document is the EU Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions on the WPS Agenda⁹ with an annex, the so-called "EU Strategic Approach to WPS", adopted in December 2018. The EU Strategic Approach to WPS was subsequently further elaborated in the Action Plan¹⁰ adopted in July 2019. The EU Gender Action Plan for 2016-2019 (so-called GAP II) is also crucial in this regard. NATO adopted an Action Plan for the WPS Agenda in 2018. All these documents shaped and inspired the form of the National Action Plan for 2021-2025. The National Action Plan will be further provided with a broader context by the Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2021-2030, which is being prepared by the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic with the contribution of ministries co-responsible for gender issues.

IV. Methodology and monitoring of the implementation of the National Action Plan

The National Action Plan of the Czech Republic for 2021-2025 was elaborated under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with participating relevant ministries (Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice and Government Office), non-governmental organizations and the academic sector. A series of both formal and informal consultations with individual actors took place, after which the final version of the National Action Plan was approved by the Czech Government.

The core of the National Action Plan of the Czech Republic for 2021-2025 is a set of specific measures classified according to strategic goals. Each measure is assigned an indicator, which can be used to determine whether and to what extent the measure has been fulfilled. An estimated measure implementation period is determined and the specific institution responsible for its implementation is indicated. The measures are thus specific, measurable, relevant to the individual strategic goals and time bound. This methodology aims to simplify and clarify the annual evaluation of the National Action Plan implementation.

Monitoring of the implementation progress will be carried out annually by elaboration of an implementation report and ongoing evaluation at meetings of the Inter-Ministerial working group of all relevant ministries to the WPS Agenda, which should be established and chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The implementation report will be firstly submitted to the Government Council for Gender Equality for approval and subsequently, no later than 30 June

⁹ Council document 15086/18 of 10.12.2018

¹⁰ EEAS(2019) 747

of the following year, to the Government for informative purposes. The first implementation report should be submitted to the Government by 30 June 2022. Based on the results of the implementation report, a proposal to amend the National Action Plan may be submitted to the Government for approval in justified cases.