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Intervention at

CSW67 – High level side-event of the FFP+ Group

*Feminist Foreign Policy-Making as a Diverse Tool to Strengthen Multilateralism: Lessons Learned and Opportunities*

Deputy Permanent Representative Ambassador Karl Lagatie

New York, 9/03/2023

8:15 - 9:30am, CR4

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*Durée de l'intervention : maximum 4 minutes*

*Possibilité de réduire la liste des salutations introductives*

I would like to start by thanking the co-hosts, Ms. Antonia Orellana, Minister of Women and Gender Equality of Chile for her participation through pre-recorded video and the Permanent Representative of Chile, Ms. Paula Narvaez Ojeda, Ms. Martha Delgado, Under-Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights of Mexico, Ms. Helga Barth from Germany, Ms. Karen Burbach from the Netherlands, the Permanent Representative of Spain, Ambassador Santos Maraver and of course many others present here who have been advocating for gender equality, the empowerment of women and a true Feminist Foreign Policy,

Ladies and gentlemen,

- As H.E. Laura Gil just announced, I'm extremely pleased to **confirm that Belgium has recently become a member of the FFP+ Group together with Colombia**, as part of the first joint accession of two countries, one from the South and one from the North, to the FFP+ group.

- Indeed, **the full realization of gender equality and the human rights of all women and girls are objectives that my country pursues horizontally throughout all foreign policy domains**, may it be at the level of our bilateral diplomacy, in the framework of the European Union or in our multilateral action, including within the United Nations system. Belgium continuously strives to uphold positions on gender equality and the **empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity** that are as ambitious and inclusive as possible.
- In order to pursue coherent policies across various aspects of foreign and domestic affairs, my government adopted important tools, including the 6th **National Action Plan against gender-based violence (2021-2025)**, the 4th **National Action plan on Women, Peace and Security (2022-2026)** as well as the **Inter-federal Action Plan against discrimination and violence against LGBTI persons**
- Belgium's **National Action Plan against gender-based violence** includes more than 200 measures to be implemented among 17 ministries and 23 administrations. It aims to enable Belgium to fully implement the Istanbul Convention. Through this plan, Belgium is strengthening its data collection on feminicides and intensifying follow-up cases of gender-based violence by the police. In-depth training on sexual and intra-family violence is already mandatory for all magistrates in Belgium, and we foresee further training of professional staff in contact with victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, including the police, doctors and psychosocial staff.
- Belgium fully embraces the broad scope of the **Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS Agenda)** which aims at the participation of women in conflict prevention and peacekeeping processes, as well as the protection of women and girls from conflict-related sexual violence, and the mainstreaming of a gender responsive approach in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping. Belgium emphasizes that the pursuit of women's full, equal and meaningful participation in peace and security processes and decision-making does not only revolve around conflict situations, but also touches the core of security issues such as terrorism, disarmament, climate change and pandemics. We underline that the protection component

naturally includes preventing gender-based violence and punishing perpetrators, but also touches upon issues such as the socio-economic status of women and girls, children born of sexual violence, stigma, restorative rights ("reparations") for survivors and a generalized application of gender mainstreaming. The Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also supports this political priority through funding, notably in Ukraine where we help fight against conflict-related sexual violence.

- Belgium attaches great importance to strengthening and implementing effectively international normative frameworks when it comes to the **full, meaningful and equal participation of women** and girls at all levels and in all sectors of society. We continuously promote **sexual and reproductive health and rights and comprehensive sexuality education as necessary conditions to attain gender equality**, also in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Joining the FFP+ group is especially relevant at times where gender equality and **women's rights are under attack** in many parts of the world. We believe indeed that collaboration between like-minded countries in multilateral fora is of utmost importance. In the same vein, we call to reinforce our support to **women human rights defenders, women organisations and peacebuilders**.
- Despite our efforts and a common awareness, a lot still has to be done in my own country, including in our own diplomatic corps where we still face the challenge of a significant imbalance between men and women head of diplomatic posts.
- I thank once again the members of the FFP+ group who have welcomed Belgium, together with Colombia, as their newest members, and I look forward to our common action to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, not only with regards to specific initiatives (resolutions, statements, events) on gender equality and women and girls' rights, but across the board, including in policy areas that are not directly linked to women's rights.