EWL Statement - MS Council of the EU-supporting EC proposal for a Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence

Dear Annika Öberg Jarlebring  
JHA Counsellor of the Permanent Representation of Sweden to the EU,

I am contacting you on behalf of the Women’s Baltic Peacebuilding Initiative, member of the European Women’s Lobby, the largest umbrella organization of women's associations in Europe.

We are pleased to send you a statement calling all the Member States in the Council of the European Union, including Sweden to step up their efforts to work towards enhancing and swiftly adopting a Directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence, **including the provisions based on the EU crime of sexual exploitation of women and children in Article 83(1) TFEU.**

We listen bitterly and with great concern to voices on removing rape, female genital mutilation and other violations of women's human rights as violence from the Directive on Violence Against Women. Peacebuilding is not possible if women are subject to negligence of bodily integretity and human dignity. Rape is a crime of war but also in peace.

We count on Sweden to **send a strong political message and confirm the EU’s commitment to fight this pervasive form of women’s rights violation and discrimination, including all aspects of sexual exploitation.**

Please find attached the EWL statement.

We thank you in advance for your attention and we remain at your disposal for any further information you might need.

With kindest regards,

Gertrud Åström