

## 1. Address by Dr. Ágnes VADAI in Section 1 of Women in public life

I would like to greet the Honored participants and allow me to introduce myself. I am Ágnes VADAI, Senior State Secretary of the Hungarian Ministry of Defense. In my opinion, which has also been confirmed by the honored presenters, the reasons for adverse discrimination against women should be sought primarily among religious and cultural traditions. In countries where these are strong, men do not regard women as equals for religious prescriptions as well as for the customs of thousands of years; thus, they do not find them suitable for taking on roles in politics and in public life. In countries, where equal rights for women are even guaranteed by laws for example, thus, such legislation outweigh the customs of many centuries. Well, maybe men are afraid of the equal role played by women in politics. We, as women, who take on active roles in politics must resolve this delusion of men. We must raise their awareness of women's participation in politics is not against men but indeed for them. The greater political presence of women may only trigger a positive impact since they represent added values that are missing or scarce among men.

In case we succeed in causing the presence of women to be accepted, women will have to meet a serious challenge. Namely, that in politics, as a field traditionally regarded as male territory, women must stay women. We must not think and act as men, since we would thus lose our womanliness and the surplus that we add to public life. Thank you for your attention.