



STATEMENT

On the International Women's Day

ENGLISH only

**as delivered by Ambassador Armen Papikyan, Permanent Representative of
Armenia, at the 1219th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
March 07, 2019**

Mr. Chairperson,

The Delegation of Armenia thanks Ambassador Andrej Benedejčič and Ms. Barbara Burajová for their interventions dedicated to the International Women's Day.

Preventing and combatting violence against women is an integral part of the OSCE commitments and agenda. On many occasions, including during successful negotiation of the Milan Ministerial Council decision, Armenia voiced its strong support for upholding and developing commitments related to the addressing the violence against women.

On the eve of the International Women's Day, I would like to refer to the gender equality exclusively from the perspective of women empowerment, which should unleash an immense potential of positive change in our societies.

Last year Armenia has underwent a strong democratic transition. Though this democratic transition did not start exactly on March 8th but it entailed very decisive women participation. We owe to women for the peaceful and non-violent manner of these positive changes.

The stronger women involvement in political and public life of Armenia has been reflected in the outcome of the parliamentary elections, which took place last December. The new composition of the parliament is not merely an outcome of the top down approach of introducing quotas but genuine bottom up societal processes.

No one can deny that stronger women involvement in political and public life creates more inclusive political institutions based on rule of law and human rights. We are pleased to note that women are well represented in civil society and grassroot organizations as well as in mass media in Armenia.

Economic empowerment of women is another important dimension of positive societal change, and we are pleased to note the cooperation of Armenia with the OSCE executive structures and participating states within an ExB project aimed at economic empowerment at the local and regional level.

I know that there are ongoing debates in the OSCE on historic role of women in society when it comes to gender equality or more accurately gender perspective, and I am certainly not here to open up new page in that debate. What I would do on this special occasion is to state that we are living in times of women before, during and after March 8 celebration. Congratulations.

Thank you.