

PC.DEL/161/13
12 March 2013

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY RUDENKO,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 943rd MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 March 2013

International Women's Day on 8 March

Mr. Chairperson,

It is gratifying to note on the eve of International Women's Day on 8 March that attention to this day has become a nice tradition within the Permanent Council. I should like to take this opportunity of congratulating all of the women in this room on the forthcoming International Women's Day.

In Russia it enjoys widespread popularity and affection. This has to do not so much with the principle enshrined in the Russian Constitution of equal rights and the ban on gender discrimination as with the respect entrenched in our society of women as "hearth keepers" and recognition of their special role in upholding family values and cultural and moral traditions.

I would remind you that women in Russia were already given the right to vote on 20 June 1917 by a decree of the Provisional Government.

In Russia today women make up more than half of the population and its workforce. They play an important role in areas such as education, health care, business and the civil service. For example, 64 per cent of those working in the financial sector are women.

Of particular note in recent times is the active participation by women in civil society. In Russia, women's non-governmental organizations work in all areas of life and serve as an important catalyst for social change.

Special attention is paid in our country to the social protection of women, mothers and children and the protection of women from violence.

In spite of the great progress in gender issues in recent years, there still remains a considerable amount to do to achieve genuine equality between men and women. The OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues is a good basis for addressing these tasks.

Thank you for your attention.