

Delegation of Canada

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR FREDERICKA GREGORY ON
BEHALF OF THE DELEGATIONS OF ICELAND, LIECHTENSTEIN,
NORWAY, SWITZERLAND AND CANADA TO THE OSCE AT THE
853rd MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

10 March 2011

**On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of
International Women's Day**

Mr. Chairperson,

I am delighted to take the floor today on behalf of the delegations of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Canada.

We are proud to add our voice to those of other OSCE participating States to highlight the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, a worldwide celebration of women and their exceptional achievements.

We attach great importance to the role of women in various spheres, be it social, economic or political. Human rights and gender equality are always relevant topics for us. In the OSCE region, there are still too few women in traditionally masculine professions and their numbers are quite simply too few among political and economic leaders.

This issue also merits consideration within the OSCE itself. Dr. Hedy Fry, Canadian representative for women's issues in the Parliamentary Assembly, has stated that a gender balance needs to be considered within the OSCE institutions. We also welcome the creation of the post of Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues and fully support the mandate of Ms. Wendy Patten and the recommendations in her letter of 8 March.

Mr. Chairperson,

We have been a strong advocate of the Women, Peace and Security agenda (1325) at the OSCE, United Nations and in other multilateral forums and we will continue in this vein.

We are committed to continuing to work on issues of advancing women's economic security and prosperity, ending violence against women and girls and encouraging women's leadership and democratic participation at home, in the OSCE region and beyond.

Mr. Chairperson,

We shall continue to be committed to promoting gender equality and to recognizing the important role played by women in our societies, not only on 8 March and this week in honour of International Women's Day, but also throughout the year.

Today, we highlight the struggles and victories of women in history, as well as those still to come. We support them in their efforts towards building a better future for their children and coming generations.

Thank you.