



Statement by Ambassador Andrej Benedejčič, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia, in response to the presentations by the Chairpersons of the three Committees, at the 1133rd Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, Vienna, 9 February 2017

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to thank the Chairs of the three Committees for their presentations and welcome them in their new functions. While Slovenia fully subscribes to the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, let me also stress in my national capacity that the priorities set out in the work programs represent a comprehensive and ambitious set of topics. I am convinced that they will allow for substantial and constructive dialogue among the participating States.

Mr. Chairperson,

When discussing the work plans, I would like to underline that it is our collective responsibility to ensure that OSCE policies, programs and activities are gender mainstreamed, as it was agreed by all of us in the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality from 2004. I am saying this as the Chair of the OSCE MenEngage Network, which seeks to raise awareness of the important influence men can have in ending gender-based violence and in speaking out against all kinds of inequality.

Let me, therefore, welcome the intention of Ambassador Kongstad, as the Chair of the Security Committee, to devote special attention to the gender aspect in the efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. I am convinced he will bring to this issue his rich experience, also as the inaugural Geneva Gender Champion.

I agree that March 8, the International Women's Day, represents an excellent opportunity to discuss the participation of women in decision-making, including in the economic and environmental sphere. I therefore commend the plan of Ambassador Sarybay, as the Chair of the Economic and Environmental Committee, to hold a special session on that day.

Finally, I would like to welcome the approach of Ambassador MacLeod, as the Chair of the Human Dimension Committee. The topic of women's participation and leadership, which is to be discussed at one of its meetings, is of special importance, because there is growing evidence that it not only augments public and political life but also improves it.

Mr. Chairperson,

Before concluding, allow me to stress once again the need for all of us to contribute to integrating gender equality into our policies and our practices in order to foster peace, economic development and sustainable democracy. Gender mainstreaming calls for a cross-dimensional approach and the OSCE with its three baskets offers a unique framework to do it the right way. Let me therefore use this opportunity to commend the proactive approach of the Austrian side to this important issue and its intention to imbed the gender perspective into all of the Chairmanship activities.

Thank you.