

ԵԱՀԿ-ՈՒՍ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ
ՀԱՆԴԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄՇՏԱԿԱՆ
ՆԵՐԿԱՅԱՑՈՒՑՉՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ



PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE REPUBLIC OF
ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT

**On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
delivered by Ms. Lilit Grigoryan, Deputy Head of Mission
at the 1499th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

28 November 2024

Madam Chair,

On November 25th, we commemorated the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and initiated the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, culminating on Human Rights Day, December 10th. This alignment between these significant dates underscores a fundamental truth: the full realization of human rights is unattainable without the elimination of all forms of discrimination. Women and girls constitute half of the world's population, and their empowerment unlocks immense potential for sustainable development across all spheres of life.

However, these opportunities are gravely hindered by violence against women and girls, which persists at alarming levels. According to the World Health Organization, approximately one in three women globally has experienced violence in her lifetime. This must—and can—be prevented. Empowering women, providing relationship skills education for all genders, alleviating poverty, fostering safe environments in schools, workplaces, and public spaces, preventing child and adolescent abuse, and challenging entrenched attitudes, beliefs, and norms—particularly in traditional societies—are crucial to reducing and eventually eradicating violence against women.

To achieve this, we must adopt innovative approaches to reach victims, break cycles of violence, and establish robust protection systems. The application of new technologies can play a vital role in prevention, protection, and prosecution. Data collection is also critical for evidence-based policymaking to address and ultimately end gender-based violence.

Madam Chair,

Gender-based violence in conflict settings represents one of the most horrific and reprehensible crimes. Despite widespread condemnation, it continues to be used as a weapon of war and a tool of political oppression. As conflicts proliferate, humanitarian crises deepen, and international laws are flouted, women and girls bear a disproportionate burden. They are deliberately targeted with violence intended to humiliate, dominate, and instill fear—often with the goal of forcibly displacing entire communities or ethnic groups. Such violence frequently persists long after conflicts have ended, leaving survivors with lifelong physical and psychological scars.

Preventing and eliminating gender-based violence in conflict and humanitarian crises is essential for sustainable peace—a peace rooted in human rights and dignity for all. Gender equality, including the full participation and leadership of women in peace processes, as outlined in the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda, is indispensable for building just and peaceful societies.

Madam Chair,

Armed conflicts significantly increase the risk of violence against women and girls, but such violence is by no means confined to these settings. In the digital age, online and ICT-facilitated violence against women has become increasingly prevalent, particularly through the pervasive use of social media and other digital platforms. While the Internet and ICT have revolutionized how we connect, communicate, and shape society, they have also created new avenues for violence.

We believe the principles and norms protecting human rights offline must be unequivocally applied online.

Women journalists, in particular, face unique risks. Alongside the challenges faced by all journalists, they endure gender-specific threats, including harassment, public shaming, stigmatization, and even physical or sexual violence—risks that are heightened in authoritarian regimes.

Online violence against women journalists infringes upon their right to safety and freedom of expression, while also undermining democracy and good governance. Such violence contributes to a democratic deficit that must be addressed. Acts of intimidation and violence against women journalists demand universal condemnation, and governments must be held accountable for failing to protect journalists and, in some cases, for perpetuating systemic harassment. The recent OSCE media freedom event has elaborated on a number of cases in this regard.

As one of the leaders of Generation Equality Action Coalition on Information technology and Innovation for Gender Equality, Armenia is convinced that a greater role for women in ICT sector may serve as a game changer in the greater efforts to empower women and girls and increase their role and participation in society.

Madam Chair,

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the OSCE Gender Action Plan, and next year, we commemorate the 25th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. These milestone

documents provide a framework for strengthening the empowerment of women. However, their successful implementation depends on us—the participating States. Without meaningful action, even the most well-crafted strategies will remain mere words.

Thank you, Madam Chair.