



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

ON INTERNATIONAL ROMA DAY

**908th PERMANENT COUNCIL
19 April 2012**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

April 8th, marked the 22nd celebration of International Roma Day, which had been established in 1990 at the conference of the International Roma Union.

Turkey believes that the day serves as an occasion to draw attention to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as combating hate crimes, xenophobia and discrimination that members of Roma communities are facing almost across OSCE area.

On this day, we are once more reminded that there is still much to be done in order to provide the Roma persons with better living conditions and equal participation in public life as well as to protect them from the negative effects of economic downturn and the social disturbances which may ensue thereof.

Regrettably enough, despite all the efforts exerted at the national and international level, in particular through implementation of the OSCE Action Plan for the Improvement of the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area and progress that has been achieved over the years to improve the situation of Roma communities, many continue to live in dire conditions.

Turkey readily subscribes to the calls for combating discrimination against Roma people and in strengthening efforts to ensure that equal opportunities are available for them in all spheres of social life.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.