

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY RUDENKO,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1047th MEETING OF THE
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 April 2015

Regarding International Roma Day

Mr. Chairperson,

The celebration of International Roma Day provides a good opportunity to take stock of the current situation with the integration of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area of responsibility.

The Roma question has traditionally occupied an important place on the OSCE agenda. However, although no other single national minority has been the focus of such close attention as the Roma and Sinti, the situation of that minority continues to leave a lot to be desired. The OSCE States must do even more to promote the successful integration of the Roma into all areas of public life.

In connection with Kyiv Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/13 on enhancing OSCE efforts to implement the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area, with a particular focus on Roman and Sinti women, youth and children, I should like to stress three key aspects.

First and foremost attention must be paid to the education, social inclusion and protection of Roma children.

Integration is a two-way street. Its success depends on the active participation and willingness to co-operate of all those involved, both the authorities and the Roma community and each individual. Therefore raising Roma motivation for social inclusion is important, while raising public awareness of Roma history, culture and traditions as well as of the problems they encounter facilitates understanding and mutual respect in society.

For the economic, social and cultural integration of the Roma and Sinti it is essential to take into account their own preferences and characteristics, including the culture, skills and trades in which the Roma have always been traditionally strong and successful.

Finally, experience shows that Roma problems cannot be solved in isolation from the problems of other national minorities. Ensuring a balanced policy of integration into society of all national minorities is key to improving the situation of Roma and Sinti as but one integral part of any multi-ethnic society.

Thank you for your attention.