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**STATEMENT BY  
MR. ALEKSANDR VOLGAREV, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1383rd MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

21 July 2022

**On the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on gender equality**

Mr. Chairperson,  
Madam Secretary General,

We take note of your report on the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan to promote so-called “gender equality”. Unfortunately, we can again perceive attempts to introduce, through documents of this kind, non-consensus, confrontational ideas and dubious theories, assertions and initiatives. In particular, this refers to the concepts of “gender” and “gender-based hate crimes”, but also to the “International Survivors of Trafficking Advisory Council” established under an extrabudgetary project at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

As regards combating violence against women, it is necessary to tackle this pernicious phenomenon by improving the economic situation of women – in particular, by creating the necessary conditions for their participation in economic activities – and by undertaking systematic efforts to eradicate poverty and social hardship. In the context of overcoming the negative consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, priority attention should be accorded to protecting the family, motherhood and childhood; the occupational retraining of unemployed women and men; and protecting and supporting large or low-income families, along with single parents. As part of this, it is necessary to make use of the extensive resources offered by digital technologies, notably to foster the employment of women and enhance their skills.

With regard to ensuring the equal participation of women in anti-corruption activities and in water resources management, it is important to adhere to the OSCE’s approved mandate in these fields and to the commitments undertaken by participating States.

As regards United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, we should like to emphasize that implementation of the tasks laid down in it and the co-ordinating role continue to rest with the United Nations, and that the efforts of the latter should not be duplicated. Furthermore, the resolution can hardly be used as a universal instrument for promoting the participation of women in all spheres of public life, notably in law enforcement. We also wish to remind you that at the OSCE there is no uniform understanding of how the topic of women, peace and security should be pursued further here, as evidenced, *inter alia*, by the lack of consensus on a relevant draft declaration during the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Stockholm.

With regard to the representation of women in the OSCE executive structures – notably in decision-making positions – the situation has improved markedly in recent years. As may be seen from statistical data on the staffing of the Organization as of 30 June 2022 (document SEC.GAL/47/22/Rev.1), the total number of internationally contracted and seconded positions occupied by women in the four OSCE institutions exceeds, at 175, the number of such positions occupied by men (163). Women thus account for approximately 52 per cent of posts in the staffing table. As for the category of locally recruited staff, there are almost twice as many women (189) as men (101).

Additionally, we should like to emphasize that the lower level of women's representation in the OSCE field operations compared with the institutions is due to objective reasons. This situation can be explained in terms not of gender discrimination but of the conditions of service in the field: it has to do with socio-economic factors. The situation can hardly be remedied by means of administrative measures alone. After all, other intergovernmental organizations, including organizations that belong to the United Nations system, are faced with exactly the same problems. In this connection, we are convinced that the plans to achieve equality between women and men in the staffing of the OSCE field operations need to be adjusted by reducing the current target values to a realistic level.

In general, we take the view that in selecting candidates to be employed in the OSCE structures, it is necessary to consider above all “the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity, taking full account of the principle of recruiting staff from all OSCE participating States on a fair basis”. It is precisely these requirements that have the highest priority in recruitment by the Organization according to Staff Regulation 3.01, whereas a candidate's gender is just one of a number of criteria – and by no means the main one. We note with regret that this criterion is constantly accorded unjustifiably close attention to the detriment of other principles of personnel administration, including a fair geographical distribution of posts.

Madam Secretary General,

Women in Russia occupy leadership positions on an equal footing with men in all key spheres of life, including all branches of government. Thus, 37 women are members of the Federation Council, including the Chairperson and one of her deputies. There are 73 women in the eighth State Duma (compared to 71 in its previous convocation). Moreover, the Central Bank and the Central Election Commission are headed by women; the federal commissioners for human rights and children's rights are also women. A similar picture also pertains in the business world. According to data from the all-Russian non-governmental organization Opora, Russia today leads the way when it comes to the number of women managers: 43 per cent of companies in our country are headed by women. Moreover, women are engaged in 90 per cent of socially oriented business and childhood development and education projects in Russia.

Thank you for your attention.