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## **STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE SECOND PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE 29th OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM**

Sweden (via videoconference), 10 June 2021

### **Promoting comprehensive security, stability and sustainable development in the OSCE area through women's economic empowerment**

#### **Opening session**

Madam Chairperson,

We welcome the participants in the Second Preparatory Meeting for the 29th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. We are grateful to the Swedish Chairmanship and to the distinguished Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Ambassador Vuk Žugić, and his colleagues for preparing and organizing this event.

In view of the issues that are due to be discussed today and tomorrow, we should like to stress the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and the relevance of the Joint Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment adopted by the World Trade Organization in 2017. A good basis for our discussions is afforded by the provisions of OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 10/11 concerning, in particular, the development of women's entrepreneurial skills, ensuring women's equal participation in the labour market, and combating the social exclusion of women and discrimination against them.

The economic empowerment of women is a policy priority in many countries, including Russia, and also a key factor in economic growth. It fosters the creation of new jobs, the development of entrepreneurship, the provision of a wider range of services to the population, and the growth of the national and global gross domestic product.

Particular attention by governments to women's entrepreneurship is warranted, as it is a field that requires State support. In our country such support is provided for by the action plan for the implementation of the National Action Strategy for Women and by the national project "Small and medium-sized businesses and support of individual entrepreneurial initiatives".

During the discussions ahead of us at this meeting, it is essential to take into account the growing influence of digitalization. For example, digitalization helps women entrepreneurs to conquer high-tech areas of the economy and to occupy strong positions in cross-border e-commerce.

We are keen to engage in a constructive discussion of the issues outlined in the programme for the event. We look forward to interesting presentations by the speakers.

May our work together be productive!

Thank you for your attention.