



PC.DEL/1026/13  
12 December 2013

ENGLISH only

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

**In Response to Ms. June Zeitlin, Special Representative of the OSCE  
Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues  
(977<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Permanent Council, 12 December 2013)**

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to join the previous speakers in warmly welcoming the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Gender Issues, Ms. June Zeitlin, back to the Permanent Council. I also thank her for the informative annual report she has presented today.

Turkey commends Special Representative Zeitlin's valuable efforts to promote gender equality and women's rights across the OSCE region. We wholeheartedly agree with her recommendations for increased action in such areas as violence against women, political participation and economic empowerment.

Fully cognizant of the vital contribution of women in every conceivable aspect of society, Turkey is committed to the goals of improving the rights of women, ensuring their full and equal participation in all spheres of life and strengthening their status in society.

Such goals, however, cannot be attained, nor can gender equality become an everyday fact of life while women continue to be subjected to violence. The 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence, which ended two days ago with the International Human Rights Day, also served as a reminder that violence against women continues to be one of the most pervasive human rights violations worldwide. This is why Turkey steadfastly pursues its policy of zero tolerance for violence against women. In keeping with this policy, Turkey was the first country to sign and to ratify the "Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence", also known as the Istanbul Convention. Subsequently, on International Women's Day last year, the Turkish Grand National Assembly adopted a new law on "Protection of the Family and Elimination of Violence Against Women". Being the first law in Turkey which defines and tackles domestic violence, it has broadened the scope of existing legislation to cover all women victims of domestic violence, and transposed the provisions of the Istanbul Convention into our national legislation.

In addition, our "National Action Plan on Combating Domestic Violence Against Women", revised for the years 2012-2016, contains targets such as effective implementation of all relevant legislative measures, promotion of awareness-raising activities, empowerment of women in the economy, guarantees for full social participation, as well as improvement of preventive services, treatment and rehabilitation. Mr. Chairperson,

The year 2014 will mark the tenth anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. By applying our comprehensive security approach to gender equality, the

Action Plan calls for the implementation of our relevant commitments across all three dimensions of security and places our Organization at the forefront of the international efforts aimed at increasing women's participation in all walks of life. We cannot deny, however, that the OSCE can do more, especially when we bear in mind that the United Nations framework continues to evolve. United Nations Security Council resolution 2122, in particular, emphasizes the role of regional organizations in the field of women, peace and security. We could take advantage of the opportunity presented by the Gender Action Plan's tenth anniversary to organize a Review Conference, as has been alluded to by the Special Representative as well, on how to further strengthen our toolbox and improve the implementation of the relevant UNSC resolutions in the OSCE area.

This, in fact, is precisely the reasoning behind the draft OSCE-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security co-sponsored by Austria, Finland, Kazakhstan and Turkey. We strongly believe that we need to empower women in all phases of the conflict cycle, on which our Ministers adopted a decision in Vilnius in 2011. We continue to hope that the broad support of participating States will soon translate itself to an Action Plan adopted by all.

Let us not forget for a single moment that not one among the 57 participating States can boast of a perfect record when it comes to the promotion of women's rights. We must all make progress in empowering women. In order to do so, we must equip our Organization with strengthened tools to more effectively support our national efforts.

In concluding, I would like to reiterate our strong support for Special Representative Zeitlin's indispensable work and wish her every success in her future endeavors.

Thank you.