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**STATEMENT BY
MR. ANDREY KELIN, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AT THE 1042nd MEETING OF
THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

5 March 2015

On International Women's Day

Mr. Chairperson,

It is gratifying to note on the eve of this holiday that the increased attention paid to International Women's Day on 8 March has become a welcome tradition in the Permanent Council. I should like to take this opportunity of congratulating all of the women in this room on this forthcoming event.

This first spring holiday enjoys widespread popularity in our country and it is not without reason that it has therefore been designated a public holiday.

In Russia today, women make up over half of the population and workforce. Everything is done to allow women to assert themselves, to reconcile family and career and to enable women with children to return to work. In terms of the social protection for motherhood, we have something to share with our colleagues.

Positive results have been achieved regarding the participation of women in the political and economic life of the country. For example, 55 per cent of the staff of the legislative authorities are women, and in the courts and public prosecutors' offices they account for as many as 68 per cent of the staff. Women make up 43 per cent of business executives, twice as much as the global average. Many women occupy prominent government and public positions.

The OSCE has solid experience in fostering gender equality, including the 2004 Action Plan. Last year in Basel we adopted a decision on combating violence against women. Much has been done to ensure equal opportunities for participation by men and women in all spheres of life.

But there are still problems in this area. In our opinion, it is important to concert our efforts to create conditions in which women and men can both fully develop their potential and make use of their knowledge and skills. It goes without saying in that regard that due

account should be taken of the special role played by women in preserving cultural, religious, moral and family values, and in bringing up children.

So, once again, compliments to our valuable female colleagues.

Thank you for your attention.