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***STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY
On International Women's Day
(943rd Meeting of the Permanent Council, 7 March 2013)***

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

The yearly observance of International Women's Day serves to emphasize not only the vital role and contribution of women in all aspects of life, but also to remind us of how much more needs to be done in order to ensure that their achievements are honored and celebrated, that their empowerment steadily progresses, that gender equality becomes an everyday fact of life in all of our societies.

For its part, Turkey is committed to the goals of improving the living standards and rights of women, ensuring their full and equal participation in all spheres of life and strengthening their equal status in society.

The United Nations' theme for this year's International Women's Day is: "A promise is a promise: Time for action to end violence against women". In this context, I would once again like to draw my colleagues' attention to the fact that Turkey is the first country to sign and to ratify the "Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence". Furthermore, 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", which incorporates the provisions of the Convention into our national legislation.

Speaking at the United Nations this week, our Minister for Family and Social Policies, Ms. Fatma Şahin, summarized the progress we have made by emphasizing Turkey's policy of "zero tolerance against violence on women".

I would also like to take this opportunity to refer to the draft Ministerial Council decision on the OSCE-Wide Action Plan on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Turkey is co-sponsoring this decision together with Austria, Finland and Kazakhstan. The protection of the rights of women in armed conflicts and full participation of women in all conflict prevention, peace-building, mediation and post-conflict reconstruction processes are some of the main issues where the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 needs



to be strengthened. The OSCE's comprehensive and cooperative approach to security constitutes the basis of our endeavors in this regard.

I think it would be safe to say 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 more progress in empowering women. In this context the OSCE, a regional security organization with tangible tools at its disposal, undeniably has an added value in our efforts to develop a continuous, comprehensive and forward-looking approach to all aspects of women, peace and security. We believe that international organizations can provide a great deal of incentive and support to national efforts in this context.

Thank you.

