



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **On Turkey's Withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Courtney Austrian  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 25, 2021

I would like to convey President Biden's statement from March 21, 2021.

“Turkey's sudden and unwarranted withdrawal from the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, better known as the Istanbul Convention, is deeply disappointing. Around the world, we have witnessed a surge in the number of domestic violence incidents, including reports of rising femicide in Turkey, the first nation to sign the Convention. Countries must work to strengthen and renew their commitments to ending violence against women, not rejecting international treaties designed to protect women and hold abusers accountable. This is a disheartening step backward for the international movement to end violence against women globally.

Gender-based violence is a scourge that touches every nation in every corner of the world. In the past few weeks, we've seen too many examples of horrific and brutal assaults on women, including the tragic murders in the state of Georgia.

And we've seen the broader damage that living under the daily specter of gender-based violence does to women everywhere. It hurts all of us, and we all must do more to create societies where women are able to go about their lives free from violence.”

Madam Chair, just two weeks ago, the OSCE observed International Women's Day at the Permanent Council and through numerous events. Collectively, we reaffirmed our commitment to eliminate violence against women and girls. We also reaffirmed the importance of gender equality and women's participation in peace and security issues in all phases of the conflict cycle. At this pivotal time for women's human rights, we must increase our collective efforts to defend and uphold those rights, not roll them back.

Thank you, Madam Chair.