



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

**Statement by
Ms. Alemka Vrcan
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration**

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**Equality of opportunity for women and men; Implementation of the OSCE Action Plan for the
Promotion of Gender Equality; Prevention of violence against women
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Thank you Mr. Chairman,

At the outset let me thank you for the opportunity to take the floor at this session and give you some insights on recent developments in Croatia concerning our today's topics.

In recent years, Croatia has introduced a new legislative framework as well as strategies and policies with a view, improving the policy of equal opportunities, preventing gender discrimination and violence against women.

In this respect it is important to mention two laws that form the core legislative framework and legal guarantees in this field - the Gender Equality Act and the Anti-discrimination Act.

Croatia has also adopted the Strategy of Development of Female Entrepreneurship and its Action Plan in order to create a motivating setting for an increase of women entrepreneurs in the labor market.

In addition, in February this year the National Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence 2011-2016 has been adopted, and this July the Croatian Parliament adopted the Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality for the period 2011-2015.

Due to legislative and institutional changes Croatia witnessed significant progress in public awareness, judicial protection of human rights and higher participation of women in decision-making positions.

In this respect, let me remind that the Croatian Prime Minister and the President of the Constitutional Court are women, strongly committed to the promotion of gender equality policy. Allow me to also mention that women represent the majority of judges and occupy one- third of the highest ranked positions in the public administration.

However, despite the positive and significant achievements, there is a clear need for further committed efforts.

Even though the gender gap regarding access to education has not been recorded, there are still differences in the selection of secondary schools and universities, reflecting a division of labour into male and female professions.

In Croatia, similar to many European countries, women make the majority of unemployed, being concentrated in lower-income professions. If they do the same work, they are generally paid less than men.

In this regard, addressing women's situation on the labor market, especially long-term unemployment and the pay-gap, requires a multifaceted approach that should incorporate gender sensitive employment policy.

Although the achievements of full equality of men and women should be expanded through all levels of public and private life, gender sensitive education and a systematic training of teachers on gender equality issues play a particularly important role and further efforts should be invested in order to develop the educational system free of prejudice and stereotypes.

Finally, let me stress that the principles of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality were incorporated in the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 adopted in July this year, ensuring a coordinated outreach of national activities to both, regional and global level

Thank you.