



United States Mission to the OSCE

Session 16: Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Right of Reply

As prepared for delivery by Ambassador Cynthia Efir
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This discussion today on equality of opportunity and the prevention of violence against women has been, in my opinion, particularly rich and valuable. The many calls for women to be represented at the policy- and decision-making table, including at the senior levels of OSCE itself, are important reminders that women must be allowed to contribute to the search for practical solutions to all societal problems.

The Russian Federation has listed some problems the United States faces in countering violence against women, especially in prisons, and the need to consider the protection of ethnic minorities as part of the context in protecting all women's rights which are, of course, human rights.

The U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, has been a leader in this area as a Senator in our legislature, and now in her current position. Under her leadership, the State Department, in its Human Rights Report, references the U.S. national report submitted to the U.N. Human Rights Council, with information on U.S. shortcomings and on U.S. efforts to improve our human rights performance, including those of women and minorities. I recommend this report to the Russian Federation since it addresses our attempts to overcome these problems we all face at much greater length than I can do in this Right of Reply.

The Human Rights report itself includes a lot of good information about women's rights throughout the world and is available and at the website www.state.gov.

Thank you.