



**Statement
in Response to the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on
Gender, Ambassador Melanne Verveer**

**as delivered by Ambassador Arman Kirakossian, Permanent Representative of Armenia,
at the 1178th Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council
March 08, 2018**

Mr. Chairperson,

I would like to thank the Italian Chairmanship for dedicating this morning session of the Permanent Council to the International Women Day and thus to the issues of advancement women in all sphere of public life.

In this regard, I would also like to welcome Ambassador Melanne Verveer, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Gender and acknowledge her contribution in framing up today's discussion.

The International Women Day is both anniversary and celebration. Anniversary and commemoration of more than century long struggle to advance women as an equal part of society and celebration of all virtues emanating from women's role in the society.

Ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women constitutes one of the important theme of international cooperation elsewhere, and the OSCE with its strong emphasis on security is not an exception. In our view, gender mainstreaming should remain principal instrument in achieving advancement of women throughout OSCE three dimension.

Armenia values the OSCE role in advancing the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and looks forward to the continued cooperation with the OSCE Secretariat.

Women should be protected in all phases of conflicts and particular emphasis should be made on those who are at danger of violence and atrocities or already affected by it in the conflict area. Access to the women residing in conflict areas is a prerequisite for any effective actions on Women, Peace and Security.

Domestic violence is another phenomenon, which requires effective action. This year, Armenia has signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and its decision to join the Convention has been thoroughly debated at societal level bringing together various stakeholders. Active debates entailed also the adoption of the national law on domestic violence, which adopts holistic approach from prevention to protection and rehabilitation.

We are also pleased to refer to another positive development, such as increasing threshold for women representation in parliament through party lists, which resulted in stronger participation of women MPs in National Assembly of Armenia elected last year.

In this regard, we would like to acknowledge the cooperation with the ODIHR, something that we are going to do in more details later today.

In conclusion, let me congratulate Ms. Melanne Verveer and all women in this hall and wish them more strength in leading OSCE towards peace, security and cooperation.

Thank you