



**PERMANENT DELEGATION
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY NORWAY IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF AUSTRIA,
H.E. BARBARA PRAMMER,
ON THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

As delivered by Ambassador Robert Kvile
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
8 March, 2012

Mr. Chairman,

Let me join others in warmly thanking the President of the National Council of Austria, H.E. Barbara Prammer, for her excellent presentation. Norway shares her views. We also fully subscribe to the points already made by the European Union and others on the importance of gender issues.

We believe that women's rights are an inherent part of the universal human rights. We also believe that gender equality is an important aspect of both security and economic development. It is therefore absolutely essential for the OSCE to promote gender equality in and across all three dimensions, inside our own organisation as well as in member states.

Mr. Chairman,

Gender equality is a priority of your chairmanship. It is a priority for us as well. Norway will therefore support your efforts in promoting women's rights and gender equality.

Our organisation has the necessary tools to help participating states to implement their gender commitments. Often it is the political will to implement the commitments that is lacking.

As part of our gender agenda, we must redouble our efforts in fighting gender based oppression, including violence against women and human trafficking.

Norway also attaches great importance to the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security.

We welcome the positive trend of increased female representation in the Secretariat and the Institutions as well as the efforts of field operations towards gender mainstreaming. There is, however, a regrettable underrepresentation of women in key positions of the OSCE. The ultimate goal must be to reach a balanced gender representation at all levels of our organisation. We therefore support the Secretary General's recommendation to revise and update the 2004 OSCE Gender Action Plan.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by congratulating all those in favour of gender equality with the International Women's Day.

Thank you.