



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

### **On International Day of the Girl**

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Harry R. Kamian  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
October 19, 2017

In recognition of the International Day of the Girl, the United States recognizes how girlhood shapes the lives of all women, and we promote the empowerment of more than 1 billion young girls growing up around the world.

Girlhood is a time when young women should be nurturing their skills, pursuing their passions, and building the foundations of their futures. For far too many girls, however, unreasonable limits and restrictions block their paths to achievement and self-fulfillment. In many countries, girls are seen as a burden or a commodity. These mindsets prevent girls from fully participating politically, socially, and economically in their communities. Around the world, girls are less likely than boys to be enrolled in school, which deprives them of vital resources and their best chance to learn the skills needed for a successful adulthood and life in a modern economy. Even for those who receive a quality education, however, women in roughly 100 countries must somehow also overcome laws that prevent or impede them from employment and entrepreneurship. Yet we know that societies and economies achieve far better results when they embrace, rather than marginalize, the power of women.

The United States reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that every female, young and old, is empowered to pursue her dreams. We recognize that the girls of today will tomorrow be leaders in every nation and every sector of the economy. To these ends, the United States has launched several new efforts to encourage girls to explore their interests in science, technology, engineering, and math fields, and careers that are essential to our 21st century economy. In addition, we are expanding access to vocational training and apprenticeships that will especially help women and girls. Around the world, the United States is working in communities to help girls know their rights, increase their self-confidence, and motivate them to be leaders in their communities. Ensuring young women have the access, education, and training they need to reach their full potential is critical to ensuring that the power, intellect, and skill of our best and brightest young women is unleashed for the betterment of all.

In honor of the International Day of the Girl, we commit to upholding the rights of all and working to ensure that every girl is born into a world where she is free to live her life to the fullest.

Mr. Chair, I am grateful that this item was included on our agenda today. As a father of a fifteen-year-old girl, I hope that she will have every opportunity and every right to grow up to be a mother, a wife, a doctor, a soccer player, a diplomat, a president, or any or all of the above. Whatever she chooses, she has that right.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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