



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

**STATEMENT BY MONSIGNOR MICHAEL W. BANACH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE,
AT THE 905th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL
15 MARCH 2012**

**RE: TOLERANCE AND NON DISCRIMINATION
IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND IN MOLDOVA**

Mister Chairman,

It was not my intention to take the floor at today's Permanent Council, but this discussion compels me to do so.

The position of the Holy See is well-known position of the Holy See: the topic of sexual orientation does not belong to the area of competence of the OSCE and its agenda; there is no consensus among participating States on this issue, even if some are trying to force the Organization to deal with it. This position has recently been expressed at previous Meetings of the Permanent Council.

The Holy See is convinced that what is needed in our Organization is more focused energy and efforts to fulfill the OSCE commitments agreed upon by all participating States, and to resist the unilateral expansion of the same. Undue attention to other concerns serves only to distract the efforts of the OSCE, as well as to forestall the original commitments, many of which have yet to be implemented.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.