

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

EEF.DEL/1/21
15 February 2021

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE 29th OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Vienna, 15 February 2021

Promoting comprehensive security, stability and sustainable development in the OSCE area through women's economic empowerment

Opening session

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the participants in the First Preparatory Meeting for the 29th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum. We thank the Swedish Chairmanship and the distinguished Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, Ambassador Vuk Žugić, together with his team for organizing this event and drawing up an interesting agenda.

The creation of equal opportunities for women to participate in the economy is acquiring ever greater relevance in the OSCE area. We welcome the Swedish Chairmanship's selection of this topic, given that this year is the tenth anniversary of the adoption, in 2011, of the Vilnius Ministerial Council decision laying down relevant commitments.

Due attention is being paid in the Russian Federation to the expansion of opportunities for women and their role in the economy. The National Action Strategy for Women for 2017–2022 and the Women Leaders educational programme are being implemented. A number of community-based organizations are actively involved in this area, including, for example, Businesswomen of Russia, the Committee for Women's Entrepreneurship Development of Opora (an organization of small and medium-sized enterprises), the Women's Power Union and the Women's Business Academy (a social and educational project).

First held in 2015 and taking place every three years, the Eurasian Women's Forum, a major international event, is organized in St. Petersburg by the parliamentary bodies of Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. The Council of the Forum has initiated such projects as "Development of women's entrepreneurship", "Women for sustainable industrial development", "Women's co-operation in world trade", "Women in the digital economy" and "Enhancing women's financial literacy".

Russia advocates the development of international co-operation aimed at expanding the participation of women in the economy and is working on this issue together with the United Nations Industrial

Development Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the other BRICS countries (that is, Brazil, India, China and South Africa) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

We consider the following to be among the priorities both within our country and in the OSCE area: creating an enabling environment for women's professional and personal development and enhancing women's economic participation; providing comprehensive support, based on examples of best practices, for women's entrepreneurship, above all in relation to small and medium-sized enterprises; establishing programmes to promote women's leadership; ensuring that women have broader access to markets and finance; and developing an investment platform for projects involving women.

In our view, it is especially important to promote the further adoption of innovative technologies and development of the digital economy, both of which in practice help to enhance the participation of women in economic activities. In Russia the process of digitalization has made it possible to make a number of professions that were once regarded as typically male occupations more comfortable for and attractive to women. For example, in January this year, the first cohort of female train drivers at the Moscow Metro took up their jobs.

We are keen to engage in constructive dialogue and the exchange of best practices at the events of this year's Economic and Environmental Forum, drawing on the intellectual resources of the participating States and the expertise of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities. May we all have fruitful discussions!

Thank you for your attention.