

ENGLISH only



United States Mission to the OSCE

On International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. Harry Kamian
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
November 30, 2017

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25, and the accompanying 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, the United States joins other participating States who have already taken the floor in reaffirming its commitment to defending the rights of women and girls to live free from violence.

The International Day and the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign to focus global attention on the scourge of violence against women, including child and forced marriage, domestic violence, and all forms of human trafficking. We know that violence against women and girls undermines global peace and security. It also weakens the social fabric that binds families and communities together, and prevents countries from achieving social stability and economic development.

Nearly two decades after the United Nations General Assembly established the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, we continue to recognize that violence against women remains a persistent threat and an obstacle to achieving women's equality. The United States is especially alarmed by violent extremist groups' use of violence against women as a tactic of terror to suppress women, recruit terrorists, and stigmatize communities. We denounce terrorist organizations' use of forced conscription, sexual exploitation, and abuse, including the sex trafficking of women and girls.

The United States will never waver in its support for women's equality. In partnership with other governments, international organizations, and civil society around the world, we will continue to work to end violence against women and girls globally and to ensure that women and girls have equal rights and opportunities. On International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and throughout the 16 Days of Activism, we call on all governments to join us in our shared responsibility to end violence against women.

In closing, Mr. Chair, I would like to thank the Austrian Chairmanship for tabling a draft ministerial decision on combating violence against women. The United States commends the Chair's efforts to keep gender equality on the OSCE agenda this year.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

###