

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY
THE DELEGATION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE
OSCE GENDER EQUALITY REVIEW CONFERENCE**

Vienna, 10 and 11 July 2014

Working Session II: A Gender Perspective in Economic Empowerment

Madam Chairperson,

In the modern world, there is a need to strive for equal opportunities and conditions for women and men in public, political and economic life. Economic equality and women's right to work in their chosen field are a vital component of gender equality. Professionalism and competence should be the criteria when deciding whether a person gets a particular job, and sexual discrimination is unacceptable.

Following the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, Russia undertook to increase the participation of women in decision-making; the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation on increasing the role of women in federal government authorities and in the government authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation was issued in 1996.

The gender aspect is given comprehensive consideration in programmes for the socio-economic development of Russia and in the political life of our country. Women in Russia are the backbone of the economy and the social sector. They have a firm position in the country's economy and are traditionally employed in education, public health and social services, finance and commerce. In Russia, women make up 40 per cent of the managers of private companies, including the majority of the heads of small and medium-sized enterprises.

The institution of the Commissioner for Entrepreneurs' Rights was established in our country in 2012. A regional network of commissioners for entrepreneurs' rights has been set up in virtually all the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. Businessmen and businesswomen alike, including representatives of the foreign business community, approach the Commissioner.

We believe that it is important to empower women through the optimal combination of family and professional life. In continuing to implement programmes to protect mothers and children, we shall endeavour to secure more active involvement of women in all aspects of social relations and ensure their greater representation in political and economic affairs. A

number of programmes are under way in our country to provide support for self-employed women with children, and assistance in setting up small businesses and in obtaining higher education, both at the federal and regional level.

We take a positive view of the OSCE's efforts to support and develop the role of women in socio-economic and political fields. We believe that an exchange of views and experience between OSCE participating States in this area will help to step up and achieve a balance in the efforts to improve the situation of women. In this connection, it is essential to avoid a bias in favour of absolute priority being given to gender equality and the protection of women's rights, as well as attempts to peddle the illusion that when a 50 per cent parity with men is achieved in employment, education and other fields, this will automatically solve all the problems that women face and the rapid development of society will begin.

Positive discrimination can also have an adverse effect, contributing to stagnation in social and economic development. It is not sufficient to apply simplified formulas mechanically. What is required is a carefully considered and comprehensive approach.