

Delegation of Italy

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR GIANFRANCO VARVESI,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ITALY TO THE OSCE**

**In response to the statement by the Acting Chargé d'affaires of the Mission  
of the United States of America to the OSCE on the occasion of  
International Roma Day**

With reference to the statement by the United States mission to the OSCE on occasion of International Roma Day, which was distributed at the meeting of the Permanent Council on 2 April 2009 (PC.DEL/225/09), I should like to thank the delegation of the United States for giving me this opportunity to brief the Permanent Council on a matter to which particular attention has been drawn in a way that has highlighted a number of negative situations but has overlooked the fact that in most cases the prevailing approach has been one of solidarity and humanitarianism, which is characteristic of Italy when dealing with human suffering, whatever its cause. I might further note that in my country the existing constitutional and legal norms ensure that fundamental human rights are fully respected and that appropriate institutions are in place to see to it that there are no abuses or discrimination of any kind in the application of the law.

More specifically, regarding the visit that took place in Italy last July, I would remind you that the final text of the report of the delegation of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights/Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities incorporated a number of the many observations that I put forward, and I should like to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Lenarčič for his personal involvement in seeking greater objectivity. The ODIHR/HCNM document is currently before the relevant Italian authorities in order that they may find formulas for constructive collaboration. With regard to criminal acts committed in Italy by foreigners against Italian citizens, by foreigners against foreigners or by Italians against foreigners, I wish to emphasize that in my country the law is the same for all. Persons suspected of unlawful behaviour are reported to the judicial authorities. With reference to the events of 2008, I can say that the police were quick in presenting a report to the Office of the Public Prosecutor, which, after launching an investigation, identified two suspected guilty parties. The relevant judicial proceedings are currently under way.