



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia
OSCE

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**UNITING TO FIGHT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS (VAWG): OSCE APPROACH
TO ADDRESSING VAWG AS A SECURITY ISSUE**

Vienna, 9 December 2022

Thank you very much Secretary General. Allow me to congratulate you and the OSCE Gender Issues Team, and in particular Lara Scarpitta and Vera Strobachova Budway, for this very timely initiative and for your strong dedication to raising awareness on gender equality and women empowerment.

The Strategic Guidance on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Girls presented today is another important practical tool of the OSCE.

Advancing gender equality and ending violence against women and girls is crucial to promote an approach to security that is comprehensive, legitimate and sustainable. The war in Ukraine – and indeed conflicts in many regions of the world - confirm once again that, in situations of war and emergency, women and girls are particularly exposed to the risk of violence and abuse. We need to step up our efforts in order to uproot this unacceptable phenomenon, hopefully once and for all.

Italy firmly condemns all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls. We support and promote the implementation of the Council of Europe “Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence” and we are at the forefront of many international campaigns, for example to eliminate female genital mutilations (FGMs) and child and forced marriage.

At a national level, the “National Strategic Plan on Men’s violence against Women for the period 2021-2023”, adopted by the Ministry for Equal Opportunities, strengthens coordination among different national authorities and civil society organisations.

I would also take this opportunity to mention our excellent cooperation with ODIHR, including within the framework of the CHANGE (Capitalising on the Human Dimension Mandate to Advance Gender Equality) extra-budgetary project, which has been financially supported by Italy.

In conclusion, I would like to commend you once again for this timely initiative and for the work done by the Secretariat and the Autonomous Institutions in the implementation of the 2014 OSCE Gender Strategy.