



Rappresentanza Permanente d'Italia  
OSCE

**MIN. PLEN. GIANLUCA ALBERINI  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS**

**2022 MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE  
ITALY'S STATEMENT AT SESSION III "WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT.  
SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW WORLD OF WORK:  
BARRIERS, PRACTICES AND OPPORTUNITIES "**

Jordan, 25 October 2022

Madam Chair,

our sincere thanks to the speakers for their expertise and precious insights.

The protection and promotion of women's and girls' rights, gender equality and women's empowerment are among Italy's utmost priority in the field of human rights. These issues also lay at the heart of our last mandate in the UN Human Rights Council (2019-2021) and our Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (November 2021 -May 2022).

Advancing gender equality in political, economic and social life is crucial to promote an approach to security that is comprehensive, legitimate and sustainable. Gender responsive policies, legislation and action are indeed a sound pillar for democracy, sustainable development and durable peace.

In this respect, we firmly believe that promoting the full, effective and meaningful participation of women and girls in all spheres of public life and decision-making process and closing the gender gap in the labour market are key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular SDG 5.

The economic and social fallouts of the COVID-19 pandemic, in the short, medium and long term, have compounded already existing crises provoked by armed conflicts and humanitarian insecure contexts in many regions of the world. Women and girls suffer disproportionately from the consequences of these crises, which affect them in a negative and multidimensional way, ranging from economic impoverishment to rampant gender-based violence.

Against this backdrop, it is of the utmost importance to reaffirm, at the national level, within the OSCE and in all concerned international fora, our unwavering commitment to the promotion and protection of all human rights of women and girls, as well as to fight all forms of gender-based discrimination against them, which remain a major impediment to gender equality and an effective and meaningful women's empowerment.

Allow me to mention three actions Italy has taken to promote women's empowerment:

1. At the national level, in 2021, Italy formulated its first National Strategy for Gender Equality. The Strategy identifies five priorities: work, income, skills, time, and power. High priority is given to promoting women's participation in the labour market, with particular attention to work-life balance and care responsibilities. In addition, the document includes measures to encourage an equal division of rights and duties between genders, rebalancing the allocation of all unpaid care and assistance activities, and ensuring quality, affordable, and widespread early childhood care throughout the country.

2. Internationally, the implementation of the Women Peace and Security Agenda remains one of Italy's major priorities. To this end, at the end of 2020 we approved Italy's fourth National Action Plan (NAP) on Women Peace and Security for the 2020-2024 period. The Italian Parliament allocated 3 million Euro for the 2020-2023 term in support of the implementation of the NAP.

3. In 2017, we launched the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network (MWMN), which combines Italy's role in the Mediterranean region and its commitments to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and to the promotion of gender equality. The Network responds to the pressing need to foster women's participation in peace processes, mediation efforts and peacebuilding in a region that is key for global peace and stability. It brings together a multigenerational group of more than 60 qualified women mediators from 21 countries from all the shores of the Mediterranean area. A more intense

cooperation and exchanges between the Network and the OSCE institutions could be actively promoted within the agenda of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership.

Madam Chair, our efforts to advance women's economic empowerment is an integral part of our general commitment to advance the comprehensive concept of security upon which our Organisation is based. In this regard, it is of fundamental importance to ensure the full, meaningful and equal participation of women in all spheres of society, as well as in all phases of the conflict cycle. We need to constantly recognize the critical role of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in achieving peace and security in the OSCE region.

Allow me to conclude by commending the work done by the OSCE Secretariat and the Autonomous Institutions in the implementation of the OSCE Gender Strategy, recalling also our excellent cooperation with ODIHR, including within the framework of the CHANGE extra-budgetary project (*Capitalising on the Human Dimension Mandate to Advance Gender Equality*), which has been financially supported by Italy.

Thank you.