



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

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Remarks

High-Level Panel

Workshop 2: Trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants

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Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the very outset, allow me to express my gratitude to the Executive Director of UNODC, Mr. Yury Fedotov, for the kind invitation to speak at this Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in order to address the important issue of trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling.

In recent years, my Office and I have enjoyed close co-operation with Mr. Fedotov and the UNODC, which is a long-standing member of our *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons*. Our collaboration allows us to exchange views and expertise in many specialized gatherings where we share best practices and lessons learned with the aim of fostering a constructive dialogue with national and international counterparts.

The OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization, comprising 57 states on a territory that stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok. We take a human rights-based approach to combating human trafficking across this vast region, raising the public and political profile of our work and assisting participating States, at their request, in the implementation of OSCE commitments. The OSCE was in fact a pioneer of the human rights approach to combating trafficking, reflecting in part its concept of common and comprehensive security which addresses the human, economic, political and military dimensions of security as an integral whole.

The broad scope of my mandate allows me to meet a wide range of actors in the struggle against human trafficking, including high-ranking government officials and NGO representatives who work directly with victims. This has given me great insight into the **emerging trends and challenges** that we confront in our efforts to eliminate modern day slavery.

Since the first OSCE Ministerial Decision on combating human trafficking in 2000, a great deal of progress has been made. Most of our participating States have endorsed, or have started to endorse,

a cross-dimensional and human rights based response to this phenomenon. They have made significant achievements in criminalizing human trafficking within their legal systems, creating national co-ordinating structures to build synergies among relevant state and non-state stakeholders, establishing National Rapporteur or equivalent mechanisms to monitor and report on CTHB as well as undertaking preventative actions designed to diminish vulnerability to trafficking.

It is known that criminal organizations engaged in human trafficking have become much more sophisticated in their *modus operandi*, employing subtle new methods of recruitment, and penetrating new economic sectors, both legal and illegal, to exploit victims and launder profits. As a result, there is no doubt that trafficking in human beings has developed into a major criminal phenomenon entailing gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Traffickers are also increasing their use of the Internet and associated information technology to recruit and exploit victims, including children, and divert the income they earn to legitimate business operations.

As I travel across the OSCE region and beyond to deliver trainings and carry out official Country Visits, I have seen first hand how trafficking for labour exploitation is steadily increasing, including for domestic servitude. Regrettably, child trafficking for all forms of exploitation is also on the rise, while other crimes, such as trafficking for the purpose of organ removal, are becoming more common. Amidst these emerging trends, trafficking for sexual exploitation remains the predominant form of human trafficking in terms of cases in my region.

My own experience is backed up with empirical data compiled by our hosts in their excellent Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014, which also found that since 2010, 49 per cent of detected victims of trafficking are women, 18 per cent are men and 33 per cent are children. The latter statistic represents a 5 per cent increase in child victims compared to previous years.

Now let us turn to the main **challenges** that we in the anti-trafficking community face. Victim identification and protection are among the biggest. But how can we protect these vulnerable people? There are of course a range of possibilities, but I would like to briefly cite two: implement the non-punishment provision for victims and provide unconditional access to protective services, regardless of legal status or the victim's readiness to co-operate with authorities.

In part because victims are afraid of co-operating with authorities, the number of prosecutions and convictions of traffickers remains a serious concern. This highlights the need for law enforcement to not only rely on victim testimony, but also to develop alternative and pro-active investigative strategies. That is why my Office is developing this year a training module on the integration of financial investigations into trafficking investigations, and hopes to collaborate further with UNODC, the Council of Europe as well as financial institutions and private companies in this regard. Such strategies could allow judges and prosecutors to increase the number of successful convictions and confiscate considerable amounts of illicit flows associated with human trafficking. Please bear in mind that THB ranks as the third largest source of illicit profit after narcotics and arms trafficking. In 2014, the ILO estimated that the annual criminal revenue of THB amounted to 150 billion USD, five times more than its 2005 estimate.

Finally, **tackling the social and economic roots** of trafficking remains one of the most effective ways to prevent modern-day slavery in a holistic manner, including through fighting discrimination and reducing the vulnerability of potential victims. This includes tackling difficult issues within our own community, such as the problem of human trafficking for domestic servitude in diplomatic households, by working with protocol departments across the OSCE to assist them in their efforts to protect these workers.

We also work closely with the business community by exploring methods to keep human trafficking out of their supply chains. In 2014, we issued a publication, *“Ending Exploitation. Ensuring that Businesses do not contribute to Trafficking in Human Beings: Duties of States and the Private Sector”* that explored this issue in detail.

These brief examples provide an introduction to how we fight trafficking at the OSCE, in line with our mandate and Action Plan, which includes a recent Addendum.

Our mandate revolves around three key objectives:

First, to raise the public and political profile of combating trafficking in human beings.

Second, to assist the OSCE participating States in the implementation of anti-trafficking

commitments (and full usage of the recommendations of the Action Plan).

Third, to pursue strategic co-ordination of OSCE anti-trafficking efforts and seek synergies with other relevant stakeholders.

The Addendum updating the OSCE Action Plan is the latest expression of the OSCE's and participating States' political will to combat human trafficking, taking a proactive and innovative approach. In order to increase **prosecutions** the document identifies the need to trace, freeze and confiscate the proceeds of crime. It also stresses the importance of **prevention**, outlining a wide spectrum of measures, such as paying special attention to the needs and vulnerability of children, that can break the cycle of victimization. **Protection** is another key aspect of the Addendum, which recommends that victims are assisted even before an investigation is initiated, regardless of the victim's willingness to participate in legal proceedings. Finally, there is a new chapter on **partnerships**, highlighting the need for enhanced international co-operation with law enforcement, the private sector and other key actors.

Let me briefly outline some of the most innovative projects and activities that we are planning for 2015.

Prosecution lies at the heart of a number of our activities. Specifically, I firmly believe that we should continue to strengthen our criminal justice response, making it more holistic and targeted, while also improving our intelligence-led approach. For this, more guidance and capacity building for criminal justice actors is needed -- not only on the new forms and trends of trafficking, but also on conducting financial investigations.

Victim **protection** is a core principle that we uphold in all our activities. Indeed, many different stakeholders could be empowered to better co-operate and identify possible victims of trafficking such as labour inspectors, law enforcement, migration and other officials dealing with illegal migrants as well as relevant stakeholders involved in conflict zones.

In keeping with our human rights centred approach, we shall also continue to promote the implementation of the non-punishment provision. Moreover, the Addendum confirms the victims' right to justice and remedies including compensation for harm suffered. It has proven to be effective

only if victims have access to legal assistance. I will therefore continue to promote it during my country visits.

Preventing human trafficking in the first place is essential, including through addressing demand and its root causes. We should more systematically target the root causes of this crime, as THB and forced labour cannot be prevented without addressing the inter-linkages between relevant policy areas, and recognizing the necessity to mainstream anti-trafficking work across these policy areas.

I plan to focus on factors which foster exploitation leading to all forms of THB, especially the demand for inexpensive socially unprotected labour. My Office will proactively engage States, civil society, business, trade unions, and others to undertake measures to ensure that the private sector does not contribute to exploitation in their supply chains and workplaces. Governments are powerful economic actors and they can use their purchasing power to ensure accountability and transparency of contractors by developing public procurement regulations.

Partnerships have played an essential role in allowing us to increase the impact of our efforts. At times of prolonged financial constraints, it is imperative to forge goal-oriented partnerships at all levels in order to improve complementarity and avoid duplication and the waste of important resources. In this regard, we are planning to continue to conduct joint activities and training for the judiciary with the Council of Europe as well as continue our excellent co-operation with UNODC on a number of fronts. We are also working with both organizations to avoid overlap during the data collection and analysis for a survey that I will conduct this year. The resulting document will be an important tool for systematically reviewing the progress made in the OSCE region towards the implementation of agreed commitments and recommendations, and to better tailor our future initiatives to the most pressing needs.

This will build upon our strong legacy of collaboration that last year allowed us to organize, together with the IOM, the 11-12 June Trans-Regional Workshop in Athens to analyse the impact of immigration control and criminal justice measures in view of improving their effectiveness in countering illegal border crossing and protecting vulnerable migrants. The OSCE and UNODC also co-organized a judicial training seminar, together with IOM and Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV) in Haifa on 27-30 October. I have been working closely with UNODC on promoting the use of anti-money laundering instruments to combat human

trafficking. In 2011, our Office partnered with UNODC on an expert seminar on this subject, which featured experts and national authorities from leading financial institutions, law enforcement agencies and stakeholders from civil society.

I also am very keen on continuing to **conduct country visits**, as they have proven to be an excellent tool for dialogue and co-operation with the participating States and their anti-trafficking authorities. Last month I completed visits to Baku and Skopje, and Tajikistan, France and Turkey are scheduled for later this year.

Finally, I believe that the anti-trafficking community should more carefully consider the **impact of crisis and conflicts on human trafficking**, and find a way to contribute to lasting solutions to address these challenges. In this context, it is crucial to follow developments within the OSCE region and beyond its borders, including the crisis in and around Ukraine as well as ongoing conflicts here in the Middle East. It is essential that we gather up-to-date information, engage with high-level authorities, and raise awareness about the repercussions of these crises.

Therefore, I have chosen to focus on this subject during the 15th *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons* conference, entitled, “People at risk: combating human trafficking along migration routes” that will take place on 6-7 July in Vienna. The event aims to further enhance the coherence of international efforts when addressing human trafficking in the context of migration processes through an open exchange of best practices and lessons learned.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When we consider the current geopolitical climate, the ongoing conflicts and the vast numbers of refugees they have created, it is obvious that 2015 is going to be a challenging year. At the same time, I am confident that by working together, we in the international community can confront these issues and take positive steps to reduce the number of trafficking victims. When we meet again in five years’ time, we will be able to look back on this meeting as the place where we created a vision for a better, more equitable world, before departing to translate this vision into reality.

Thank you.