



23rd Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons

***It's About People: National Leadership
to End Human Trafficking***

18-19 April 2023

Hofburg, Vienna, Austria

CONCEPT NOTE

THE ALLIANCE

The Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference is an annual gathering of key stakeholders from across the OSCE region that aims to raise the political profile of the fight against trafficking in human beings (THB) and discuss emerging topics and trends in this area. With participation from national authorities, as well as international and civil society organizations, the Alliance helps to align and amplify the efforts of all stakeholders toward the common goal of preventing and combating human trafficking. Since its establishment in 2004 as a framework for advocacy and co-operation, the Alliance has supported OSCE participating States in developing a robust, harmonized approach to combating THB that seeks to protect human rights, security, the rule of law and good governance throughout the region.

THE FOCUS

On the 20th anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan, the 23rd Alliance Conference against Trafficking in Persons will showcase examples of leadership and path-breaking in combating trafficking in human beings within OSCE participating States. The focus will be on establishing the core building blocks of an effective national response, including the legislative and policy action, government anti-trafficking systems and structures, investment, and political will needed to achieve success.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Human trafficking is one of the largest organized criminal activity in the world, and ranks among the most widespread human rights violations across the OSCE region. Yet, resources allocated to combat it remain disproportionately low, particularly considering the harm it causes to individuals and societies. At the same time, in recent years, trafficking has evolved significantly, taking on new forms, moving more online, and growing in size. Against this backdrop, there is an urgent need for anti-trafficking leadership to scale up national investment and action, including by equipping States with the necessary structures and laws to effectively combat trafficking in human beings in the modern day.

The aim of the Conference will be a renewed impetus across the OSCE region toward eradicating trafficking in human beings and a roadmap for success in the next 20 years of the OSCE Action Plan.

Day 1 begins with a **high-level opening session** that will highlight positive examples of anti-trafficking leadership across the OSCE region. The speakers will discuss how leadership has made the difference in achieving tangible success in combating trafficking, including through political prioritization and investment to build the capacities of institutions, policy frameworks and human resources to achieve impact. Next, **Panel 1** will dive deeper into the **nature and scale of the problem** of human exploitation and why strong leadership is necessary to overcome the challenge. The discussion will cover different forms of exploitation and their manifestations, as well as developing trends and patterns. It will also explore gaps in responses across the OSCE region and their consequences.

Day 2 will explore solutions, beginning with an introductory **discussion on anti-trafficking leadership led by survivors of trafficking**. **Panel 2** will examine the most effective anti-trafficking **systems and structures – the architecture for impact**. Presenters will consider the critical, bedrock structures needed in each country to effectively combat THB, including a national coordinator, an independent national rapporteur, a national anti-trafficking coordinating council or multi-agency task force, and a functioning national referral mechanism. A specific focus will be on fostering strong, multi-agency approaches and partnerships to achieve a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, as well as the need for robust investment, monitoring and data collection, and sustainable capacity-building.

Panel 3 will examine game-changing **laws and policies**, including those that address and capture the evolving nature of the crime, as well as a comprehensive anti-trafficking law that sets out not only criminalization of the crime but also structures for coordination, prevention, and protection. The panel will also highlight new areas where legislative intervention is needed to advance a “whole of society” approach, such as combating labor exploitation in supply chains, addressing the misuse of technology, and reducing the demand fostering exploitation.

The **closing** will wrap up the conference, summarize the lessons learnt and offer thoughts on the way forward, including a call to action for a renewed impetus to combat and ultimately end trafficking in human beings in the OSCE region.

THE OBJECTIVES

The programme of the Alliance Conference will encourage participants to reflect upon the key ‘building blocks’ of an effective State anti-trafficking response and will offer positive examples of anti-trafficking leadership on different topics across the OSCE region. The high level conference will seek to achieve the following goals: i) raise awareness on the growing and changing nature of the problem of human exploitation and trafficking across the OSCE region; ii) offer positive examples of what constitutes effective State’s anti-trafficking systems and structures; iii) outline areas where legislative or policy changes are needed to complement the traditional anti-trafficking work with more ambitious and effective market-based interventions, iv) showcase examples of political leadership in the anti-trafficking field across the OSCE area.

THE AUDIENCE AND FORMAT

The Conferences of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons are attended by representatives of the 57 OSCE participating States and 11 Partners for Co-operation, major international organizations and NGOs which are partners in the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, as well as civil society, media, the private sector, academia and relevant professional networks of national anti-trafficking practitioners. The 23rd Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons will be conducted in Vienna and bring the OSCE anti-trafficking community together in person for the first time after the COVID-19 pandemic. Active participation during the discussion sessions and via Twitter - @osce_cthb, #CTHB23 – is highly encouraged. For those who cannot travel to Vienna, a Zoom link to follow the discussions will be provided. Ahead of the Alliance, participants can use the hashtag #askOSCE on Twitter to ask questions to the speakers. More information will soon be available at <https://www.osce.org/event/alliance23>