



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

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**Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator
for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**

**Conference “Public-Private Partnership in the Fight Against Human
Trafficking”**

Opening Speech

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Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, MGIMO for hosting us, and Tamara Shashikhina for welcoming us today. I would like to thank Mr. Gennady Gatilov, the Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, for co-organizing this significant conference, which was agreed on at my meeting with Foreign Minister Lavrov during my country visit in February. I would like to express my gratitude to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the OSCE for their excellent cooperation in organizing this conference.

For those of you who are not familiar with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), we are the world's largest regional security organization with 57 participating States spread across an area that stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The OSCE addresses security through a comprehensive cross-dimensional approach, including addressing good governance and human rights. The OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings was established in 2004 as a high-level mechanism to promote the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan and other commitments on combating trafficking in human beings in all of our 57 participating States (pS).

My Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OSR/CTHB) has been tasked by the OSCE participating States to support them in the implementation of these and all anti-trafficking commitments.

The OSCE has shown leadership by adopting strong commitments and recommending actions on anti-trafficking measures as a cross-dimensional issue, from the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings of

2003, to the 2013 *Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: One Decade Later*.

The OSCE CTHB commitments contain strong recommendations for OSCE participating States to enhance co-operation between the public and private actors to combat THB. The OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings of 2003, for example, recommends to pS to “*adopt or review laws, administrative controls and procedures relating to the licensing and operation of sectors of business that, according to intelligence, may be involved in trafficking, such as employment, tourist, au pair, adoption or mail-order bride agencies, as well as hotels and escort services*”. Participating States are also recommended to increase awareness of different relevant target groups, including the private sector, to THB, to enhance their readiness to address it adequately and to strengthen their institutional capacity to counter it.

In addition, the Action plan encourages OSCE institutions to: facilitate contacts between **public and private actors** to encourage the local business community to offer job opportunities to victims of trafficking; and to help to mobilize and strengthen the *private sector*’s efforts to combat trafficking in human beings by raising awareness, and by identifying and disseminating best practices, such as self-regulation, policy guidelines and codes of conduct.

The 2013 *Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: One Decade Later* recommends that participating States *should encourage the private sector, trade unions and relevant civil society institutions, to promote codes of conduct to ensure the protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of workers throughout the supply chain in order to prevent the exploitative situations that foster trafficking in human beings*. In terms of capacity building and training, states should encourage the development and introduction of training programmes on THB-related issues

for a wide range of business areas, including commercial carriers, tourism and hospitality industry and human resources units of private sector companies.

Regarding Partnerships, the Addendum recommends governments to *encourage co-operation between law enforcement authorities, other relevant **State structures and the private sector** to combat THB-related money-laundering activities and also encourages **private sector**, including the banking sector, credit card companies, ICT companies and Internet service providers, to contribute to the prevention of all forms of THB and disrupting trafficking networks, inter alia, by providing THB-related information to the relevant authorities, and encouraging private legal sector entities to provide legal assistance to victims of THB, as applicable.* Finally, the OSCE adopted the 2015 OSCE Parliamentary Assembly *Resolution on Responsibility to Combat Trafficking in Government Contracts for Goods and Services*, and the 2016 MCD on *Good Governance and Connectivity*.

There is increasing awareness by both governments and the private sector of the scale of trafficking in human beings (THB) and the risks it poses globally. In 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons which stressed: “the importance of strengthening collective action by **Member States** and other stakeholders, including regional and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, **the private sector** and the media” as well as the public at large, called for “cooperation and coordination among all relevant stakeholders, to strengthen prevention and protection policies and programmes, ‘taking into account existing best practices and lessons learned’ and urged these stakeholders “to fully and effectively implement the relevant provisions of the Plan of Action’, with a ‘view to discouraging the demand that fosters the exploitation of persons, especially women and children, and that leads to trafficking”. This year the UN GPoA is undergoing a review, and it is

anticipated that an Addendum/Annex will be adopted at the High-Level meeting in NYC on 27-28 September, including actions relating to the responsibilities of both governments and the private sector to address THB in supply chains.

In 2011, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UN GPs) clearly outlined the roles of both State and businesses to protect human rights” and “the corporate responsibility to respect human rights”. The United Nations has recently taken a further step towards mainstreaming international efforts on combating forced labour and human trafficking, by including specific reference to trafficking in human beings, in Goals 8.7, 5.2 and 16.2 of the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. There is also goal 17, which is devoted to partnerships to implement the SDGs!

The *UN Global Compact* represents a voluntary initiative based on commitments by CEOs to implement sustainability principles and to take steps to support UN goals. *National Contact Points for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises* is another platform whose main role is to further the effectiveness of the Guidelines by undertaking promotional activities, handling enquiries, and contributing to the resolution of issues that may arise from the alleged non-observance of the guidelines in specific instances.

The CIS Program of Co-operation to Combat THB, developed Model legislation, which contains provisions encouraging the CIS member-States to co-operate with NGOs... “the interaction mechanisms are enhanced to improve cooperation among law enforcement agencies, border and migration control authorities, social protection agencies, healthcare and education departments, NGOs and other organizations for the purpose of adopting agreed-upon measures to counter trafficking in persons, especially women and children”; and “coordination is achieved among federal and local bodies, government and municipal agencies, international and non-governmental organizations, public

partnerships, other institutions of civil society, and the general public to counter TIP...and for the purpose of assisting human trafficking victims”.

No one country, organization or business can work alone. Each has a role to play. Since there is no governing body for the private sector of each country, working in a globalized system, the main existing mechanisms to handle the true scope of Modern Slavery are governments and simultaneously, inter-governmental organizations. However, one government or organization alone is not equipped to address the perverse and massive scope of human trafficking in global supply chains. We all need to work together to prevent human trafficking in a comprehensive way through improving economic competitiveness and connectivity and creating decent work conditions for workers in order to create a level playing field for businesses trying to do the right thing, especially when **90% of all forced labour occurs in the private economy.**

This Moscow Conference is building upon the *work already undertaken by my Office*. In particular, the OSCE addressed the topic of public-private partnership to prevent THB during the *14th Alliance Conference against Trafficking in Persons “Ethical Issues in Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking”*. The seventh occasional paper *“Ending Exploitation. Ensuring that Businesses do not Contribute to Trafficking in Human Beings: Duties of States and the Private Sector”* published in November 2014 by the OSR/CTHB outlines the measures that businesses can take to ensure that trafficking in human beings does not occur in their workplaces or those of their operations and it also reviews the obligations of the OSCE's participating States to regulate business activities and to enable businesses to take appropriate actions to stop human trafficking from occurring.

Further building on this work, we developed the ExB project, *Preventing Trafficking in Human Beings in Supply Chains, through Government Measures and Practices*, the purpose of which is to provide you, the OSCE participating

States, with the capacity to implement concrete measures to prevent human trafficking, including through public private partnership.

We held conferences and workshops in the framework of this project with our partner the CBSS in Stockholm Sweden, in Berlin together with the then German CiO and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the BMAS/Ministry of Labour, in London together with the UK Home Office, in Astana at my Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, and the final one we will be co-organized with our partner the ILO and Switzerland in Geneva in November.

Furthermore, we will develop a compendium of resources and flexible model guidelines, as practical tools on preventing human trafficking in supply chains, with a focus on public procurement, fair labour recruitment and transparency practices, based on discussions and inputs from these workshops. We hope to present these results at an event co-organized with the Austrian CiO in mid-December, and to finalize them by the end of the project, if we receive additional funding to fill the current funding gap.

We are heartened by *recent developments in the field* of preventing trafficking for labour exploitation in supply chains by OSCE participating States, businesses, IOs and civil society.

Good public private partnership practices from the OSCE region already exist, and include Germany's Partnership for Sustainable Textiles and leadership in the G20, and the Netherlands' Sustainable garment production and textile supply chain and the work around the "Child Labour Due Diligence Law".

The business community in the OSCE region has implemented different initiatives in promoting human rights and business and corporate social responsibility in narrow areas of the economy. The Ethical Trading Initiative in the UK (and Norway) is a leading alliance of companies, trade unions and

NGOs that promotes respect for workers' rights around the globe. The Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment (IHRB and IOM) is collaboration between leading companies and expert organizations to drive positive change in the way that migrant workers are recruited with its aim being the total eradication of fees being charged to workers to secure employment. The Electronic Industry Citizenship Coalition (EICC) will speak today about their coalition of electronics, retail, auto and toy companies committed to supporting the rights and wellbeing of workers and communities worldwide, whose vision is to see a global industry that creates sustainable value for workers, the environment and business.

Among international organizations there are several partnerships, such as ICAT among UN agencies, for example. The Alliance 8.7 is a new global initiative based on multi-stakeholder partnerships to support the implementation of SDG goal 8.7. At the regional level I would like to share the good practice of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, which I host. The OSCE brought together all major international and regional organizations working on THB in the OSCE region in 2004 in a platform of advocacy, called **the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons**, which is based on voluntary participation for the exchange of information, sharing experience and best practices. This informal forum was established immediately after the first Special Representative started her mandate in 2004, on the basis of thorough consultations with UN and international organization partners (ILO, IOM, UNODC, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNHCR, CoE, ECPAT, La Strada, Red Cross, Tdh, etc.)

This consultation with IOs led to the establishment of a smaller group of experts (the Alliance Expert Coordination Team or AECT), a unique mechanism representing the same organizations - partners of the Alliance - at the working operational level for hosting expert meetings (twice a year) at the OSCE in Vienna for updating each other, reaching common understanding of main trends

and other developments in the area of THB, sharing calendars of events, discussing gaps and priorities, and other issues making our organizations more efficient.

Beyond relationship building, the gathering of expertise and exchange of information, joint efforts and co-ordination, the Alliance provides other benefits to the members, including visibility, access to pS delegations/capitals and potential funding.

In conclusion, allow me to stress that my office sees our work on preventing human trafficking as strategic. We agree that public private partnership, to prevent child trafficking, sexual exploitation, to ensure fair recruitment practices, transparency by private sector companies, leveraging of anti-money laundering regimes to prevent and combat THB, etc. if correctly incentivized and enforced, can have a great influence on preventing human trafficking. In order to make this a reality, we must continue to strengthen our partnerships to ensure that all relevant stakeholders do their part, such as through the Alliance 8.7, and work together towards a similar approach. The goal of our norm setting project work is to create a level playing field by harmonizing jurisdictions across the OSCE region, thus lessening the burden on business to adapt to different laws and policies in various countries.

My Office stands ready to support governmental institutions, as well as work with our international partners, with civil society organizations and the private sector, in our continuous endeavor to improve our policies and actions in the fight against human trafficking, and to prevent it in the first place.

Together we must shine a brighter spotlight on human trafficking. Together in partnership we can make a great impact through continued collaboration to make the difference we would like to see a reality! Thank you for your attention!