



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe**

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**"Trafficking in Human Beings: Integral Part of Organized Crime,  
Transnational Threat to Security - New Trends, New Challenges"**

Workshop "Enhancement of Interaction among Bodies of Sectoral Co-operation  
between CIS Participating States  
in Combating Organized Crime and Human Trafficking"

**Moscow, Russian Federation**

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Dear Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished colleagues,

I am thankful to the CIS Executive Committee and IOM Moscow, the two organizations having strong partnership relations with the OSCE and my Office in the fight against human trafficking, for the opportunity to welcome the participants of this extremely important event. Let me reiterate from the very beginning: the topic we are discussing is of a special relevance to the OSCE work. It reflects the approach to human trafficking as an integral part of organized crime and a new transnational threat. The OSCE, fully in line with the decisions taken by the OSCE participating States, including all those represented at this Workshop, has been engaged in addressing this modern-day slavery within the framework of its Concept of Common and Comprehensive Security starting from 1999 and considers the fight against human trafficking as one of its priorities.

We have to admit that, irrespective of tremendous efforts undertaken at the global, regional and national levels, trafficking in men, women and children – for all forms of exploitation - has grown into a **phenomenon occurring on a massive scale**, which violates the whole spectrum of human rights and fundamental freedoms, affects the global economy, hampers economic growth, fuels corruption, and undermines the rule of law throughout the OSCE area, CIS being a part of it. This is the change of perception which is needed today, in order to identify the real challenges we have to face and adapt the institutional response to it.

Statistics reveals just a tiny part of identified victims, and beyond these figures remain the vast majority of those who have been trapped and kept like slaves at construction sites, farms, restaurants, hospitality business, garment factories, fishing, mines, entertainment sector, in forced prostitution, pornography, and in purely criminal field of activities – such as forced begging, selling drugs or stolen items. And this is not the full list of areas where traffickers flourish from their criminal business.

The minimum estimate by the International Labour Organisation indicates that out of **12 million persons – victims of forced labour – there are a minimum of 2.45 million victims of trafficking globally**, of which **at least** half a million are in the OSCE area.<sup>1</sup> In 2009, Europol reported that trafficking for labour exploitation was increasing, principally in the sectors of construction, drug production, and forced begging. They further noted that trafficking of children for both sexual and labour exploitation is growing.<sup>2</sup> We should add to this number further cases of debt bondage in which victims are subjugated and exploited through subtle means, usually a combination of threats and economic constraints. Therefore, **hundreds of thousands more** should be counted as trafficking cases, and even more are disclosed among irregular migrants, those most vulnerable to trafficking - their numbers are truly significant.

In a June 2008 UNDP report<sup>3</sup>, the UN estimated that **four billion people live outside the protection of the rule of law**.<sup>4</sup> We have to be aware that potential and actual victims of trafficking are among the billions of people whose rights are not recognised or enforced. **This is the quality and the scale of the problem we have to face.**

Another indicator of the scale of trafficking in human beings is related to the proceeds of the crime.

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<sup>1</sup> ILO, A global alliance against forced labour, Geneva 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Europol, OCTA 2009 EU Organised Crime Threat Assessment.

<sup>3</sup> <<http://www.undp.org/legalempowerment/report/>>, accessed 31 August 2010, pp. 14, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Gary Haugen and Victor Boutros, *And Justice for All, Enforcing Human Rights for the World's Poor*.

The total market value of human trafficking amounts to an estimated **\$32 billion**, a profitable criminal business based on the exploitation of people across the globe who have become mere commodities in the informal economy of forced labour.<sup>5</sup>

The trafficking process is run by **organized crime networks**. EUROPOL talks about a “**criminal hub**”, a conceptual entity that is generated by a combination of factors such as proximity to major destination markets, geographic location, infrastructure, types of organized crime groups and migration processes. Such criminal hubs are complex configurations which shape criminal markets in large parts of EU, although they are supplied by **so-called feeders which are often located just inside or outside the EU borders** and provide goods for EU criminal markets. For example, the South West criminal hubs have an impact especially in the criminal markets of cocaine, cannabis, trafficking in human beings and illegal migration.<sup>6</sup> I am sure you have accurate information about the CIS area in this respect, and I am interested in your opinion whether these markets are interlinked. Logically they should.

The OSCE research recently accomplished under the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, *Analysing the Business Model of Trafficking in Human Beings to Better Prevent the Crime*, proves that trafficking in human beings may involve different types of organized crime ranging from highly structured international trafficking networks to loosely connected clusters of people, together forming a very flexible and specialized trafficking network, which is difficult to disrupt<sup>7</sup> (**this research will be translated into Russian by the end of 2010**). Each node in a network consists of a specific function of the operation and is usually completed by a specialist who is not involved in anything other than this particular function. All the people involved go about their own business and get their own share of profit from their own activity. Contacts between the nodes of the network operate along the lines of business relations.<sup>8</sup>

Individuals can serve as recruiters, transporters, protectors or any number of other roles. Small groups of two or three individuals can also specialize in one role. **The larger the trafficking scheme, the more likely one is to find associated criminal activities such as document fraud, money laundering, cyber-crime and corruption.**<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, **linkages between trafficking in human beings and other types of crimes are increasingly reported**. UNODC estimates that some twenty other serious crimes are usually related to trafficking in human beings at various stages of the trafficking process, including drug trafficking, documents forgery, fraud, immigration law abuse, kidnapping, sexual assault, rape, murder, forced abortion, torture, money laundering, tax evasion, corruption of officials, and the intimidation or subversion of officials.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> ILO, op. cit..

<sup>6</sup> Europol, OCTA 2009, EU Organised Crime Threat Assessment.

<sup>7</sup> *Analysing the Business Model of Trafficking in Human Beings to Better Prevent the Crime*. OSCE-UN.GIFT Report, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> Institute for International Research on Criminal Policy, Ghent University, Organised crime involvement in trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, p.38.

<sup>9</sup> John Picarelli, Human trafficking and organized crime in the US and Western Europe, in C.Frisendorf (Ed), *Strategies against Human Trafficking: the Role of the Security Sector*, Schutz and Hilfe, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> UNODC, Toolkit to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

What is more alarming is that funds from trafficking in human beings are **potential sources of income for terrorism**. Some reports indicate that young people have been trafficked for terrorism in South Asia or other non-OSCE countries, but this phenomenon should keep us all alerted. The information was confirmed by international experts at the Seminar organized by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva (27-28 May 2010). Terrorist groups recruit their victims and indoctrinate them into becoming suicide bombers, out of the most vulnerable layers of the population.

Bearing in mind the massive scale and organized crime nature of trafficking in human beings, it is easier to understand why trafficking must be considered **one of the most serious transnational threats for security**. Trafficking interferes with various dimensions of security. First of all, trafficking in human beings violates the fundamental rights and dignity of people who fall victim to such a crime, and therefore it is a threat for an **individual's security**. This aspect should always be paramount in designing security policy concerning trafficking in human beings.<sup>11</sup> After all, security is about people and their well-being.

**Health security** is also at stake, and not only for the individual trafficked person but also for the wider public. In most of the cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation, women and girls are affected by HIV disease and suffer the consequences of post-traumatic stress disorder or other trauma comparable to that observed in victims of torture.<sup>12</sup> Health security is also threatened in the majority of cases of labour exploitation, in which inhuman and degrading conditions lead to infection or other serious disease, and even death. Finally, health security is affected in the most cruel way in cases of trafficking in human organs. The health implications as consequences of child trafficking are often incurable and have a life-time effect on the survivor.

Then, **trafficking is a side effect of conflicts** exacerbating this grave crime. For example, it is estimated by the UN that 300,000 children - as young as 8 - have been trafficked as child soldiers serving in over 30 armed conflicts all over the world for government or armed rebel forces.<sup>13</sup> **Organized crime, including trafficking in human beings, thrives in conflict areas** and destabilized situations.

Along these lines, there is increasing recognition of how **trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation undermines security and international peacekeeping efforts**. International military organizations and their staff have been targeted for both labour and sex trafficking in the countries of deployment. While the vast majority of military personnel conduct themselves honorably, a worrying number of trafficking cases occurred in connection with international military organizations.

Trafficking in human beings is a **threat for state security also from the point of view of its impact on the economy**. Huge number of migrant workers are trafficked for the purpose of labour exploitation, for example, in agriculture or construction - not only are the rights of these workers violated, but the employers gain **huge profits from their illegal business and tax evasion** as they benefit from unpaid work on a large scale. The normal rules of market competition are deviated or even disrupted.

**Corruption** has been grossly underestimated as a driver of trafficking in human beings. According

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<sup>11</sup> Elspeth Guild, *Security and migration in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, Polity Press, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Cathy Zimmermann, *The health risks and consequences of trafficking in women and adolescents*, 2003 available at <http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/hpu/docs/traffickingfinal.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Alexis Aronowitz, *Human Trafficking, Human Misery: the Global Trade in Human Beings*, 2009 p.103.

to a recent study on trafficking and security, in numerous investigated cases state officials were found involved in corrupt practices relating to trafficking in human beings. In addition to breaking the law, such officials are at risk of being blackmailed and persuaded to engage in other types of smuggling and trafficking, such as narcotics or arms. These officers of the state could then become involved in a broad variety of crimes. For example, if corruption occurs in the criminal justice chain, it leads to the obstruction of investigation or criminal proceedings, and the revealing and or selling of investigative information in order to help the traffickers to escape prosecution.<sup>14</sup> It is obvious that this constitutes a serious security threat.<sup>15</sup> Today, to break the links between trafficking and corruption have become a crucial aspect of struggling against modern-day slavery.

Experts placed corruption as the most significant indicator of human trafficking in countries when compared to other factors such as population or food production.<sup>16</sup> Though there are relatively few reports or investigations into corruption offences relating to trafficking, with virtually no cases leading to convictions, it is obvious that opportunities for corruption are many, and one scholar has posited that “*countries that make the least effort to fight human trafficking also tend to be those with high levels of official corruption*”.<sup>17</sup>

Investigative information shows a vast phenomenon of reinvestment of the proceeds of trafficking, especially in countries of origin. **Money laundering** is generally considered one of the common denominators of organized crime and the necessary interface between licit and illicit markets. Through money laundering, the proceeds of illegal activities, including trafficking in human beings, are conveyed to the legitimate economic sector for business investments. Real estate and related activities – from construction and restoration to property investment companies and real estate agencies – are the most common tools habitually used by organized crime to launder money.<sup>18</sup>

As a consequence of the significant amount of illicit proceeds originating from trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking and other criminal activities, illegal markets are increasing their role in the globalized economy. Trafficking in human beings is becoming an inexhaustible source of profits which are constantly reinvested in all kinds of other criminal activities, including drug trafficking and trafficking in weapons. This is the new profitable renewable business for criminal networks. Our challenge is to prevent it, combat it, and ultimately to eradicate it.

Against this background, **the law enforcement and criminal justice response to trafficking in human beings remains largely inadequate. Reported criminal proceedings for trafficking in human beings are modest.** According to the 2010 US Trafficking in Persons Report, a total number of 5,606 trafficking prosecutions were recorded globally in 2009. Furthermore, a large number of criminal proceedings are often carried out on the basis of an indictment for less serious crimes. But even so, the criminal justice response is not comparable with the scale of the crime;

<sup>14</sup> Programme against Corruption and Organised Crime in South-eastern Europe , Project PACO Networking, *Trafficking in human beings and corruption*, Report on the regional seminar, Portoroz, Slovenia, June 2002, pp. 7-8

<sup>15</sup> Leslie Homes, Human Rights and Corruption: Triple Victimization?, in Cornelius Friesendorf (Ed), *Strategies Against Human Trafficking: the Role of the Security Sector.* ) 2009.

<sup>16</sup> Sheldon Zhang, Samuel Pineda, ‘Corruption as a causal factor in human trafficking’, Chapter 4 in *Organized Crime: Culture, Markets and Policies* (Springer: New York, 2008), p. 45.

<sup>17</sup> Sheldon X. Zhang and Samuel L. Pineda: ‘Corruption as a Causal Factor in Human Trafficking’, in ‘Organized Crime: Culture, Markets and Policies’ (Springer: New York, 2008); see also: ‘Trafficking in Human Beings and Corruption’, Report on the regional seminar, Portoroz, Slovenia, 19-22 June 2002, Council of Europe Programme against Corruption and Organized Crime in South-Eastern Europe (PACO); Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council ‘Fighting trafficking in human beings – an integrated approach and proposals for an action plan’, COM(2005) 514 final (Brussels, 18 October 2005).

<sup>18</sup> EUROPOL, OCTA 2009, EU Organised Crime Threat Assessment

only final exploiters are targeted, mainly in the field of sexual exploitation; the level of penalties is low compared to the gravity of the crime; no seizure or confiscation of the proceeds of crime is carried out in the vast majority of cases.

**All in all, trafficking in human beings is still a low-risk crime compared to other types of organized crime, which can be considered a concurrent driving factor of trafficking in human beings. What can be done to improve our criminal justice response to this scourge?**

**Anti-trafficking action in the field of prosecution should derive from the recognition of the massive scale of the crime, the international nature of criminal networks and the increasing trend towards reinvestment of proceeds of crime and money laundering. More sophisticated investigation techniques should be used on a regular basis, in order to detect and disrupt the whole transnational criminal networks rather than arresting only individual criminals, typically the final exploiters, or the smaller fish.**

Since trafficking in human beings is a profit driven crime, it is imperative to find, freeze and forfeit the proceeds of crime. This requires **the use of financial investigation on a routine basis as well as on a large scale**. This is a difficult challenge. As opposed to what happens in cases related to drug trafficking, so far this investigative tool is underutilized and almost unknown in trafficking cases. The use of financial investigation is particularly important to trace the proceeds of crime in the country in which usually such proceeds are reinvested and laundered, often in countries of origin. This requires decisive improvements in law enforcement and judicial co-operation, especially between the country in which exploitation takes place, and the country of origin where profits are reinvested. Criminal assets should be confiscated and used to secure the protection of victims' rights, and in particular to make their right to obtain compensation a reality.

Law enforcement and judicial experience shows that the contribution of the victim is absolutely essential for successful prosecution. The protection of victims' rights must be ensured before, during and after criminal proceedings not only to comply with a clear obligation under international human rights standards, but also to promote successful investigation and prosecution. **Let me underline that assistance to the presumed victims of trafficking should be unconditional and independent of their readiness to co-operate with the law enforcement. Actually this is the only way to encourage the trafficked person to trust and rely on the authorities.**

However, the role of intelligence, and the **collection of other evidence not dependent on a victim's testimony**, should be adequately valued. Intelligence-led investigations – included on the basis of military intelligence where appropriate – should be much more developed and become routine mechanisms to initiate trafficking in human beings investigations without solely relying on victims reporting the crime. Intelligence resources should also be used to achieve better knowledge of major activities of organized crime, new markets, innovation in money laundering, and measures undertaken by criminal networks to counteract the criminal justice response.

For all these purposes, what are those consistent operational objectives which can be recommended? They are:

- increasing the capacity of law enforcement operational units, especially those specialised or in charge of trafficking in human beings cases and/or organized crime cases;
- generalizing the use of the most advanced and sophisticated investigative tools such as phone tapping, electronic surveillance, financial investigation and under-cover operations;
- promoting the full involvement and co-operation of specialised financial police units, to trace financial operations linked with trafficking in human beings cases, and ensure confiscation of the proceeds;

- promoting capacity building of practitioners, particularly aimed at giving legal counselling and assistance to trafficked persons, and help them to claim pay-back of wages and compensation;
- promoting the international networking of police and prosecutorial specialised units, with a view to facilitating international law enforcement and judicial co-operation, including the use of joint investigation teams.

Let me add that we, the OSCE, are ready to contribute to the capacity building of national structures by **initiating a network of law enforcement and prosecutors of the OSCE participating States** – to share best practices, exchange experience and seek for better solutions to meet the challenge of THB as a transnational threat and gross human rights violation.

**The OSCE** is ideally placed to combat this transnational threat, in its ability to work comprehensively across all three dimensions of security: political-military, economic and the human dimension. It is a unique security organization taking a human rights and cross-dimensional approach to trafficking in human beings. My Office, in co-operation with other OSCE structures, engages with and assists participating States in the implementation and advancement of anti-trafficking commitments and recommendations, including the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings,<sup>19</sup> a document which remains relevant seven years after its adoption and endorsement by all participating States.

For example, together with the Strategic Police Matters Unit we have supported OSCE field missions in organizing anti-trafficking training programmes and joint workshops for police, and provided training for the CIS countries at the International Training Centre on Migration and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Minsk. Additionally, the Special Representative worked with the Action against Terrorism Unit and the Borders team in providing training programmes for Border Guards on increasing operational awareness on detecting forged documents in Central Asia and the Balkans, and we are working together with the Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe to develop a training curriculum for border officials.

This is our common challenge: trafficking in human beings is a crime which definitely requires a co-ordinated and multi-faceted response. I look forward to working with the CIS Executive Committee, with all of you, and offer my support in this critical effort to improve our common security, to protect human dignity, fundamental rights and freedoms and ensure justice for all. It is crucial that the Workshop is attended by the CIS bodies of Sectoral Co-operation and by major international organizations which, since 2004, have been united by the OSCE in the *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons*, informal platform for co-operation in the fight against this scourge. I am sure that the workshop will give an additional impetus and concrete substance for enhancement of the consolidated efforts of CIS participating States towards achievement of the secure and safe life for CIS citizens through effective protection of human rights, law and order. The OSCE stands ready to meet this common challenge of human trafficking, to prevent it, combat it, and ultimately eradicate it. We are together with you in this noble mission.

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<sup>19</sup> PC.DEC/557, adopted on 24 July 2003