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ENGLISH only

To: All Delegations
Secretariat

Please find attached the summary of the meeting of the **Informal Working Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking** held on 22 March 2004.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Amb. Kongshem', followed by a smaller, more stylized signature.

Amb. Kongshem, Dr. Gracheva
Co-Chairs of the Group

**Summary
of the meeting of the Informal Working Group
on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking**

22 March 2004

*Co-chairs: Ambassador Mette Kongshem (NORWAY)
Dr. Vera Gracheva (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)*

1. Adoption of the agenda:

The *Co-Chair (Norway)* drew attention to the revised agenda issued the same morning. The revised agenda was adopted.

2. Implementation of the Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings by the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU). Focus on legitimacy and validity of documents and border measures: *Mr. Woo, Head of the Action against Terrorism Unit (ATU) (SEC.GAL/76/04 Restr.),* pointed out that the main focus of the Unit was counter-terrorism, however, he added that there were several ways in which trafficking in human beings (THB) and terrorism were connected. First, he noted that funds stemming from human trafficking were being used to fund terrorist and militant organizations. Secondly, human trafficking routes could be used to infiltrate terrorists, weapons and other materials into destination countries. Thirdly, he mentioned that human trafficking weakened the rule of law through corruption and thereby weakened states' capabilities to prevent and combat terrorism. *Mr. Woo* continued by recalling that under the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, the ATU's task mainly concerned the issue of travel documents security as well as the prevention of falsified travel documents. The ATU therefore encouraged and facilitated sub-regional co-operation between the specialised national structures in identifying fraudulent and falsified documents. He mentioned the recent workshops which had been organized, with the aim of gathering experts to address various issues participating States faced in relation to the use of fraudulent travel documents as well as legal travel documents used for illegal purposes, such as THB. *Mr. Woo* also mentioned that the ATU's work aimed at improving security features in travel documents thereby making them more resistant to counterfeiting and altering. He made reference to the recently held ATU-ICAO experts workshop, which had identified the needs and possibilities of providing technical and financial assistance to those participating States which might need it in order to fulfil their commitments. In conclusion, *Mr. Woo* noted that the ATU welcomed all contacts from participating States seeking assistance in upgrading their travel documents.

The *Chairperson (Norway)* underlined the connection between THB and terrorism, and noted the importance of holding regional workshops. *One delegation* asked for more information concerning the gender aspect of the ATU. *Another delegation* wondered whether the ATU had studied the connection between terrorist financing and THB. *A delegation* noted the trend of increased participation of women in terrorist acts, and inquired whether the ATU had conducted any research on this trend. *Mr. Woo* responded by noting that indeed financial proceeds stemming from THB benefited terrorist groups. He also underlined the importance of inviting experts to the regional workshops. He stressed the need for co-ordination between the ATU and the SPMU, as well as between participating States, concerning THB. He noted the disturbing increase of women's participation in acts of terrorism. *Mr. Woo* added that terrorists had adapted their methods and noted that in the future, children could also possibly be used for their purposes.

3. Addressing trafficking in human beings. Implementing the AP on THB. Progress and challenges. Presentation by the Republic of Kazakhstan: *Kazakhstan (PC.DEL/215/04 Restr.)* reported on national activities to combat trafficking in human beings. She stated that the government had taken several concrete measures in this field. In July 2003, President Nazarbayev had approved the Law on amendments to the Penal Code which were aimed at toughening the punishment for THB. Special attention had also been paid to the work of the Ministry of Interior, Department of Protection of Women-Victims of Trafficking. The representative mentioned, however, that more than 50% of the population did not even know what trafficking was, and only about 170 cases had been registered thus far. The representative of *Kazakhstan* further listed steps which had been taken to implement the AP on THB. Those steps included: social rehabilitation and protection programmes; financial reparations of victims and special courses on anti-trafficking in human beings in educational institutions. Furthermore, the representative of *Kazakhstan* mentioned that existing legislation, as well as enforcement mechanisms to punish trafficking perpetrators had been strengthened. In conclusion, *Kazakhstan* stated that it was ready to collaborate with all participating States and international organizations in combating THB. She added that for *Kazakhstan*, destination countries were also in the middle East and in the far East. The *Chairperson (Russian Federation)* mentioned that it was indeed very difficult to document the exact number of cases of THB, and added that according to the assessment of international NGOs such statistics was usually ten times higher than the official figure. The *Chairperson (Norway)* mentioned that attention had to be also paid to the countries of destination outside of the OSCE area.

4. Focus on Gender Issues. Presentation by Ms. Lokar, Chair of the Stability Pact Gender Task Force: *Ms. Lokar* presented the Stability Pact Gender Task Force's (SP GTF) strategies, achievements and future plans. She first recalled the beginning of the GTF, which dated back to July 1999. She continued by noting that in 2000, the SP GTF Plan of Action had been presented in Geneva. The GTF included the total regional coverage of South Eastern Europe (SEE) and fostered gender equality activities in 13 countries of the SEE. She listed some of the GTF regional projects in 2002/2003 which included: media campaigns, awareness raising, electoral systems reforms from a gender perspective, Women Mayor's Link, Euro Regional co-operation and Regional Gender Equality Centre. She mentioned some of the achievements of GTF: the current implementation of gender equality mechanisms in governmental, parliamentary and local levels in 10 SEE countries, compared to 4 in 1999. Ombudspersons for gender equality were currently present in 2 countries, compared to none in 1999. Also, a quota rule had been enacted in 5 countries, compared to 1 in 1999. Women mayors were present in 4 countries, compared to none in 1999. Future GTF projects included: engendering key policies, active women's citizenship, political empowerment of women in SEE trade unions and cross border co-operation. She mentioned that the GTF had received full recognition, but, however had lacked necessary funding. In conclusion, *Ms. Lokar* noted that the question of co-operation in this area in the framework of the OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues which was to be revised in 2004 and the SP GTF future plans ought to be further considered.

The *Chairperson (Russian Federation)* wondered whether there was any progress in comparison between the approach to gender equality in the region 5 years ago and the present. *Ms. Lokar* noted that at the time of the political changes in the SEE countries, there had been a very difficult situation for women. Most of them had lost their jobs as well as their political influence. With time, they began organizing themselves and participating in NGOs

and political parties. Thereby, the attention which had been given to gender equality 5 years ago and now had increased. *Another delegation* asked what could be the role of the OSCE in implementing the UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women and peace and security. *Ms. Lokar* referred to the Peace and Reconciliation Project developed by the SP GTF, which also had helped in bringing women of different religions to dialogue and interaction. The representative of the *OCEEA* underlined the importance of the "bottom-up" approach as well as the need for international experts to respect the local situation. *One delegation* wondered whether municipal politics had changed for the better due to the presence of women mayors. *Ms. Lokar* noted that each country's experience in this respect was different. She noted that some countries elected their mayors directly by the people, while other countries elected them through their city council. Gender issues had been more of a priority in those cases where the mayors had been elected by the people. Regarding Ombudspersons for gender issues, *one delegation* asked what would be the activities and role of such persons. *Ms. Lokar* responded that the role of the Ombudsperson would be to directly assist in the implementation of legislation regarding gender issues. The Ombudsperson would have the right to be involved in all aspects of gender issues. Concerning the problem of funding, *one delegation* wondered whether the SP GTF had considered the idea of jointly funding projects with other international organizations. *Ms. Lokar* noted that indeed there had been some donors from UNICEF, UNDP and the OSCE. The *Chairperson (Norway)* noted that the presentation served as a good basis for future work concerning gender issues, in particular the work on the 2004 Action Plan on Gender Issues, and looked forward to close co-operation with *Ms. Lokar*.

5. Preparation for SHDM on human rights education and training on 25/26 March in Vienna and the Third Preparatory Seminar for the Economic Forum in Bishkek on 29/30 March: The *Chairperson (Norway)* recalled that the 2000 OSCE Action Plan on Gender Issues (AP) states that all OSCE Seminars would refer to gender issues in some form. She noted that the two upcoming meetings had a potential for interesting discussions on gender issues. At the SHDM, in discussing education and tolerance, there should be a focus on equal rights of women and gender equality when discussing the curriculum for human rights education. The *Chairperson (Norway)* noted that at the Third Preparatory Seminar for the Economic Forum in Bishkek, the topic of equal opportunity in obtaining business education could be discussed. She furthermore pointed out that it was unfortunate that in the introductory note to the draft agenda for the conference, women are portrayed as a vulnerable group. On the contrary, women constitute an asset for any society – comprising half of the population. The problem is that they are not always allowed to develop their potential on a par with men.

6. Any other business:

Draft Outline of the 2004 Action Plan on Gender Issues: The *Chairperson (Norway)* informed that informal consultations were still on going regarding the draft outline, and stated that a draft text could be distributed in time for the next meeting which would be held on 19 April 2004, if consultations had progressed sufficiently.

International Women's Day: The *Chairperson (Norway)* mentioned that *Ms. Tone Tingsgard*, Vice President of the OSCE PA and Special Representative on Gender Issues, had reminded the OSCE CiO, on the occasion of International Women's Day, of the need to ensure that women were involved into the activities of the Organization at all levels within the OSCE.