



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

**Ambassador Madina Jarbussynova,  
OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator  
for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**

**Presentation**

**at the OSCE Permanent Council**

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Dear Chairperson,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to address the Permanent Council this morning to report to you on the core activities and achievements of our Office since December 2014 and also share with you our plans for the coming year.

Before I begin, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Chairperson-in-Office and the Secretary General for providing strong support throughout the year. I also deeply appreciate the delegations of the participating States and Partners for Co-operation who have underpinned our efforts to combat human trafficking with their political and financial backing.

These efforts are outlined in the 2014-2015 Report that I have distributed today. It provides an overview of my Office's anti-trafficking activities in the period from 1 March 2014 to 1 September 2015, with additional sections that focus on the work of the OSCE's executive structures and field operations. The document also details our anti-trafficking work at the international level: actively contributing to major conferences under the auspices of the United Nations and other bodies, promoting our work in the media and issuing publications that can be used by anti-trafficking experts, NGOs, international organizations, academia, the media, the private sector, lawmakers, diplomats and politicians in the OSCE region and beyond.

I will highlight some of the key endeavours listed in the report today. But first, I would like to discuss current trends and the impact of the migration and refugee crisis, as well as our response to it, in the context of combating trafficking in human beings.

### **The OSCE Response to Human Trafficking in the Context of the Migration and Refugee Crisis**

Increasing numbers of people are on the move globally in regular and irregular conditions, either on a voluntary or involuntary basis. These so-called "mixed migration flows" consist of people who are highly vulnerable, and increasingly at risk of being trafficked before, during and after their migration process.

The scale of the exodus from areas of political instability, armed conflict, natural disasters and other problems makes it **a cause for significant concern at the OSCE**. We are reminded of the grave risks these masses face when we see the shocking images of drownings in the Mediterranean region, a key transit area on the way to Europe. Desperate people set sail from North Africa in old, unseaworthy fishing boats, or even small rubber dinghies, and tragically, this has deadly consequences. So far this year, the UNCHR United Nations Refugee Agency has recorded more than 3,000 dead and missing from among those who attempted to cross the Mediterranean. The fact that many of these people are moving into and within our region requires us to formulate a comprehensive and compassionate response.

Before we solve this problem, we must define it. Competent authorities are encountering difficulties in drawing a clear line between migrant smuggling, human trafficking and other movements of people seeking better lives or fleeing instability and persecution. The reality is that the phenomena of **migration and human trafficking are often intertwined**: a situation that begins as smuggling can evolve into a trafficking case. In addition, the progressive tightening of states' immigration

policies has contributed to boost the vulnerability of both migrants and refugees to exploitative practices.

UNODC's 2014 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons shows that in the OSCE region, the majority of detected cases entail sexual and labour exploitation, but victims are also trafficked for forced criminality and domestic servitude, among others. These trends also apply to people on the move who face many dangers, ranging from crossing natural barriers such as seas, deserts and mountains during their perilous journeys, to violence and exploitation.

According to victims' accounts, would-be migrants and people fleeing their homes are not always asked to pay a fixed sum for their entire journey; instead, they are forced to pay distinct amounts to different criminals who facilitate separate legs of their odyssey. And when their money runs out, they are likely to be subjected to bondage and exploitation, for example for sexual services or forced labour. Hence, migrants' exposure to human trafficking also depends on their financial status and resources. Those starting the journey with more revenues might be able to afford safer routes.

Because of the challenge to human security, my Office has **played a key role in addressing human trafficking risks among people on the move in the OSCE region**. We built on other important efforts in this field, contributing to events organized by the Chairmanship, the Security Committee and the Mediterranean Conference. And, just over five months ago, I convened our 15<sup>th</sup> *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons* conference, gathering representatives of participating States, regional, international and non-governmental organizations in this room to examine ways to combat trafficking in human beings along migration routes.

This group of more than 300 experts, which also included national anti-trafficking co-ordinators and rapporteurs, national human rights institutions, parliamentarians, migration authorities and criminal justice experts, were able to draw a number of important conclusions.

I would like to reiterate some of the **highlights from our high level introductory panel**:

- *A key aspect of our concerted efforts towards defending human rights is the understanding that protection and security are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, criminal law enforcement against traffickers must go hand in hand with the protection of trafficked persons.*
- *The protection of the human rights and dignity of all migrants is an essential component of good migration governance;*

The *Alliance* also contained a panel on **addressing human trafficking in crisis situations**, where one of the major subjects was the ongoing conflict in and around Ukraine. UNHCR data shows that more than one million citizens have been displaced – a vast number that demands a comprehensive response. In many cases, these people have lost not only their homes, but also their jobs, savings and possessions. This at-risk group can easily find themselves in situations where human trafficking can arise.

I have worked to ensure that combating human trafficking remains in the spotlight during the crisis, collaborating closely with the government, the Project Co-ordinator and the Special Monitoring Mission on various anti-trafficking projects. My Office developed a strategy that was welcomed by both the SMM and the Ukrainian government, allowing us to create joint initiatives to strengthen

the capacity of the monitors and the Ukrainian authorities to report on alleged incidents as well as to spot human trafficking trends and to co-ordinate effective responses to fight this crime. I also undertook a series of trips to **raise awareness about human trafficking among the monitors** and meet with officials in Kyiv, Dnepropetrovsk and Kharkiv in order to ensure that they remain committed to anti-trafficking work.

Upon a request from the local government, I returned to Dnepropetrovsk in November to organize a two-day training entitled *Ensuring domestic violence in times of conflict does not lead to human trafficking*. The attendees frequently provide counselling for people who have returned from the zone of conflict and their families. Meeting with them allowed us to focus on one of the root causes of human trafficking, as domestic violence is a trigger that causes women and children to leave home, exposing them to the risk of becoming victims. The training provided these local experts with the knowledge necessary to prevent human trafficking cases and identify and assist potential victims.

For many years, the OSCE has been recognized as a thought leader for its **innovative work on human trafficking in the Mediterranean**. More work is currently being planned, including a major training project to combat human trafficking along migration routes. It will be a three-step learning tool that encompasses theory, practice and simulation exercises for a multi-agency group of participants. They will learn how to identify and investigate human trafficking by participating in a series of simulations that recreate real-life challenges faced by different professionals while on-duty. We envision that the training will be open to approximately 200 stakeholders from both participating States and Partners for Co-operation, and that they could be grouped together according to the migrant routes that pass through their territories. This will allow us to promote joint responses to common regional and sub-regional challenges.

## **Review of 2015 priorities**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One year ago, I outlined our priorities. These are:

- Enhancing prevention of human trafficking;
- Strengthening the criminal justice response, and;
- Improving victim identification and assistance.

Starting with prevention, I noted that we should more **systematically target the root causes of the crime of human trafficking**, as it cannot be prevented without addressing the inter-linkages between relevant policy areas, and recognizing the necessity to mainstream anti-trafficking work across these areas. I always highlight this point in my meetings with government officials and lawmakers across the OSCE region while on Country Visits or during my speeches at conferences and seminars in the region.

**Targeting root causes** is a key component of our work in Moldova, where we have been active since 2011, supporting the sustainable social and professional integration of children without parental care, an at-risk group for human trafficking as they often do not have a family support network or means of securing an income after they leave school.

In order to widen the impact of our work and enhance its sustainability, in April I organized a two-day roundtable in Minsk, inviting leading child welfare experts from Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus

to exchange good practices and share their expertise. These social workers, government officials and NGO representatives form a core group of experts committed to work together to seek solutions to combat child trafficking in the region. The conclusions from this meeting called for sustainable programmes on education and training of trainers to support children to overcome the negative effects of institutionalization and acquire necessary life skills. As a result, we plan to implement a final capacity building activity for 40 selected teachers, social workers and educators from the schools on both banks of the Dniester/Nistru River where they will be encouraged to continue the practical application of skills and models acquired and developed during the project in a sustainable manner.

My Office continues its extensive efforts to **prevent trafficking in human beings for domestic servitude, *inter alia* in diplomatic households** and to address challenges such as those posed by diplomatic immunities. Following the successful completion of the workshops for protocol officers across the OSCE region from 2012-2014 and the publication of a handbook to respond to the request of the 43 participating States who participated in the initiative, a dissemination strategy was developed to expand beyond our own Organization and sensitize the entire international community. This tool was distributed at events organized by UNODC and the Philippines' Department of Foreign Affairs in Vienna and by the U.S. State Department in Washington. Last month, a French language version of the handbook was issued and presented at the 15<sup>th</sup> Informal Asia-Europe Seminar in Montreux. As a result of the project, 13 OSCE countries have made concrete efforts to change or to strengthen their policies. For example, Poland and Ireland, inspired by the workshops, issued new regulations; the U.S. increased its human capacity to respond to allegations and has set up a new annual in-person registration program; and lastly, Canada included the issue as a priority in its national action plan on trafficking in human beings.

In line with my work on preventing trafficking for all forms of exploitation, I organized an expert meeting in Milan in September on prevention of trafficking in human beings in supply chains, with a focus on government practices and measures. Eleven countries were represented at the meeting by governmental officials, NGOs, and think-tanks. In addition, representatives of six international organizations also participated actively and expressed their interest in collaborating with my Office on this topic. Here I would like to thank the UK for hosting this meeting, which we held in co-operation with the Gangmasters Licencing Authority, or GLA, on the premises of the UK pavilion at the Milan Expo. During the meeting, I called on governments to enact measures to ensure ethical sourcing – an essential step if we are to eliminate modern day slavery since governments spend up to 15 per cent of gross domestic product, or GDP, on public procurement contracts. This meeting built on our ground-breaking 2014 publication, *Ending Exploitation. Ensuring that Businesses do not Contribute to Trafficking in Human Beings: Duties of States and the Private Sector*, which analyses these issues in great detail and serves as an essential research tool for lawmakers and professionals who deal with this aspect of human trafficking. The experts participating in the Milan meeting expressed their unanimous support for the OSCE to address prevention of trafficking in human beings in supply chains, especially on measures that governments can take, as this would not only **address an existing gap in policy and practice**, as less work has been done with governments compared to with the private sector, **but can have a significant impact on the problem**.

In 2015, I spoke on this and related topics at a number of fora exploring these issues, such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and a Wilton Park conference on mega-sporting events and human rights. In addition, my office actively participated in other fora including the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights.

Protecting trafficked people is at the core of OSCE's response to human trafficking. Assistance to

victims and protection of their rights are mainstreamed and promoted in all our activities in particular during training sessions. In 2015, my focus was on child trafficking and the lack of effective child protection. I addressed it in several fora including at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting.

**Prosecuting human traffickers is at the core of strengthening the criminal justice response.** According to ILO and UNODC data less than 1 per cent of victims ever see any sort of justice.

Working with law enforcement is essential to solve this problem, helping us move towards the three goals of **prosecuting more traffickers, preventing the crime from occurring and protecting victims once they are rescued.** I have already mentioned our plans, but I should also highlight the work of our staff, who have tirelessly carried out trainings in a number of areas including preventing and combating trafficking in conflict and post-conflict scenarios, best practices in terms of identification, referral and assistance to victims as well as sector specific human trafficking for forced labour. In these areas, we have worked with our Field Missions in Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro and Serbia as well as Interpol, Frontex and the CoESPU Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units in Vicenza, Italy. I visited this state of the art facility in March in order to emphasize the positive role that comprehensive training can play in preventing human trafficking in conflict and post-conflict environments and lay the foundation for further collaboration in the future.

In order to improve this situation, my Office carries out **trainings for judges and prosecutors**, sometimes working together with partners, such as the Council of Europe, which collaborated with us on a series of workshops in 2014 and 2015 that focused on the implementation of the non-punishment principle. This principle holds that human trafficking victims should not be punished for unlawful activities they were forced to commit by their exploiters. Our staff also contributed to trainings organized by our field offices in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Skopje, and Uzbekistan.

Forging **goal-oriented partnerships** at all levels in order to improve complementarity and avoid duplication remains a key pillar of our work. Last week we convened our *Alliance* Expert Coordination Team (AECT) meeting here in Vienna to exchange information on new activities and new human trafficking trends. In 2015, we also welcomed the Commonwealth of Independent States as the latest organization to join the *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons*. Furthermore, I'm pleased to announce that we became a partner organization to ICAT, the Inter-agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons of the United Nations, and participated in their latest meeting.

In October, I spoke at the Catholic Church's Santa Marta Group Human Trafficking Conference for the first time, and I followed this up in November by meeting with the Secretary of State of the Holy See, Cardinal Pietro Parolin. During our talks, we discussed ways in which we could join forces with their global alliance of international police chiefs and bishops that work together with civil society to eradicate human trafficking and co-operate with the Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences.

We continued our extensive collaboration with UNODC, participating in the June Technical Meeting of Experts on preventing the exploitation of workers during recruitment organized by the ILO and UNODC in Geneva. The event allowed staff to engage in a dialogue on current challenges related to the significant increase in transit mixed migration flows in the OSCE region and beyond, as well as to focus on fraudulent labour recruitment which is a key factor in human trafficking of labour migrants. I was also honoured to welcome UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov as a

speaker at the 15<sup>th</sup> *Alliance* conference in July.

**Country Visits are another fundamental part of our efforts**, allowing us to share knowledge and good practices in the fight against human trafficking and to make tailor-made recommendations for the countries visited. The visits serve to establish a direct and constructive dialogue with participating States on anti-trafficking policy, as I hold consultations with government authorities, parliamentarians, representatives of the judiciary, international organizations and NGOs. During my first year in Office, I carried out official visits to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tajikistan and the Czech Republic as well as a follow up visit to Azerbaijan.

In 2015 my Office launched a Survey to assess the implementation of selected aspects of the OSCE anti-trafficking commitments by participating States, namely the 2003 OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and the 2013 Addendum to the Action Plan. It emphasizes areas of work that my Office is specifically supporting, as well as emerging areas of the response to trafficking in human beings on which information is currently limited. The set of survey measures was developed in co-operation with the Council of Europe and UNODC to complement other data collection initiatives, to avoid duplication, and to serve as a baseline for future survey work. The questionnaire was disseminated in two separate versions to collect data from both the governments of OSCE participating States and from civil society organizations. I would like to thank those participating States which have already responded. The responses will contribute to **a better understanding of both government and non-governmental approaches in the area of human trafficking** and will further the implementation of the OSCE's counter trafficking commitments. The results of the survey will be used to collate data to identify areas of strong progress and where more attention may be required throughout the OSCE region. The findings will be presented to the participating States next year.

In addition to the 2014-2015 Report, I am also distributing our *Commentary to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings* and its 2005 and 2013 Addendums. The *Commentary* makes it possible to see the Action Plan and the OSCE anti-trafficking commitments in conjunction with international and regional legal obligations and helps all relevant actors to orient themselves properly in the OSCE political framework, supported by the legally binding instruments of our partner organizations. I am sure that it will be extremely useful.

A review of our activities would not be complete without a brief mention of our internal co-operation and co-ordination with the OSCE offices in the Secretariat, the Parliamentary Assembly, ODIHR and the Field Missions.

Among the many highlights, I would like to mention my meeting with OSCE Parliamentary Assembly President Ilkka Kanerva as well as their Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues, US Congressman Chris Smith. The Parliamentary Assembly **passed a Resolution on Responsibility to Combat Human Trafficking in Government Contracts for Goods and Services in July 2015**, which, *inter alia*, called on participating States to require by law and regulation that all government contracts for goods and services go only to businesses that have a plan in place to ensure that their subcontractors and employees do not participate in activities that contribute to or that constitute human trafficking. We look forward to continued co-operation with the Parliamentary Assembly in our common endeavour to combat human trafficking.

The Field Missions were also very active. Indeed, their extensive contributions to the struggle to eliminate human trafficking are too many to mention in this brief address. Nonetheless, I would like to point out a few highlights, including the Mission to Serbia's support for the drafting of guidelines

for applying the non-punishment principle, the Mission to Moldova's publication of three Romanian-language documents aimed at raising awareness about domestic violence and human trafficking, the Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine's project to create new economic opportunities for victims of trafficking and the numerous trainings for border guards and law enforcement that took place across the region in the past year in addition to the trainings for judges and prosecutors outlined above.

Internal co-ordination at the Secretariat is an essential part of our work. We held two meetings this year with all of our Secretariat Focal Points, allowing us to enhance face-to-face contacts, work jointly on complementary themes, build synergies and avoid duplication efforts.

Your Excellencies,

I have provided you with some details of our work over the past year, which has been a very busy period for my Office. Let me assure you that we will remain steadfast in our efforts to eliminate human trafficking across the OSCE region!

In the coming year, we have a number of exciting projects planned, in addition to those I already mentioned:

On the basis of the relevant OSCE commitments<sup>1</sup> and the research our Office conducted, we will continue our highly-regarded efforts to prevent trafficking in human beings in supply chains through a project, the purpose of which is to provide participating States with practical tools to enact concrete measures to prevent human trafficking in supply chains, as well as build their capacity to implement these measures through a series of workshops to be held in 2016 and 2017 across the OSCE region. Furthermore, we will develop and publish flexible model guidelines for governments on preventing human trafficking in supply chains, with a focus on government procurement and transparency practices. We will also develop a strategic plan for encouraging the adoption of the model guidelines, leveraging reform efforts already underway, such as national action plans on business and human rights and combating trafficking in human beings, or other relevant government commitments. Thus the project will **tap the momentum** that has developed, and focus anti-trafficking efforts on eradicating trafficking for labour exploitation and forced labour along globalized supply chains, to promote the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

During my country visits I have heard of alleged cases of human trafficking for the recruitment of foreign fighters. This can also include the recruitment of child soldiers -- another subject that demands our attention because of its grave security and human rights implications. A comprehensive multidimensional approach is required to confront it, and the OSCE, as an intergovernmental security organization, should address this threat. My Office plans to further explore this subject in the coming year.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2003 *OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings*, PC.DEC/557; Decision No. 8/07, *Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for Labour Exploitation* (MC.DEC/8/07), which recommended codes of conduct as sets of voluntary commitments in the private sector to prevent labour exploitation, in parallel with monitoring working conditions; The 2011 *Vilnius Ministerial Declaration on Combating All Forms of Human Trafficking* (MC.DOC/1/11/Corr.1), where the notion of demand was expanded to include "the goods and services that result from trafficking in persons"; The 2013 *Decision No. 1107, Addendum to the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: One Decade Later*, which advocates for zero-tolerance policies or other similar standards in government procurement of goods and services; the *Resolution on Responsibility to Combat Human Trafficking in Government Contracts for Goods and Services* of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, adopted in July 2015.



We will expand our awareness-raising and outreach work with the media via a contest for the best photographs and video footage which realistically portray human trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and child begging in selected participating States. The entries can be shared with the media to help them report more accurately on modern day slavery. In addition, we hope to offer a specialised training for media representatives on investigative reporting with the aim of increasing journalists' ability to accurately report on this crime. These joint efforts will allow us to achieve our overall goal of improving media coverage of human trafficking in the OSCE region, resulting in articles that convey an accurate message that also helps to change the public's negative attitudes towards victims.

Regarding my duty to prioritize the protection of human rights and the dignity of trafficked persons, including among migrants and refugees, my Office will take over and continue ODIHR's activities, in particular the revision and update of the National Referral Mechanism Handbook. Let me remind you that the OSCE was a pioneer in this area. The concept of national referral mechanisms was developed in 2004 by ODIHR and is now reflected in the 2011 EU directive, Paragraph 18, and the Council of Europe Convention, Chapter III, on trafficking in human beings. At the operational level, we will work with field operations in assisting participating States to establish or to strengthen their national referral mechanisms and we will further develop the network of legal practitioners created by ODIHR to improve access to justice and effective remedies.

Country Visits will feature prominently on our 2016 agenda. I am planning to visit the United States of America, the Russian Federation and Turkey.

I am also looking forward to our next *Alliance* conference. The event will be held on 11-12 April, 2016 and it will address the complex issue of human trafficking for forced criminality. I would like to cordially invite all of you to attend.

Dear Colleagues,

I have outlined our work on human trafficking, our accomplishments during the past year, as well as our future projects. Your continued support for my Office is essential if I am to transform these plans into reality.

Thank you.