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**STATEMENT BY MR. ANVAR AZIMOV,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

9 December 2010

**In response to the report by the OSCE Special Representative and
Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**

Mr. Chairperson,

We join in welcoming Ms. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. We are grateful for her detailed report on the results of her activities this year in this important and topical area of work for the OSCE.

Countering trafficking requires a comprehensive approach, including measures for prevention of this offence, effective investigation of crimes, prosecution of offenders, protection of victims and elimination of the deep-seated causes of this challenge to our common security. We regard trafficking in human beings as one of the transnational threats of the modern age, which in terms of the danger it poses to society is without any exaggeration on a par with illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and terrorism. Combating this phenomenon in a way that takes into account its cross-border nature requires strenuous concerted and co-ordinated efforts by all participating States and more effective use of the OSCE's potential. The President of Russia, Mr. Dmitry Medvedev, spoke of this when he addressed the Astana Summit.

We believe that the task of our Organization and its Co-ordinator must remain the provision of practical assistance to countries, at their request, in resolving the problems identified, with equal attention being paid to the countries of origin, transit and destination. We are in favour of further strengthening the co-ordination of the activities of the OSCE executive structures involved in countering trafficking. This approach applies in equal measure to the OSCE's co-operation with specialized multilateral structures with a view to avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort. In this connection, we welcome the idea of establishing closer working contacts between the Office of the Co-ordinator and the Council of Europe.

The OSCE has elaborated a solid set of commitments with respect to countering trafficking. We believe that at this stage it is important to focus on their implementation. We take the position that there are no universal recipes for effectively suppressing trafficking in

human beings and that each country has its own specific national features. For this reason, the participating States, guided by the recommendations made in the 2003 OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, determine their own policy in this sphere and devise optimal national mechanisms for countering trafficking.

In view of the diversity of the forms of modern-day slavery and the degree to which this phenomenon goes undetected, we believe it important to continue the efforts to improve the relevant national legislation and the practical application of the laws, to raise awareness within civil society of the problem of trafficking and to create socio-economic conditions that would prevent trafficking in human beings from developing. We should also like to mention that transnational co-operation in combating trafficking in human beings is possible only if it is combined with co-ordinated measures to counter illegal migration.

Mr. Chairperson,

This year, the Special Representative has paid particular attention to the problem of countering trafficking in children – one of the priorities of the Kazakh Chairmanship. We share the concerns voiced in the Co-ordinator's report regarding the persistently high number of children who fall victim to trafficking in the OSCE region and also the need to consolidate efforts to combat trafficking in children and violence against them.

Russia is giving priority to the implementation of an effective child protection policy. This area of work featured prominently in the Russian President's recent address to the Federal Assembly. With a view to strengthening the protection of children's rights, the institution of the Ombudsman for Children's Rights was established within the Russian presidential administration last year. At present, an association of ombudsmen for children's rights is already operating in 58 regions of our country.

In addition to these organizational measures, the process of improving Russian legislation regulating efforts to combat violence against children is continuing. In 2009, the penalties were increased for sexual crimes against minors. The State Duma is examining a draft law aimed at preventing access to educational establishments by persons convicted of any violent crimes or of involving children or adolescents in criminal activities.

In conclusion, allow me to wish Ms. Giammarinaro and her team every success in their future activities.

Thank you for your attention.