



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE  
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY  
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

**STATEMENT BY MONSIGNOR MICHAEL W. BANACH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE,  
AT THE 843<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE  
OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

**9 DECEMBER 2010**

**RE: REPORT BY THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE AND CO-  
ORDINATOR FOR COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

Mister Chairman,

1. The Delegation of the Holy See willingly joins the previous speakers in warmly welcoming the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Ms. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, and thanks her for the presentation of the detailed report of the activities and priorities of her Office.

2. The Holy See fully agrees with the assertion found in the 2010 Annual Report that: “The fight against human trafficking is at the heart of the OSCE’s founding principle that security begins with the inherent dignity of the human being”. In fact, Pope John Paul II once stated: “The trade in human persons constitutes a shocking offense against human dignity and grave violation of fundamental human rights. Already the Second Vatican Council had pointed to ‘slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children, and disgraceful working conditions where people are treated as instruments of gain rather than free and responsible persons’ as ‘infamies’ which ‘poison human society, debase their perpetrators’ and constitute ‘a supreme dishonour to the Creator’ (cfr. Pastoral Constitution of the Church *Gaudium et Spes*, 27). Such situations are an affront to fundamental values, which are shared by all cultures and peoples, values rooted in the very nature of the human person. ... Who can deny that the victims of this crime are often the poorest and most defenseless

members of the human family, the ‘least’ of our brothers and sisters? ... The disturbing tendency to treat prostitution as a business or industry not only contributes to the trade in human beings, but is itself evidence of a growing tendency to detach freedom from the moral law and to reduce the rich mystery of human sexuality to a mere commodity” (Pope John Paul II, Letter to Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran on the Occasion of the International Conference “Twenty-First Century Slavery — The Human Rights Dimension to Trafficking in Human Beings”, 15 May 2002).

3. With this in mind, my Delegation welcomes the activities undertaken by the Office of Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in 2010 in all four priorities areas, namely: Prosecution and Criminal Justice Response; Protection of Victims; Prevention; and Partnership. We have especially appreciated the particular focus given to the problem of trafficking in children. The recent Astana session of the OSCE Review Conference showed clearly that the participating States consider this emphasis truly relevant for the work of the Office and we hope that activities in this sector will continue.

In the field of prevention, I would like to recall that the Holy See is of the opinion that the *demand side* of the problem of trafficking in persons needs to be squarely faced by all.

4. On this occasion, I would also like to reaffirm that the Catholic Church has long condemned the scourge of trafficking in human persons. The Church is deeply concerned for these vulnerable and innocent victims of this example of man’s inhumanity to man. In fact, many religious congregations, Catholic organisations and volunteer groups, in particular those of a humanitarian nature, are strongly committed to the fight against this scourge, as well as in addressing its human, cultural, social and economic implications. As an example, I would like to mention *Caritas Internationalis* - a confederation of 164 Catholic relief, development and social service organizations, which operates in over 200 countries and territories worldwide. Collectively and individually its mission is to work to build a better world, especially for the poor and oppressed, and a significant part of its activities is dedicated to the fight against trafficking in human beings.

5. Finally, I wish to conclude my remarks by recognizing the strong conviction and admirable energy that Ms. Giammarinaro dedicates to her work. I can only express my sincere gratitude and wish her all the best as she continues to carry out the activities of her Office.

Thank you, Mister Chairman!