

PC.DEL/419/10
20 May 2010

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

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

20 May 2010

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

Mr. Chairperson,
Ms. Giammarinaro,

The Russian Federation regards trafficking in human beings as one of the new global threats of the modern age, which in terms of the danger it poses to society is on a par with drug trafficking and terrorism. The Russian Government considers that efforts to combat trafficking in human beings – one of the most profitable and highly developed forms of criminal activity – should be intensified as one of the priorities in countering organized crime on a global scale.

We firmly believe in the need primarily to eliminate the deep-seated causes of trafficking – the legalized sex industry and the steady demand for labour at low cost and without rights in the countries that are consumers of “human commodities”, as well as the low standard of living of families with children, the feminization of poverty, and female unemployment in the countries of origin. At the same time, tough measures need to be taken against the criminal groups that are the main organizers or mediators in illicit transactions involving human commodities. It is only with this kind of comprehensive approach, and not simply by tightening migration policy, that effective results can be achieved in combating trafficking in human beings.

Our fundamental position is that receiving and sending countries bear equal responsibility for the expansion of the modern-day slave trade. As you are aware, demand breeds supply and not the other way around, and it is on the territory of the receiving countries that the appalling exploitation of exported human commodities occurs. We welcome the humanitarian approach involving the provision of effective measures for the protection of the victims of trafficking in human beings in the receiving countries with the agreement of the relevant States.

Given the transnational and practically global nature of the problem of trafficking in human beings, many countries currently find themselves for various reasons on the list of States that receive migrants who have become victims of trafficking in human beings or serve

as transit countries, while also being classed as exporters of human commodities. Russia is one of the countries that face this dual challenge with respect to trafficking.

Russia's economic growth and its higher wage levels and quality of life as compared with its neighbours attract illegal migrant workers from the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and a number of Asian countries. Human traffickers seek to profit illicitly from this situation with the result that many illegal migrants become victims of labour or sexual exploitation. Of course, the crisis has caused a decline to some extent in the flow of migrants to Russia, whether for labour or transit purposes, but in the long term, our country's attractiveness for migrants is not likely to diminish much.

This evolving situation required aggressive preventive measures and an appropriate response, and in recent years this has taken place in Russia in terms of legislation and through prosecution activities.

We consider the growing attention paid by the OSCE to the complex issue of combating trafficking in human beings to be fully justified. We believe that the OSCE's anti-trafficking activities should focus on targeted practical measures to help participating States solve their problems, paying balanced attention to both sending and receiving countries.

We think that the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings could act as an important guideline for State authorities in formulating the necessary measures at the national level. There are nevertheless no universal recipes for combating trafficking in human beings, and each country prosecutes such crimes in its own way. While relying on the Plan's recommendations, every State therefore determines its policy in this area independently and establishes an optimum national mechanism to combat trafficking.

At the same time, there is a growing demand for an international professional exchange of experience that would make it possible to identify the most effective approach to combating trafficking in human beings. We are open to dialogue and co-operation, and we stand ready, now and in the future, to share our results and take advantage of the achievements of our colleagues in other countries to put paid to this contemporary form of slavery.

Thank you for your attention.