



PERMANENT DELEGATION OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE

STATEMENT BY NORWAY

As delivered by Ambassador Hans Fredrik Lehne to the 2011 Human Dimension implementation meeting, Warsaw 6 October 2011 – WS17: Human trafficking

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Human trafficking is a global problem, and children, women and men throughout the world are being cruelly exploited in this modern form of slavery. This type of criminality causes its victims great suffering, and constitutes a challenge to the entire international community. Human trafficking violates fundamental human rights, and infringes provisions of international law such as the prohibition on slavery and forced labour in Article 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Norway's measures to combat human trafficking are in accordance with its international commitments, including the requirement of gender sensitivity in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 and the specific commitments following the appropriate OSCE decisions. We have ratified all relevant international and regional instruments against this modern form of slavery, such as the UN trafficking protocol and the Council of Europe convention against trafficking in human beings. We urge all OSCE member states to ratify and implement these conventions.

The Norwegian government issued earlier this year a new Action Plan against Human Trafficking focusing particularly on children and illicit financial flows generated by human trafficking. We have criminalized trafficking and the purchase of sexual services and action-groups within the police force are aiming to stop the perpetrators. We have established an interdepartmental coordination group and a national referral mechanism which has produced inter-disciplinary guidance material to help identify victims of trafficking and pamphlets aimed at victims describing their rights.

Victims of trafficking who are irregular migrants in Norway may be granted a reflection period with a six months temporary residence and work permit with the possibility of extension in order to give them the necessary assistance and enable them to decide whether or not to report on the traffickers and give evidence against them in court. Norway offers shelters, individual follow-up and information to victims, and we are financing a voluntary return programme run by the IOM.

The scheme includes reintegration into school and working life and may involve medical and psycho-social follow-up as well as legal advice in the victim's home country. We are also engaged in political and normative processes within the UN and regional organizations.

Norway is engaged in political and normative processes within the UN and regional organizations and we support projects for preventing human trafficking and helping victims. We are concerned that despite all international and national efforts to prevent trafficking, international reports show a global increase in the activity and a decrease in the prosecutions of perpetrators, especially in Eurasia. In the wake of the financial crisis, new economic pressures are likely to aggravate the problem further.

Norway sees a great need for co-operation and co-ordination of efforts in order to avoid duplication and achieve maximum effectiveness. One important issue in this context is the collection of data and production of statistics and reports which should be centralized and harmonized.

We commend the co-operation between the OSCE Special Representative on human trafficking and the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council as well as the Council of Europe and its GRETA group of experts. We appreciate the joint effort of the OSCE and the UNODC, in particular to leverage Anti-Money Laundering Regimes to combat Human Trafficking. We encourage the OSCE to support the work within the UNODC to establish a review of implementation mechanism for the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, including its trafficking protocol. We also ask for enhanced co-operation with the ILO to stop forced labour. The aim of this cooperation should of course be more monitoring of implementation and more support, not less, drawing on each organization's comparative advantages.

Norway supports the OSCE and its Special Representative on human trafficking. The OSCE has proved its value in combating this modern form of slavery, not least with the work carried out by its missions in the region. They provide direct contact with the participating States and their civil society and thus make the OSCE well placed in continuing its efforts in preventing this exploitation of vulnerable persons.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your attention.