

**Council of Europe – OSCE conference:**  
**“Not for Sale – Joining Forces against Trafficking in Human Beings”**  
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**Presentation**

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**Expert Panel 1 - Prevention**

- I am delighted to speak on this panel on behalf of GRETA.
- This joint OSCE and Council of Europe conference on trafficking hosted by both the Swiss and Austrian Chairs adds an important new dimension to the strategic partnership between the two Organisations.
- As GRETA representative, allow me to focus on the Council of Europe’s contribution to combating trafficking in human beings. The CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is the only legally binding document at international level setting out anti-trafficking measures and standards with a strong human rights based approach.
- The Anti Trafficking Convention has extensive provisions on prevention and protection from trafficking as well as prosecution of traffickers including the co-ordination of efforts among all the actors involved both nationally and internationally.
- The monitoring work as stipulated in the Convention is conducted by a group of 15 independent experts from countries that ratified the Convention with expertise in various anti-trafficking fields. GRETA has published 26 country reports until now that highlight both good practices and provide further recommendations to improve anti-trafficking policies and actions.

As this panel focuses on the prevention aspect of trafficking, I would like to share the relevant Standards and provisions included in the Convention as well as a number of recommendations emanating from its monitoring work:

- The Convention has a wide range of provisions guiding actions and policies on prevention, such as:
  - Education and awareness raising through: 1) information campaigns, education and training; 2) research to better understand the phenomenon of trafficking and to highlight best practices, methods and strategies;
  - Tackle the underlying causes of trafficking through: 1) social and economic initiatives; 2) enable legal migration, strengthen visa and border control and ensure the integrity, security and validity of travel or identity documents; 3) discourage demand.

Besides this, the Convention requires States to take a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to prevention and encourages co-ordination between all relevant anti-trafficking actors. Prevention policies and programmes should be based on a human rights approach and use gender mainstreaming and a child-sensitive approach.

In terms of GRETA's findings, I would like to highlight the following recommendations on prevention:

- In its annual report for 2013 GRETA focused on the issue of prevention and provided a number of findings and conclusions following the information collected in country reports.
- Thus, as a first point, the President of GRETA highlighted in the introduction to the report the need for more efforts to address, including through prevention activities, all forms of trafficking and its new varieties, such as trafficking for the purpose of forced begging or exploitation of criminal activities and organ removal. Furthermore, action for addressing trafficking for the purpose of slavery, servitude and forced labour should be stepped up. Country reports show a great number of awareness raising activities supported by Governments and implemented by NGOs that continue targeting specifically trafficking for sexual exploitation. Very few activities are conducted to inform migrants about their rights that could prevent them from being trafficked and exploited. GRETA's assessments is that more political will is necessary to address these issues seriously and to adjust policies and activities to the

various forms of trafficking, including by organizing trainings for all relevant professionals.

- Following from this, a second conclusion made by GRETA pertained to the need of involving the private sector and the media in prevention work. Business and trade sectors must ensure that the products sold or service provided are not the result of exploited labour in violation of the Convention standards. Mass media has also a crucial role to play by bringing to light the new forms of trafficking and discourage demand by informing and influencing public opinion.
- Thirdly, prevention can only work if there are strong programmes to support and assist victims of trafficking. Adequate assistance and proper reintegration of victims of trafficking are important factors in preventing cases of re-trafficking by reducing their vulnerability. For instance, there is a serious lack of funding to secure legal assistance to trafficked persons to claim redress, let alone unpaid wages, which leaves them in an unaltered position vulnerable to re-trafficking and further exploitation. This legal assistance would be effectively strengthened through closer international cooperation between the lawyers from countries of origin and of destination.
- More needs to be done to protect victims from intimidation and reprisals from traffickers. Although countries have specific laws on victims/witnesses protection, often little is done in practice because of lack of dedicated witness protection units or funding to implement them. As a result, victims remain in a vicious circle of vulnerability.
- Finally, GRETA is of an opinion that national anti-trafficking co-ordination structures have a strategic role to play in prevention. Half of GRETA's country reports underlined the necessity of improving the nature of co-ordination, to include specifically NGOs and other actors in the field, such as trade unions and the private sector and to give to these bodies the sufficient authority to make their decisions implemented and the coordination a reality.

I will stop here. Prevention is only one of the important components of the complex fights against trafficking in human beings. My GRETA colleagues will be highlighting other ones in the next sessions.