



ԵԱՀԿ-ՈՒՄ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄՇՏԱԿԱՆ ՆԵՐԿԱՅԱՑՈՒՑՉՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TO THE OSCE

Statement

**in Response to the address by Mr. Valiant Richey,
OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator
for Combating Trafficking in Human beings
as delivered by Ambassador Armen Papikyan,
at the 1346th meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council**

25 November 2021

Madame Chairperson,

The Delegation of Armenia warmly welcomes Mr. Valiant Richey, the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings back to the Permanent Council and thanks him for his report, which covers different aspects of addressing and combating the crime of trafficking in human beings.

The pertinence of our today's discussion is further signified in light of our efforts related to the adoption of the Draft MC Decision on Strengthening Efforts to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, as traditionally proposed by the delegation of the United States and co-sponsored by the delegation of Albania.

Dear Mr. Richey,

The Anti-Trafficking Council and the Inter-Agency Working Group against Trafficking in Persons (IWGTP) are the main entities in Armenia that coordinate and oversee the implementation of anti-trafficking measures, in close co-operation with the civil society organizations.

A specialized anti trafficking unit within the Criminal Police is responsible for coordinating national efforts in fighting against trafficking in persons. This unit

conducts initial investigations and refers cases to the Investigative Committee for a more thorough investigation.

16 cases of trafficking in persons were investigated in Armenia in 2020, of which 13 were forced labour cases and 3 cases of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

It is worth mentioning that in recent years the Government of Armenia has also developed a manual for local police on monitoring risky businesses and interviewing vulnerable communities.

Another major undertaking in this field was the decision of the Government of Armenia to join the UNODC's Blue Heart Campaign on 30th of July 2021 to mark World Day against Trafficking in persons. With this, Armenia has become the newest member of the community of 35 states in supporting the global awareness raising initiative to fight human trafficking and its impact on society.

Dear Mr Richey,

We share the assessment in your report that one of the important aspects of trafficking in human beings is linked to technologies. As with other spheres of our life, technologies have dual influence on the issues related to the trafficking in human beings as well. On the one hand, they might facilitate the trafficking in persons by giving the criminals platforms to advertise their malicious activities. On the other hand, technologies also provide opportunities to combat this crime through wide social outreach and different campaigns, carried out by relevant government authorities and civil society organizations.

At the same time, we would like to bring to your attention another important aspect of trafficking in human beings that usually receives less attention. Here we speak about the nexus between trafficking in human beings and the enforced disappearance, as elaborated by the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as by the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances from the stand points of their respective mandates. We would appreciate to hear your views on that particular matter.

In closing, let me express the readiness of my Delegation to work closely with you, Mr Richey, and assure you of Armenia's support in fulfilling your mandated activities.

I thank you