



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Report to the Permanent Council
by Mr. Valiant Richey, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator on
Combating Trafficking in Human beings (CTHB)**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I am pleased to be here to deliver my first report to the Permanent Council. As you know, last year was a period of transition for the Office and consequently there was not an opportunity to brief you. With your kind indulgence, I therefore intend to report on both 2018 and 2019, with a focus on the most recent developments. In this regard, let me also acknowledge the work of my predecessors, in particular Ambassador Madina Jarbussynova, whose leadership paved the way for many of the innovative portfolios that we are still advancing today.

The mandate

- Let me start by briefly recalling **the mandate for the Special Representative position**. It derives from Ministerial Council Decisions

2/03 and 3/06 which establish the functions of our Office. At its core, our mission is to help all 57 participating States to combat, prevent and ultimately end trafficking in human beings. We do so by **raising the public and political profile** of the OSCE anti-trafficking agenda in relevant international and national fora. We also **ensure co-ordination of all OSCE work** in combating trafficking in human beings across the three dimensions as well as with external partners. And finally, we **assist participating States in the implementation** of OSCE commitments through research, policy development, technical assistance, and capacity-building.

Ministerial Council Decisions

- We are guided by the OSCE Action Plan, its addenda and the Ministerial Council Decisions, and in this regard, the last two years have seen robust activity in the OSCE with the **adoption of three MC Decisions** on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings: **Decision No. 6/17**; **Decision No. 7/17**; and **Decision No. 6/18**¹. The adoption of these decisions demonstrates a strong consensus across OSCE participating States and highlights a number of thematic areas which have been the focus of our work.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Within the framework of “Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnerships,” our approach to anti-trafficking work is based on a cycle starting with the examination of persistent and emerging challenges,

¹ Decision No. 6/17 on strengthening efforts to prevent trafficking in human beings; Decision No. 7/17 on strengthening efforts to combat all forms of child trafficking, including for sexual exploitation, as well as other forms of sexual exploitation of children; and Decision No. 6/18 on strengthening efforts to prevent and combat child trafficking, including of unaccompanied minors.

leading to the development of comprehensive policy responses, and culminating with support for practical implementation on the ground. This is our **“policy to practice” approach** that we are implementing across a number of prioritized areas.

Technology

- First, technology. In recent years, technology has transformed the human trafficking landscape, both in terms of how human traffickers misuse it to advance their interests and how it can be deployed to advance prosecution, protection and prevention goals of the OSCE participating States. In April, we held a landmark Alliance Conference which gathered more than 400 practitioners from across the OSCE to discuss prominent aspects of the intersection between technology and trafficking.
- The report of the Alliance Conference highlighted the dual nature of technology and called for further policy development and capacity-building. In the coming weeks, the Office will publish ground-breaking research on the positive use of technology in combating trafficking, which identifies over 300 tools and initiatives across the globe. We also supported a number of capacity-building initiatives for judiciary, law enforcers, prosecutors, civil society and other anti-trafficking policy-makers and practitioners from the OSCE participating States, most recently in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belarus and Ukraine. These activities were organized in co-operation with TNTD/SMPU, Field Operations and national authorities. Our joint efforts have sparked attention to the issue across States and the international community.

Supply Chains

- Another example where we successfully played a leading role is our ongoing work on preventing trafficking for labor exploitation through responsible public procurement. In essence, the goal is to ensure that procured goods or services are not produced by exploited persons. Again, participating States led the way, in particular with MC Decision 6/17 in calling for action on supply chains in the private sector, in participating States and in the OSCE structures. In response, the Office produced Model Guidelines as well as a Compendium of relevant resources on preventing trafficking for labor exploitation in supply chains. We translated the Guidelines into in all of the OSCE official languages, and have completed three regional workshops with procurement and anti-trafficking practitioners from almost half of the participating States to help foster implementation of the recommended measures.
- The OSCE also leads by example in this field: in collaboration with the Secretariat's procurement and contracting unit, the Office undertook activities to develop internal capacities to prevent trafficking in human beings in OSCE procurement. Thus far, we completed a pilot project mapping OSCE supply chains and organized an OSCE-wide workshop on Managing and Mitigating Trafficking Risks with the participation of procurement experts from all OSCE executive structures. The recommendations provided at the event will now serve as the basis for the development of OSCE procurement guidelines on how to manage and mitigate human trafficking risks.
- Our work has quickly become a model for the international community as well: in the framework of our co-chairing of the UN's Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking, or ICAT, we introduced the topic

of public procurement measures in international organizations to the UN's High Level Procurement Network. Subsequently, a task force created—in partnership with the OSCE—to explore implementation of measures across UN entities.

Child Trafficking

- Another focus over the last two years has been child trafficking. Trafficking in children has been at the forefront of recent MC Decisions as it continues to pose a serious problem in the OSCE region. In line with the MC Decision 6/18, the Office published policy recommendations aimed at ensuring that child protection mechanisms protect the rights and meet the needs of child victims of human trafficking. The Office then worked to disseminate the paper to child protection agencies and engaged ECPAT, an international NGO network on ending child trafficking, to advance the recommendations at the national level. As a next step, the Office will aid participating States in implementing the recommendation from MC Decision 6/18 for the appointment of national child trafficking focal points.

Trafficking in the context of migration flows

- Next, we have addressed trafficking in the context of migration flows, a topic that continues to garner significant attention in the OSCE region. Unfortunately, where migrants and asylum-seekers face uncertainty and peril, traffickers see opportunities for exploiting their vulnerability. Drawing upon almost two years of fact-finding field missions and ad-hoc expert research, in 2018, the Office published “*From Reception to Recognition*”, a policy paper on identifying trafficking victims in migration flows. This was followed in 2019 by the Uniform Guidelines for the Identification and Referral of Victims of Human Trafficking. The

Guidelines derived from on-the-ground experience and delivered recommendations that can be adapted to the respective legislative and operational frameworks of OSCE participating States. They can therefore be readily applied to any new migration routes or hotspots which may develop. As is our practice, we ensured the dissemination of these publications, including through practical workshops, the most recent one being held in Sarajevo with the support of the Field Operations in South-Eastern Europe.

Financial Investigations

- Another exciting thematic portfolio we have just recently launched is financial investigations into human trafficking. Human trafficking is at its core a financially motivated crime. To highlight possible ways to disrupt its profitability and break the business cycle of trafficking, we have initiated a project in partnership with the United Nations University and the Liechtenstein Initiative's Financial Sector Commission on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. We compiled the first-ever compendium of resources relating to financial flows of human trafficking and investigations, developed a comprehensive list of trafficking indicators for use by financial institutions, and outlined a step-by-step guide for financial investigation frameworks.

Other topics

- This is only a glimpse into the rich programming that the Office has implemented over the past two years. Our thematic areas of engagement also include ongoing research into gender-sensitive approaches to trafficking, exploring the intersection between terrorism and trafficking, the role of judges in enhancing the criminal justice response to trafficking,

as well as the role of tourism and hospitality industries in preventing trafficking in human beings. I encourage you to refer to our biennial report to find out more details of our 2018-2019 activities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- In order to translate our thematic research focus into policy changes, we have at our disposal an impressive toolbox aimed at increasing the impact of our work. This is done through increased capacity, knowledge and awareness, greater political will as well as greater harmonization and co-ordination of our anti-trafficking efforts.

Capacity-building

- As part of the policy-to-practice approach, we conduct important capacity-building efforts to implement the guidance and concepts developed through our policy work. I've outlined a number of examples of these efforts within our thematic portfolios, however, our effort has been our pioneering simulation-based trainings. The training framework brings together law enforcement officers, financial investigators, labour inspectors, prosecutors, migration and asylum authorities, NGOs, social service providers, lawyers and border security practitioners to tackle simulated trafficking cases in a live-action, multi-agency setting. This project has allowed us to accomplish at least three goals: build the skills and knowledge of practitioners; infuse OSCE principles and concepts throughout the participating States; and build networks of practitioners that have led to the solving of real cases.
- In the course of the eight simulation-based trainings held since 2016, we have trained 529 practitioners from 55 participating States and seven

Partners for Co-operation. About 58% of the trainees were women, including 36% in fields traditionally dominated by men—law enforcement, financial investigations, and prosecution. In the context of the trainings, we have also engaged over 30 partners, including government representatives, international organizations, NGOs, and academia, demonstrating how our partnerships ensure the sustainability of our efforts.

- Inspired by these success stories, and aided by our new *Handbook on How to Conduct Simulation-based Training Exercises to Combat Human Trafficking*, simulation trainings have already been replicated and adapted to national contexts in France and in Kazakhstan. I am very pleased that others – including Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan – have expressed their intention to organize similar exercises in 2020 and 2021. We are offering our support to all those who are seeking to strengthen their anti-trafficking training curricula by implementing our simulation-based exercises.

Country Visits

- Our work aims to assist participating States in implementing their commitments and making full usage of recommendations set forth in the OSCE Action Plan and other relevant decisions. In this regard, the country visits that I have conducted in Austria, Croatia, Cyprus and Georgia, as well as the follow-up visits to Tajikistan, Romania and Uzbekistan – have offered a unique opportunity to exchange good practices and consult relevant legislative, judicial, and executive authorities in a spirit of co-operation. This year, following requests from Iceland and Turkmenistan, technical assistance visits were also conducted and provided for targeted thematic discussions with national counterparts.

Partnerships

- The dual role of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator also carries the responsibility of advancing partnerships, co-ordination and co-operation—words that are deeply ingrained in the work of the OSCE. But partnership in itself is a means and not an end, it is a tactic not a goal. Partnerships are a "force multiplier" to advance our goals and trigger interventions adapted to the scale of the issue. The aim is to maximize the implementation of the OSCE anti-trafficking agenda through more elaborated and better co-ordinated partnerships within the OSCE and across the international community.
- In this regard, in 2019, our leadership and our role as a regional organization that can link global initiatives with action on the ground, was recognized when we became the first non-UN entity to be appointed as co-chair of ICAT, the UN's Inter-Agency Coordination Group Against Trafficking. ICAT was established with the objective to enhance inter-agency coordination in anti-trafficking efforts. Thanks to our persistent efforts to make a strategic use of this forum, OSCE anti-trafficking initiatives were promoted. Most notably, we published an ICAT paper on technology and we engaged ICAT on the topic of public procurement.
- Likewise, our co-operation with the Council of Europe remained instrumental to develop complementary lines of action and coordinate our efforts towards ending trafficking in human beings. By way of example, beginning in 2018 we co-organized annual meetings of National Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinators and Rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms jointly with Council of Europe. This year, the meeting was held in Bratislava in partnership with the Slovak OSCE Chair and was attended by representatives from 41 OSCE participating States and one Partner for Co-

operation. An extended two-day format for the meeting provided for in-depth exchange on a number of strategic areas in line with recent Ministerial Council Decisions, including ending child trafficking, addressing the demand that fosters human trafficking for various exploitative purposes and encouraging constructive engagement with civil society.

- Other partnerships that we have developed in the course of the past two years stand out for their innovative and cutting-edge nature. One example is our collaboration with Tech Against Trafficking (TAT), a coalition of technology companies. Our Office has joined the Advisory Board of TAT and will continue to partner with other TAT members to combine our efforts on the use of technology in trafficking.

Co-ordination

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Helping people on the ground is fundamental to enhancing human security and making local communities safer and more viable. That is why nobody is better placed than the OSCE Field Operations in supporting host countries to realize the OSCE's comprehensive approach to security. In 2018 and 2019, the co-operation between my Office and the Field Operations, including the network of the anti-trafficking focal points, expanded substantially. The invaluable assistance of the Field Operations during the preparation and implementation of the OSCE simulation-based trainings on combating human trafficking is just one of the many examples illustrating this. Likewise, over the past two years, co-operation with TNTD, OSG/Gender Section and other Secretariat teams, as well as our longstanding and revitalized relationship with ODIHR, also contributed to building synergies in planning and implementing the OSCE's CTHB

portfolio, in particular as it relates to advocacy around transnational threats, gender issues and the update of National Referral Mechanisms Handbook.

2020

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Virtually every country has a law on human trafficking, has trained criminal justice practitioners and has provided some level of victim services. Yet, despite this progress, estimates place the number of victims globally in the tens of millions, with a substantial percentage of these in the OSCE region. To make matters worse, every country is affected and none has successfully eradicated trafficking. I am particularly concerned about the lack of enforcement of relevant statutes in identifying and prosecuting trafficking offences. And I have heard many of you expressing these same concerns about the lack of effective prosecution.
- 2020 will mark 20 years since the adoption of Palermo Protocol, the founding document of the modern anti-trafficking movement. This will be a good opportunity to highlight the need for enhanced prosecution of traffickers in human beings. On this note, I am delighted to announce that our next Alliance Conference against Trafficking in Persons Conference will be dedicated to this topic. As we go forward with this initiative, I am confident that many of you will join me in calling for an increased emphasis on prosecution as an essential piece of our victim-centred approach to ending human trafficking.

Ladies and gentlemen,

- Today, I provided you with a brief insight into the activities carried out by my Office, but most importantly I have also given you an overview of essentially why and how we do our work.
- Human trafficking is not only an egregious affront to basic human rights and a symptom of societal ills. It is also a grave security risk that manifests when rule of law and human security are undermined through the exploitation of human beings. It can be both a cause and effect of unsafe and unstable environments. The OSCE is therefore well placed to address this crime and connect anti-trafficking efforts not only to social protection initiatives but also to broader prevention and security strategies.
- This Office is a unique institutional vehicle whose effectiveness and added value have been proven in time and practice thanks to the expertise, creativity and dedication of the CTHB Office staff and of our partners.
- I would also like to thank our donors for extra-budgetary project contributions, in particular the governments of Andorra, Austria, Belarus, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Monaco, United Kingdom, and Switzerland. A special thanks also to Italy, Germany and the United States of America for seconding staff to my Office: your support is very much appreciated.
- On a personal note, I feel deeply honoured and humbled by the responsibilities that have been accorded to me as Special Representative and Co-ordinator since September of this year. I hope to meet your expectations by representing the OSCE at the highest political level. And I

feel confident that the work of my Office will continue to make you proud of every word and sign of support you are giving to this Office.

- I would like to express my appreciation to the current Slovak Chair, as well as to the previous Italian Chair for their unconditional support to our mandate in the course of these two years. None of the achievements mentioned today would have been possible without their contribution. I would also like to commend the incoming Albanian Chair for already articulating a strong commitment in combating trafficking in human beings and setting it as a priority issue for the upcoming year.
- Our goal to end trafficking in human beings offers a unique opportunity to unite us all in the fight against a common threat, even when other avenues for cooperation have turned into impasses. It holds great promise, a promise that must be seized and elevated. I look forward to working with those who are ready to join us in the fight against trafficking in human beings so that everyone in our region can, one day, live a life free of exploitation.
- I thank you for your kind attention.