



Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for combating trafficking in human beings
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**Prevention of Modern Slavery: "An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure"
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Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be invited to this workshop and I would like to commend to Eva Biaudet, OSCE Special Representative for her important work in fight against trafficking in humans.

The theme of this workshop is very important and timely. In the last two decades there have been significant progress achieved in researching, understanding and developing policies to combat such dynamic form of slavery as trafficking in humans in Europe. But still much work is ahead. To analyse achievements and gaps made through these years, rethinking approaches with professionals and important stakeholders is extremely important and I hope that we can come up united with long term and sustainable prevention strategy to address such form of slavery as trafficking in humans, taking into consideration the challenges our societies face.

I would like to state here, that the significant achievements we have today relate only to one form of slavery – trafficking in humans with its diversity of forms, whereas multiple other forms such as bonded labour, forced and early marriage, work of domestic workers and others are still underaddressed and impact on lives of millions of women, men and children. Slavery as a social and economic relationship has never ceased to exist during recorded history, but the form that it takes and its definition have evolved and changed. Today some old traditional forms of slavery still persist in their earlier forms, others transmute into new ones, affecting the lives of many millions of people around the world¹.

I am happy to share this panel with my dear colleagues UN SRs and jointly we can present you the UN experience in combating different forms of slavery both traditional, new emerging and trafficking in humans and the toolkit we use to prevent the forms of slavery we work with and protect the rights and dignity of victims.

As I am currently happy to wear another hat as well - deputy chair of GRETA – expert mechanism to monitor the implementation by the state parties of Council of Europe "Convention of the Council of Europe on Actions against Trafficking in humans", the document which was part of my intellectual life for many years, I will build my presentation along the actions in prevention of slavery undertaken by UN Human Rights Council and prevention mechanisms build on COE Convention and

¹ According to estimates of scholars, that are based on definition of 1926 Slavery Convention there are 27 million of enslaved people thought the world. See Kevin Bales, *Ending Slavery. How We Free Today's Slaves*, 2007.

the work of GRETA and conclude with presenting recommendations on joint prevention policies.

The mandate of SR on contemporary forms of slavery I hold do not deal with trafficking in humans, it deals with other forms of slavery : traditional and modern that are not covered by any other mandate of UN Human Rights council and is new in the system of Special procedures. The Resolution of Human Rights Council establishing mandate recognized that the issue of contemporary forms of slavery needs to be given greater prominence and priority within the United Nations system if these practices are to be eradicated once and for all” and requested the established mandate to better address modern forms of slavery in UN System. The establishment of mandate encapsulated previously done by UN bodies significant work in standard setting and policy development to eradicate slavery and demonstrated political will of the states to the protect and restore the rights and dignity of many millions of people around the globe in a holistic and systematic way. The Resolution establishing mandate also mentions that none of the existing mandates of neither Special Procedures nor the Board of Trustees for the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery do not adequately cover all slavery practices. In spite of the fact that slavery has been subject to some of the strongest sanctions of the international community, none of the more than 300 laws and agreements written since 1815 to combat it has been totally effective. The Resolution defines the legal framework for the mandate: the Slavery Convention of 1926, and the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956 and other relevant ILO and other UN documents, but the instruments have received relatively low number of ratification given their age and the importance of the issue they address. In addition, there are no treaty bodies to review States’ compliance with their obligations arising out of either of these Conventions and monitor the implementation of Slavery Conventions.

According to report by an Expert Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights more than 250 million people remain affected by descent-based discrimination in various regions of the world. The vast majority of bonded labourers in India, Nepal and Pakistan are *dalits* and those who are considered to be of "low" caste, indigenous people or those from other minority groups, including religious minorities. Facts of decent based slavery have been researched by the Anti Slavery International when ten thousands of people in Niger, Mauritania and Mali are ascribed a slave status at birth and are then considered to be the property of their "masters" who force them to work without pay. Even at the most modest calculation that are based on very limited research and data as on it’s traditional forms and new emerging forms there are some 20 million people all over the world that are in debt bondage nowadays (ASI) . Discrimination and poverty also underpin debt bondage of indigenous population in many Latin American countries such as Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru and the Republic of Congo. The existence of traditional forms of forced labour can also result from long-standing patterns of discrimination against vulnerable groups, whether tribal and caste minorities in Asia, or indigenous peoples of Latin America. Such traditional forms also exist in those parts of Africa where slavery and slave trading have long been documented, and where the legacy of traditional slavery can involve continued discrimination and cohesive practices.

Domestic work, though rarely recognized as productive, involves substantial numbers of mainly female workers. In many countries domestic workers are working in shadow of private households; generally their work is excluded from labour market regulations. Domestic workers are extremely vulnerable to forced labour and slavery like conditions because of the extremely unprotected nature of their work: their legal status in the host country. Sexual abuse, rape, long working hours with in many situations no payment is the situation of domestic workers.

According to ILO number of children working in the worst forms of child labor is 179 million, one in every eight of the worlds five to 17 years old, in forced or bonded labor amount to 5.7million worldwide. The children born as slaves as “collateral” to repay generational debts with their labor. Discriminated against complex rights: such as right to education, healthcare, vocational training, living with their own family, to be protected these children grow with low perspectives for alternative life. This is perpetuated in generation.

The forms of slavery I presented above are closely linked to trafficking in humans but are not identical. Although trafficking and presented above forms of slavery have different starting points and different mechanisms of enslavement, they are all forms of slavery and are abhorrent violation of human rights.

Enhancing and mainstreaming human rights perspective in dealing with different forms of slavery , wide cooperation, coordination and raising public and political profile on the combat of phenomena , raising awareness of the issues we deal with is the core concepts of UN SR mandates and OSCE Special Representative on trafficking , experts of GRETA monitoring body of COE convention and EU expert group and other regional and International bodies established to combat slavery.

Developed during the last decade strong human rights centred instruments : UN Guidelines and principles on human rights and human trafficking and soon new edition Commentary to the Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking will be presented ,UN Palermo Protocol , COE Convention on actions against trafficking in humans , the first international legally binding instrument affirms that trafficking in human beings constitutes a violation of human rights and is an offence to the dignity and integrity of the human being and introduces the concept of victims, leaving it to each State to define who is a victim and therefore deserves the measures of protection and assistance are important foundation for our work and standard and obligation for the states that have ratified the Conventions . Irrespective of the fact that many countries have ratified Conventions and there have been developed progressive programs and laws on the level of states to protect the rights of victims of trafficking there is still gap between these programs and the implementation ,even more sometimes these laws contain discriminatory practices or implementation carries elements of discrimination and instead of empowering victims , enhances their victimization. The vital areas such as identification, referral and subsequent provision of assistance to victims and reintegration require closer attention and human rights and victims centred approach enforcement. I think identification of victims raises much concern, especially when it relates to children.

Another area that requires cooperation and thorough monitoring is application of human rights standards in dealing with children victims of trafficking. Rights of children victims of trafficking have received attention in many documents developed

by OSCE and UNICEF, COE Convention on Actions against trafficking contains important articles related to protection of the rights of children, **I do believe that strengthening human rights standards and close monitoring and guidance on implementation of the laws and programs is the area of common concern and requires strong cooperation .**

In a recent statement COE High Commissioner on Human Rights Thomas Hammamberg stressed the existing gap between the rights proclaimed in human rights treaties and the reality in member states. Closing this implementation gap is crucial for all human rights work today. It requires a systematic approach, including effective collection of relevant data and comprehensive planning through a participatory process. An important element in this endeavour is to define meaningful indicators which can be used to assess progress. This has been concern by many international agencies and discussion has been initiated long ago. In June 2008 the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights have presented the "Report on indicators for promoting and monitoring implementation of the humans rights" to HRC , proposing development of three types of indicators : structural , process and outcome indicators in March 2008 the issue have been addressed by European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in document on "Developing indicators for the protection, respect and promotion of the rights of the child in the European Union, UNICEF, UNDP and different agencies of Council of Europe have also done important work in developing the human rights indicators generally and in specific fields . **This is important area of co-operation which would allow us to better held governments accountable for the realisation of human rights and highlight success through accurate criteria. Moreover, indicators have great potential for clarifying and communicating the practical content of human rights in concrete situations.**

Mainstreaming antislavery approach and widening its application to development programs in the field is important area for cooperation in the area of prevention. Fight against slavery and its form trafficking in humans touches upon many cross cutting issues: poverty reduction, unemployment, corruption, gender, child employment, economic opportunities and provision of loans etc. Mainstreaming the anti discrimination and make programs inclusive and participatory to vulnerable population, examining programs through the lens of human rights and humans security and strong cooperation and programming their work between the agencies in the field will strengthen the impact and make it long term and in the times of economic crisis will allow to do more with less financial investment.

Search for effective, long term and sustainable cooperation has been the theme of June meeting of three UN Rapporteurs with NGO's and International agencies. I am sure the methods developed there can serve as good foundation for developing cooperation to prevent trafficking between all the main stakeholders. The list of possible mechanisms included, but not limited to : **development of common approaches to information collection and sharing** : this information might include data on victims disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, religion , main stake holders , spectrum of NGO's dealing with fight against trafficking, human rights ,state laws ratification of International instruments, State polices and state institutions , local businesses and labor recruitment agencies. The list of in country stake holders is necessary to expand to address new emerging forms of trafficking as well as build wider partnership: there might be business, church, military This

information will be useful while examining performance of states by UN, OSCE, COE GRETA, EU and other bodies, developing policies and will serve as good foundation during country visit assessments.

The useful practice might be **organization of joint country visits and prepare joint report** which will enhance impact on political level. Effective mechanism of prevention and awareness rising is mechanism of regional consultations with invitation of key partners.

Another important opportunity is issuance of joint statements on various occasions: International Day of trafficking, UN Day of slavery, International human rights day.

Modern forms of slavery are extremely dynamic phenomena, I am sure during these days many proactive and creative areas of cooperation in prevention of different forms of slavery will be discussed and I am looking forward to rich exchange of opinions and discussion and hope that other forms of slavery will also be taken as separate priority agenda in such discussions.

Thank you very much.