



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**

**STATEMENT BY MONSIGNOR MICHAEL W. BANACH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE,
AT THE 914th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

31 MAY 2012

**RE: REPORT BY THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE AND CO-
ORDINATOR FOR COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

Mister Chairman,

1. The Delegation of the Holy See willingly joins the previous speakers in warmly welcoming the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Dr. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, and thanks her for the presentation of the detailed report of the activities and priorities of her Office for 2012. Her presence at today's Permanent Council, on the heels of the 2012 Human Dimension Seminar, testifies to the great importance our Organization attaches to this issue. Ms. Giammarinaro, my Authorities deeply appreciate the work that you and your staff do to combat modern shocking offenses against human dignity and grave violations of human rights that is trafficking in human persons.

2. What is stunning, however, is that these shocking offenses are happening in our backyard. In fact, almost every country is confronted with trafficking problems, whether it be sexual exploitation, forced labour or bonded labour, child soldiers, or abusive ways of adoption. No country is excluded from it. It is a human rights abuse. Persons have been deceived about the goals of their future activities and are no longer free to decide about their lives. They end up in slavery-like situations or servitude from which it is very difficult to escape. Threats and violence are used to obtain this. The root causes of trafficking are not just poverty and unemployment in developing countries. The demand for cheap labour, low priced products or even "exotic or unusual sex" is

also a root cause of trafficking that must be addressed. Victims should be protected and assisted, whereby their access to justice, to social and legal assistance and to compensation for damages that they have suffered is ensured. The integration of victims includes medical care and psycho-social counselling, accommodation, residence permits and access to employment. In certain cases it means the return to the home country with micro projects and/or loans. One has to be careful that they do not return to the same circumstances which make trafficking again possible.

3. For these reasons, the Holy See welcomed the recent Human Dimension Seminar on Rule of Law Framework for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. My Delegation also welcomes your emphasis on victim assistance and protection. For the Holy See, it is important that the human victims of trafficking in human beings be placed in conditions where they can feel that they are effectively protected and ensured of their rights. This can be done by making the most of civil society, including Catholic and other religious and faith-based organizations. In this sense, it is equally important that the human victims of trafficking are helped to understand their status of being a victim, because this will lead them not only to recognize the violence they have suffered, but it will also render them more cooperative in eventual criminal investigations and legal processes. It is also imperative that the victims enjoy the widest legal opportunities of remaining on the territory where the crime has been committed. Such permission should not be connected only to the trial portion of a legal/criminal process or conceded only upon the filing of criminal complaint or accusation. It would also be appropriate if legislation included provisions for courses of professional work formation for the victims and, if they so desire, dispositions for them to work in the country where they find themselves, instead of having to return to their homelands. I assure Dr. Giammarinaro of my Delegation's support in building upon the Vilnius Declaration and the final recommendations of the Warsaw Seminar.

4. Finally, I wish to conclude my remarks by recognizing the strong conviction and admirable energy that Ms. Giammarinaro dedicates to her work. I can only express my sincere gratitude and wish her and her dedicated staff all the best as they continue to carry out the activities of her Office.

Thank you, Mister Chairman!