The overall goal of the side event is to raise awareness of human rights and their importance for living together in freedom and security, and therefore also for the prevention of threats such as trafficking in human beings. Human rights and trafficking in human beings are inseparably linked topics, since trafficking constitutes one of the most fundamental human rights abuses.

A better implementation of human rights as established in the European Convention on Human Rights and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights means better living conditions, stronger social cohesion and more security, which is of particular importance for vulnerable groups.

Successfully implementing human rights and better communicating their practical meaning for everyday life constitutes a challenge for all member states of the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) as well as the European Union, its member states and candidate countries.

Therefore, highly knowledgeable panelists from EU member states and countries, which would like to become members of the EU as well as high-ranking representatives of the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights have been invited to speak during this side event.

Panelists:

- Ms Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General for Democracy at the Council of Europe
- Mr Morten Kjaerum, Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)
- Ms Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- Ms Güner Balci, German journalist and author
- Ambassador Jakob Finci, Diplomat and lawyer from Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Mr Levent Korkut, Professor of Political Science and Public Law at the Hacettepe University
- Moderator: Mr Wilhelm Sandrisser, Deputy Director General, Austrian Ministry of the Interior
Maria Grazia GIAMMARINARO, Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, OSCE

Dr. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro has been Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings at the OSCE since January 2010. From 2006 to 2009 Dr. Giammarinaro served in the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security in Brussels, where she was responsible for work to combat human trafficking and sexual exploitation of children. In 2012 she received a Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Hero Award from US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to honour her significant contributions in the struggle to end modern-day slavery.

Güner BALCI, Journalist and author

Güner Balci is a German author as well as a newspaper and television journalist. As a journalist and author (novels Arabboy and Arabqueen) she particularly focuses on the situation of migrants in the German society. After finishing her studies in education and literary science, Ms Balci first worked in a model project on violence and crime prevention in Berlin. She then focused on writing as a freelance newspaper and TV journalist. In 2012 she received the Civis-Award for her work as a television journalist.

Ambassador Jakob FINCI, Diplomat and lawyer from Bosnia and Herzegovina

Jakob Finci is a diplomat, lawyer and former ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Switzerland. Mr Finci is the president of the Jewish Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mr Finci is well known for his appeal to the European Court of Human Rights on the grounds that Bosnia and Herzegovina’s constitution violates the European Convention on Human Rights (“Sejdić-Finci Case”).

Levent KORKUT, University Professor and human rights activist

Professor Levent Korkut teaches political science and public law at Hacettepe University, Ankara. Professor Korkut was one of the founders of the Turkish branch of Amnesty International, which he chaired from 2002 to 2007. Currently he is a steering committee member of the Human Rights Joint Platform, a network of national human rights associations. He is also the chair of Civil Society Development Center, a national association for the development of civil society through capacity building support.

Morten KJAERUM, Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights

Morten Kjaerum is Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in Vienna. He was the founding Director of the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), Denmark’s national human rights institution, and developed it within 17 years from a small organisation to a large internationally recognised institution. From 1986 until today, he has written extensively on a number of issues related to human rights and in particular refugee law, the prohibition against racial discrimination, and the role of national human rights.

Snežana MARKOVIC, Director General for Democracy, Council of Europe

Ms Snežana Samardžić-Marković is since 2012 Director General of Democracy at the Council of Europe, in charge of the Organisation’s action promoting democratic innovation, governance, participation and diversity. Her responsibilities include the policy areas of education and youth, local democracy, cultural policies, election assistance, the protection of human dignity, gender equality, children’s rights, and the rights of minorities, societal defences against discrimination, democratic citizenship, social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and democratic responses to crisis situations. Previously, Snežana has held numerous positions in the Serbian Government including as Deputy Director in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Neighbouring Countries; Assistant Minister of Defence (2005-2007) and Co-President of the Serbia-NATO Defence Reform Group; member of the Foundation Board of WADA, Minister of Youth and Sports (2007-2012) and President of the Fund for Young Talents.

Ambassador Jakob FINCI, Diplomat and lawyer from Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Moderator: Wilhelm SANDRISSE

Wilhelm Sandrisser is Deputy Director General in the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, and responsible for Security Policy, International and EU- Affairs and Public Relations.