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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR TACAN İLDEM
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY**

**In Response to the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking
in Human Beings**

(953th Meeting of the Permanent Council, 16 May 2013)

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.

I would like to join the previous speakers in warmly welcoming the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Dr. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, back to the Permanent Council, and to thank her for her comprehensive presentation.

The various statistics highlighted by the Special Representative demonstrate once again just how serious a transnational threat has human trafficking become despite all the measures already taken against it at the international level and among the participating States. This heinous crime not only undermines our comprehensive security but also violates the human rights of its victims. Together we must do all in our power to eradicate it. Thus we appreciate the timely prioritization of human trafficking by the Ukrainian Chairmanship.

In Turkey, which is a party to various international instruments on fighting trafficking in human beings, we established a National Task Force for Combating Human Trafficking more than a decade ago in 2002. Since then this Task Force has been instrumental in the drafting of two consecutive National Action Plans on the Fight against Human Trafficking, the first of which was initiated in 2003 and the second in 2009. Furthermore, as this effort requires international cooperation, Turkey has signed bilateral cooperation protocols with a number of countries and at the multilateral level participates in and supports the activities not only of the OSCE but also of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Union in the field of combating human trafficking.

Currently we feel the strong need in Turkey for a single legal framework concerning human trafficking, which would serve to strengthen our institutional capacity and our victim identification and protection system. We are now approaching to the finalization of such a comprehensive framework law on combating human trafficking and the protection of victims, in the line with the Palermo Protocol and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The drafting process for this legislation involves the participation not only of government institutions, but of civil society and academia as well. Given the importance we attach to the fight against human trafficking, we highly value the work of the Special Representative. We invite all participating States to actively support her

in the fulfillment of her mandate and to make use of her expertise in formulating or improving national frameworks for preventing and combating trafficking. We believe that last February's Seminar on Cooperation to Prevent Trafficking in Human Beings in the Mediterranean Region, organized in Rome by the Office of the Special Representative, provided a good opportunity to assess the current challenges. We are confident that the two important upcoming events in June, namely the Chairmanship's High-Level Conference on "Strengthening the OSCE Response to Trafficking in Human Beings" to be held in Kyiv as well as 13th Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference to be held here in Vienna, will provide us with new insights on how best to further develop and update the 2003 OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings. We look forward to having a fruitful dialogue on this occasion.

In concluding, we wish Special Representative Giammarinaro and her able team every success in their future endeavors and reiterate our full support for their activities.

Thank you.