

Not for sale –Joining forces against trafficking in human beings
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Closing session (12:30-1.30)

First let me warmly thank the organisers for inviting me to this conference which I was only able to join today because of another meeting not far from here at the UNODC.

As Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, I have been advocating that the implementation of anti-trafficking responses be based on 5Ps (protection, prosecution, punishment, prevention, promoting international cooperation and partnership), 3Rs (redress, recovery and reintegration) and 3Cs (capacity, cooperation and coordination), guided by international human rights law and standards. Partnership and cooperation, the subject that has been debated during this conference, have been important pillars of this framework; partnership and cooperation are essential to make progress in all other fields, from protection to punishment, prevention, recovery and reintegration; visually partnership and cooperation are like the wheels or tracks that drive the moving vehicle or machinery of anti-trafficking response.

I would like to begin by illustrating briefly how I have addressed and advocated for partnership and cooperation throughout my work as Special Rapporteur.

In all my thematic and country visit reports, for example, I have addressed the importance of cooperation and partnership among different stakeholders such as Governments, businesses, civil society organizations and trafficked persons themselves, not only at a national level but also at sub-regional, regional and international levels.

At the national level, cooperation with civil society organizations with experience and expertise in assisting trafficked persons can help address a capacity gap in identifying victims of trafficking, providing protection and appropriate assistance to the victims and prosecuting perpetrators. In my 2012 report to the Human Rights Council, I noted that community-based organizations and victim support agencies have become increasingly important in the identification of victims of trafficking. Working at the forefront and on the ground, civil society organizations are often the first to come into contact with trafficked persons. As such, they serve a fundamental function by referring victims to the appropriate authorities for assistance, helping to file complaints and reporting illegal activity to law enforcement.

In exercising of my mandate, I have also been continually advocating the importance of having national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms, to monitor the situation of human trafficking within a country, but also evaluate the degree of implementation of existing legislations as well as the level of efficiency of national action plans and policy orientation along with strengthening the gathering and use of data and reporting on trafficking in human beings.

In my 2010 report to the Human Right Council, I committed to pay particular attention to human rights violations against trafficking victims by working with Governments to put in place national mechanisms that will help to identify victims and provide protection and assistance to them while at the same time prosecuting and punishing traffickers. In this regard I recommended that “States should consider the appointment of a national rapporteur who will liaise with the Special Rapporteur to gather, exchange, and process information on trafficking in persons and monitor action.

At the sub-regional and regional levels, cooperation and partnership among States within a sub-region or region can advance the fight against trafficking in a strategic manner, as many cases of trafficking in persons are committed within the same region and the “push” and “pull” factors for such cases often arise out of the political, economic, social and cultural circumstances in the region. My 2010 report to the Human Rights Council noted the achievements of some of the regional and sub-regional mechanisms, including the adoption of common workplans or strategies at the regional level, the establishment of regional monitoring bodies to review the degree of implementation of normative instruments and related workplans, guiding and promoting the development of plans of action, multidisciplinary monitoring bodies and specialist counter-trafficking units within law enforcement structures at the national level. Furthermore, regional mechanisms have a key role in facilitating the development and strengthening of bilateral cooperation mechanisms between countries of the same region, or even with countries or organizations in other regions.

This leads me to the crucial role of international cooperation in combating trafficking in persons, which is often committed transnationally and cannot be always effectively dealt with by a single State. Without international cooperation and collaboration, effective investigation and prosecution of the crime of human trafficking may be almost impossible, given that acts may often take place across borders. In this regard, it is critical to develop cooperation mechanisms between States, either on a bilateral or multilateral basis, to share and exchange information about trafficking cases and to conduct proactive joint investigations by law enforcement authorities of concerned States. Cooperation between source countries and destination countries for trafficked persons is also crucial in preventing trafficking in persons. As discussed in depth in my report to the General Assembly of 2010, prevention of trafficking in persons requires concerted efforts by all stakeholders, including source, transit and destination countries. Furthermore, cooperation with international organizations is also strongly encouraged as they have an instrumental role in setting standards.

Finally, I would like to highlight that the private sector, particularly businesses, are a significant part of the human trafficking chain, as they could be directly linked to it through the recruitment, transport or receipt of workers for purposes of exploitation. They can also be indirectly associated with trafficking through the actions of others, such as suppliers, subcontractors, business partners, labour brokers or private employment agencies. From this perspective, cooperation and partnership with the private sector are not only logical, but also essential if anti-trafficking responses are to be effective and sustainable. My 2012 report to the General Assembly focuses on the issue of trafficking in persons in global supply chains and explores the ways in which States and businesses may join forces to contribute to combating and preventing this form of human trafficking.

As far as my mandate is concerned, I have made partnership and cooperation a cornerstone of my working methods. Besides cooperation with UN agencies and international organizations, I consciously paid particular attention to establishing partnerships with regional organisations.

As far as the European region and the broader areas covered by the OSCE, I would like to mention here the excellent collaboration that my mandate and the regional mechanisms specifically devoted to anti-trafficking have built over the years. This has included participation in conferences and expert meetings.

For example, I took part in the 13th High-level *Alliance against Trafficking in Persons* Conference “Stolen Lives, Stolen Money: The Price of Modern-Day Slavery” in July 2013. Similarly, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings took part in consultations I convened in Berlin, while staff from her office attended in the consultations in Bratislava and Geneva ...Furthermore, the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and I, co-sponsored a joint Side Event Trafficking in Persons for the Purpose of Organ Removal on the margin of session of the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons in November 2013.

In addition, throughout my term, I held regular meetings with GRETA to consolidate the standing cooperation between my mandate and the mechanism and enhanced information-sharing to fight the phenomenon of human trafficking. For instance, as a result of such exchanges, it was possible to avoid duplication of a country visit scheduled in 2013 by both mechanism but later undertaken only by GRETA.

In July 2013, I addressed the experts following which a joint press release was issued with the focus of using innovative and effective joint actions, and enhancing information-sharing to fight the phenomenon of human trafficking. Moreover, GRETA experts regularly took part in the expert meetings I convened on the various thematic priorities I examined, including in Bratislava, Geneva and Berlin. I have also systematically promoted the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in all possible occasions and fora.

On the occasion of the European Anti-Trafficking Day on 18 October 2013, GRETA, the OSCE Special Representative and myself issued a joint press statement stressing the paramount need of a universal human rights-based approach to end human trafficking in the world.

Allow me to publicly acknowledge the tireless work to combat the phenomena of trafficking undertaken by Maria Grazia Giammarinaro in her capacity of OSCE Special representative and Co-ordinator for Combating trafficking in human beings, with whom my mandate enjoyed a good cooperation.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the importance of cooperation and partnership are key, if we are to effectively counter trafficking in persons.

The time is now to join forces in combating and preventing human trafficking and ensuring full implementation of international standards as well as re-affirming our political and

economic support for this cause. Human beings are not for sale not articles of trade and all stakeholders have to collectively work in partnership to stop trafficking in persons, human trafficking or the trade in human beings.