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Iceland to the OSCE



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**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Iceland at the 785th  
meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, 10th December 2009**

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

Iceland warmly welcomes the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Ms. Eva Biaudet, to the Permanent Council and thanks her for the 2009 Annual Report – an Agenda for Change: Implementing the Platform for Action against Human Trafficking.

Iceland finds it highly valuable to receive a report on the six thematic priority areas set out in the Annual Report of 2007 entitled: “Platform for Action” that have guided the SR’s work the past three years. Iceland finds the achievement and results impressive for the SR and her office and fully subscribes to the statement of the European Union.

Trafficking in human beings is first of all a threat to the security of an individual. Additionally, it threatens the fundamental structures in society that our well-being and development are built on. This year, Iceland has had three cases of alleged THB that have been widely publicized by the Icelandic media. These have emphasized the seriousness of this matter domestically and the importance of international co-operation in addressing this crime.

The Government of Iceland has consistently been strengthening measures to combat trafficking in human beings. It adopted its first National Action Plan against trafficking in human beings on 17 March 2009. The Action Plan laid down in 25 Actions the priorities of the Government in combating trafficking in human beings. It also established a task force to ensure its successful implementation. Iceland also passed a legislation recently criminalizing the purchase of prostitution services. Last but not least, Iceland welcomed last October the Deputy Co-ordinator for

Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, in the absence of Ms. Biaudet. Ms. Pojman's visit was met with great interest and enthusiasm. She participated in an open seminar organized by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and had a number of meetings with members of the Icelandic Parliament, representatives from various Ministries and civil society.

We attach great importance to the work of the OSCE and the Special Representative in this field, based on the OSCE's Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and the unique mandate of the Special Representative. Their work really makes a difference. The cross dimensional aspect of the work of the Special Representative makes the work of the OSCE on human trafficking stand out from other international actors and stakeholders. Ms. Biaudet's political vision and leadership has been imperative in achieving success, and we hope her successor, once appointed, will follow in her steps.

As this is Ms. Biaudet's last appearance before the Permanent Council, Iceland would like to thank for her highly valuable and visible work for the OSCE in combating trafficking in human beings for the past three years. Her political leadership and passion for the cause are beyond doubt. As she rightly points out in her report, trafficking must first of all be placed on the political agenda in all the participating states to become a true priority. Iceland wishes Ms. Biaudet all the best in her future endeavours.

Thank you Madam Chair.

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