

Trafficking in Persons in the Context of Conflict and Crisis Situations

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Hofburg (Neuer Saal), Vienna

CONCEPT NOTE

In December 2016, the UN Security Council by adopting resolution 2331 (2016) condemned all instances of human trafficking in areas affected by armed conflict. The Council specifically condemned the sale of, or trade in, persons seized by terrorist groups for purposes of sexual exploitation, and exploitation of forced labour. It stressed that human trafficking contributed to other forms of transnational organized crime, which could exacerbate conflict and foster insecurity and instability.

The breakdown of law and order in conflict areas makes civilians especially vulnerable to human trafficking, which can take a variety of forms including sexual exploitation and forced labour. Conflicts and humanitarian emergencies also lead to forced migration. The deprivation of rights (e.g. to health, labour, education) and lack of protection resulting from displacement also places migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons at a particularly high risk of human trafficking. The fight to end human trafficking requires a system wide approach involving governments, the private sector, civil society, and international organisations.

On the occasion of the EU Anti Trafficking Day, the Austrian Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking, under the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship, in cooperation with the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) will organize a conference that addresses various aspects of trafficking stemming from conflict and post-conflict areas, as well as in humanitarian settings and crisis situations. Two panels and three interactive workshops will provide a forum for international experts, practitioners from the field, academia, the media and civil society to exchange views, good practices and experiences in order to co-ordinate joint efforts and to develop recommendations to respond to this heinous crime. Active participation during the discussion is highly encouraged.

BACKGROUND

The Austrian Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking was set up as the Austrian coordination mechanism by the Federal Government in 2004. Within the Task Force, representatives of all competent ministries, the federal provinces, social partners and NGOs cooperate closely to develop and monitor policies and measures to prevent and combat human trafficking. Every year, on the occasion of the EU Anti Trafficking Day, the Task Force in cooperation with partner organisations organizes a public event in order to raise awareness and sensitize the broad public on the crime of human trafficking. In 2016, for the first time and in view of the Austrian OSCE Chairmanship in 2017, the conference was organized in cooperation with the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, attracting more than 350 participants comprising representatives from OSCE participating States, international organisations, the media, civil society and academia.