



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

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Report

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In line with the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings (2003) and its 2013 Addendum, in 2016 my Office continued to provide assistance to participating States in tackling human trafficking in the following areas:

- Prevention, including awareness-raising and addressing root causes;
- Prosecution, including investigation and co-operation with international law enforcement;
- Protection of victims' rights, including assistance and compensation;
- Partnership, enhancing a co-ordinated response against human trafficking (THB).

With the aim of better understanding and assessing progress across these integrated areas, over the course of 2016 we compiled a **survey on the implementation of selected aspects of the OSCE Action Plan** and its Addendums (Hereafter referred to as 'the survey'). Although the data generated by the survey indicates progress by participating States in implementing OSCE commitments and recommended actions, it also shows that there remains considerable work to do, particularly in ensuring that OSCE participating States are adequately equipped to:

- Identify and provide appropriate support to a higher proportion of victims, including compensation;
- Prevent new cases of trafficking in persons;
- End the impunity of traffickers.¹

Overall, trafficking in human beings remains an extremely lucrative criminal business, particularly against the backdrop of the current security crisis faced by the OSCE region.

Indeed, trafficking syndicates take advantage of the **current migration and refugee crisis** as challenges posed by large mixed migration flows continue to have direct and indirect security implications across the OSCE area. Limiting people's opportunities for regular migration across the region has inadvertently fuelled the market of human smugglers and human traffickers and made migration routes longer, more expensive and life-threatening. More than

¹ Responses were received from 52 participating States and 90 non-governmental organizations from across the OSCE region.

90 per cent of the more than one million irregular migrants who surged into Europe in 2015 last year used services provided by more than 40,000 people operating in loose criminal networks, for example. According to Interpol, there is considerable evidence to suggest that people smugglers continue to exploit illegal migrants after arrival, through threats and demands for additional fees. Clearly, human trafficking is often a direct consequence of human smuggling among mixed migration flows. Desperately lacking in security and opportunity, **migrants, refugees and IDPs are particularly at risk of being trafficked for sexual or labour exploitation.**

That is why, during summer 2016, I visited several temporary protection and first reception centres in the OSCE region with the aim of raising **awareness of the trafficking threat in migrant, refugee and transit facilities.** Talking to first-hand responders, rescuers, law enforcement agencies, refugees and people on the move, as I did in Lampedusa, Gaziantep and elsewhere, has proven key to examining the progress made by relevant authorities in identifying and assisting potential THB victims among mixed migration flows. It has also confirmed to me how important it is for migrants and refugees themselves to be aware of the perils they face. This is imperative, given that recent International Organization for Migration (IOM) data, for example, estimates that of more than 3,600 Nigerian women arriving by boat in Italy in the first six months of 2016 (double the number registered for 2015), more than 80 per cent will be trafficked into prostitution. Yet if victims of trafficking can identify themselves as such, they can seek help quicker and thus avoid being further abused or coerced.

To this end, I also travelled in August to **Ukraine** to work with the authorities and the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) to raise their awareness as well as that of displaced persons themselves regarding the risks the crisis poses. We continue to co-operate with the staff of the SMM on how to monitor and report trafficking related trends in the context of a conflict situation, ensuring that the Mission's activities do not contribute to any form of human trafficking.

While progress has been made by authorities in identifying potential victims among mixed flows of migrants and refugees, there is still considerable potential for **improving the capacity of frontline operators** to screen such flows. This is why our Office, in close co-ordination with ODIHR, is currently exploring ways of assisting participating States in

enhancing the effectiveness of their assistance programmes to victims. While the mechanism is a framework within which state actors, in co-operation with civil society, fulfil their obligations to protect and promote the human rights of all trafficked persons, its implementation has revealed a number of operational and normative gaps. These include, for instance, the identification of victims of labour exploitation and of trafficking victims among refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the protection of unaccompanied minors. Seeking to help address these issues, together with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), I promoted a consultation of anti-trafficking NGOs from the OSCE region and representatives of UN agencies, which took place in Switzerland on 23 and 24 November.

Within the same line of work, on November 14-18 this year, **we piloted an ambitious multi-disciplinary and cross-sectorial project** at the Carabinieri run Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units (CoEPSU) in Vicenza, Italy. After two days intense discussions regarding theoretical and technical aspects of the anti-trafficking action, the first group of 200 law enforcement officials, prosecutors, labour inspectors, financial investigators and civil society representatives from countries of origin, destination and transit along the Western Balkan migration route participated in a three-day simulation exercise.

The simulation, using reality-based scripts acted out by actors, focused on **trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation** and highlighted the fact that financial investigation is often the best means of putting an end to perpetrator immunity and dismantling complex criminal organizations. It also enhanced criminal justice responses to prosecute human traffickers operating along migration routes, while better equipping frontline operators to identify and protect potential victims by ensuring adequate and effective referral mechanisms.

The exercise required mobilizing more than one hundred support staff from local authorities and civil society networks, as well as from partner international organizations. I am grateful to all agencies that enthusiastically partnered with us in this complex endeavour, especially to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), IOM, Europol and Interpol, as well as the broad NGO network that provided first-rate expertise and advice. Similarly, the enthusiastic contribution of our colleagues in the Transnational Threats Department (TNTD), Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

and on the ground made this innovative project a truly multi-agency and cross-organizational effort, of which I am particularly proud.

In co-operation with anti-trafficking co-ordinators from the Western Balkans and in close co-operation with the OSCE Field Operations, my Office is also promoting coherent efforts in addressing trafficking in human beings in the region through our '**Western Balkans Regional Initiative**'. Throughout the year, we facilitated and organized a series of consultations with anti-trafficking co-ordinators from South-Eastern Europe, including in Vienna, Vicenza, Tirana and Skopje. The regional conference organized in Skopje in October, entitled *Building stronger synergies and common approaches among Western Balkan and Migration Affected Countries in Addressing Human Trafficking along Migration Routes* was attended by several experts, practitioners and Western Balkans national anti-trafficking co-ordinators. Such initiatives serve to assess fault lines within existing regulatory frameworks, which were not originally conceived to address some of the latest trends and current crisis. As pointed out at our workshops, a lack of harmonized methods, protocols and approaches negatively impacts upon the swift and timely identification and protection of unaccompanied minors and potential victims of trafficking. In this spirit, we sincerely hope that a **Joint Declaration of the Western Balkans national anti-trafficking co-ordinators** will pave the way for deeper co-operation in the region in 2017.

Maintaining old and fostering new **goal-oriented partnerships** on an international, national and local level remained a key achievement of our work throughout 2016. To respond to transnational and cross-boundary human and security threats, in fact, we are endeavouring to **strengthen co-ordinated responses** due to the fact that in such a challenging environment, no one authority or agency can cope alone. Inter-governmental action, however effective, cannot in itself tackle the magnitude and complexity of the challenges involved. Instead we need to build more flexible, creative and multi-disciplinary approaches, uniting multiple actors, including the criminal justice sector and civil society, to lay the foundation for high-impact work in the field of anti-trafficking. This is the reason why, in the spirit of good co-operation and partnership, we undertook a variety of initiatives alongside a number of other actors, be they from civil society, governments or international organizations.

In this respect, in February, in New York, as part of my official visit to the United States I had the chance to brief a number of delegations from OSCE participating states on challenges

and responses facing the OSCE in meeting current trends. At the UN Headquarters in New York, I was also pleased to speak to the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking at a special high level event seeking to better co-ordinate efforts to stop human trafficking through sustainable development.

In October, for the second time since I took Office, I also had the privilege of addressing the **Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime**. It is imperative that we continue to work together to better improve the capacity of States to combat transnational organized crime.

We at the OSCE were likewise delighted to host and co-organise an important initiative to mark the 2016 European Day against Trafficking in Human Beings together with the **Austrian Anti-trafficking Task Force**. The event, which proved to be a major success in terms of participation and outreach, focused on migration and the inherent vulnerabilities of migrants. Serving to raise the public profile of anti-trafficking, it also proved a remarkable example of good co-operation among agencies and organizations, with the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC) and IOM also partnering in shaping the programme of the event.

The year 2016 also saw us continue our fruitful co-operation with the **Council of Europe (CoE)**, including in the realms of data exchange and the co-ordination of monitoring activities. Here I would like to further thank the CoE Secretariat for co-operating with us regarding our 2016 OSCE Survey on the implementation of selected commitments of the OSCE Action Plan. Such co-operation serves to avoid duplication, to the ultimate benefit of both the OSCE, the CoE and their member states. In this respect, we look forward to further co-operation and co-ordination with the CoE in conducting our official visits to participating States.

In terms of further strengthening co-ordinated responses, this week also saw the convening in Vienna of our second **Alliance Expert Co-ordination Team (AECT)** for 2016 to discuss latest trends and activities in human trafficking. Our **2016 Alliance against Trafficking in Persons** High Level Conference in April sought to address the rampant yet inadequately addressed phenomenon of human beings being trafficked for the purpose of **forced criminality** across the OSCE region. The conference aimed to further enhance the ability of

criminal justice systems across the OSCE area to clearly detect forced criminality, prosecute those responsible and dismantle their criminal networks on the one hand, while also imparting how to apply the non-punishment principle and provide victims with proper assistance, on the other.

In our survey, only 15 participating States reported that they have public procurement policies in place to minimize the risk of purchasing products which – there is reason to believe – have been produced by trafficked or exploited labour. Another 11 countries reported that they are in the process of approving or developing such policies or have concrete plans to do so. In this respect, and in line with my work on preventing trafficking for all forms of human exploitation, in September 2016, we held in Berlin, in co-operation with the OSCE Chairmanship, the High-Level conference on the **Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings in Supply Chains through Government Procurement and Measures**. Over 170 experts representing governments, civil society, international organizations, the private sector, trade unions and academia, gathered to discuss good practices in the field of preventing human trafficking through ethical sourcing from a variety of perspectives. I would like to thank the German Chairmanship for their commitment and support of this endeavor, together with our Berlin workshop. Similarly, with the UK Home Office, we organized a second workshop in London to explore new ways of addressing modern slavery through government practices. It is important to extend these types of initiatives throughout the OSCE region, taking advantage of the collective purchasing power of governments to eliminate markets for goods and services produced by trafficked labour.

In 2016 we also furthered our work to **prevent trafficking in human beings for diplomatic servitude**, *inter alia* in **diplomatic households**. Having assisted OSCE countries last year in amending or strengthening their policies and regulations, 2016 has seen us complementing our French version released in 2015 with a Spanish version of the Handbook for Diplomatic Personnel on “How to Prevent Human Trafficking for Domestic Servitude in Diplomatic Households and Protect Private Domestic Workers” published in 2016. We continue to witness tangible results stemming from this line of work, as epitomised by an information event on 25 November organised by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs and the Federal Ministry of the Interior exclusively for private domestic staff of diplomatic households in Austria. The organization of such a meeting is one of the

recommendations of the Handbook to prevent trafficking for domestic servitude in diplomatic households which we published.

With the same spirit of multi-agency co-operation, my Office co-organized an international seminar for judges with UNODC, IOM, the Ministry of Justice of Israel, and Israel's Agency for International Development Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Haifa, Israel, from 6-10 November, 2016. Entitled *The Critical Role of the Judiciary in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings*, the event was attended by more than 25 judges from 12 OSCE participating States, the International Criminal Court (ICC) and Partners for Co-operation. It proved to be an invaluable exercise in raising awareness amongst high-level members of the judiciary on different patterns in trafficking, forms of exploitation, challenges in collecting evidence and means used by criminals, as well as of the importance of non-punishment of victims for acts they were obliged to perform under coercion. In line with my mandate, I will continue to support such events as part of our overall strategy to strengthen the capacity of the judiciary to prosecute perpetrators and safeguard the rights of victims of trafficking.

To further strengthen the **coherence and effectiveness of OSCE anti-trafficking action**, in 2016 I invested significant efforts to reinvigorate our strategic partnership with ODIHR, which remains an important player in promoting and protecting human rights across the region. Since ODIHR's new Anti-Trafficking Adviser took office in September, we held several bilateral co-ordination meetings in both Warsaw (September) and Vienna (October, November and December) in order to outline my current efforts and engage in joint planning. The immediate involvement of ODIHR's Anti-trafficking Advisor in all our key lines of work, including the 1st Simulation Exercise in Italy and the consultation with NGOs in Switzerland, speaks loud and clear about the added value I attach to transparent and goal-oriented co-operation with ODIHR in the implementation of my mandate.

In addition, I continued to actively co-operate with the TNTD in the criminal justice area. A case in point is the *Regional Workshop on Enhancing and Strengthening International and Cross-border Co-operation in Addressing Irregular Migration-related Crimes in the Western Balkans*, held last September in Podgorica. Just this week, a member of my Office participated in a joint Interpol/TNTD consultation to provide capacity building for Ukrainian law enforcement agencies.

Similarly, we have engaged with the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) in the framework of our efforts to prevent human trafficking in supply chains and with the OSCE Gender Section to ensure that a strong gender perspective is included in all our activities.

Finally, we have continued to ensure co-ordination of the outstanding anti-trafficking work conducted by the OSCE Field Operations by organizing two meetings of our THB Focal Points, in April and December respectively, and by developing and managing a shared calendar of all relevant OSCE initiatives in this field.

In an effort to add value in the global fight against human trafficking, and duly taking stock of targeted initiatives conducted in 2015-2016 to improve the understanding of the impact of current crisis situations on trafficking in persons, in 2017 my Office will continue to raise awareness and provide technical assistance to enhance criminal justice responses, the identification and protection of trafficking victims, as well the prevention of human trafficking.

Our project “Combating Human Trafficking along Migration Routes” will continue at the Centre of Excellence for Stability Police Units in Vicenza with an additional two simulation-based training exercises in spring and fall 2017. We greatly appreciated the assistance of all delegations in sharing information regarding our first simulation in November 2016 and ask that our subsequent call for applicants once more be disseminated to all relevant authorities throughout the OSCE. Finally, taking advantage of the extensive feedback and experience gained throughout the project, we plan to publish, in late 2017, a handbook providing a step-by step guide on how to design and conduct similar simulation-based training exercises on human trafficking.

In addition, I will build on existing efforts to promote best practices related to the identification of human trafficking among mixed migration flows. In this respect, my Office would like to further assess the situation within the most affected countries in the OSCE region with a view to determine which potential support we can provide to enhance regional and international responses.

On the basis of the research our Office has conducted to date, we will be continuing our efforts to combat labour exploitation. As part of our ExB project *Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings in Supply Chains through Government Practices and Measures*, we will be releasing a publication in 2017 and conducting a series of workshops. Entitled *Flexible model guidelines for governments on preventing THB in supply chains, with a focus on government procurement and transparency practices*, the publication will consist of a series of guidelines and promising practices regarding governmental measures on preventing THB in supply chains within and beyond the OSCE region. This publication will complement a series of workshops in Stockholm (May 2017), Astana (June 2016) and Geneva (October/November 2017). Existing promising practices and lessons learned in this field will be discussed during these events.

Country visits remain integral to our efforts to combat human trafficking given that they provide a platform for us to share knowledge and lessons learned in the fight against human trafficking in visited countries. They also afford the Office the opportunity to establish direct constructive dialogue with participating States regarding anti-trafficking policy, given that during the visits, we liaise with government authorities, parliamentarians, members of the judiciary, international organizations and NGOs. Ultimately, in accordance with the mandate of the Special Representative, country visits remain an important tool in enabling and encouraging governments to place combating all forms of human trafficking high on their political agenda. During 2016, I carried out country and follow-up visits to OSCE participating States Armenia, Czech Republic, Romania, Turkey and the United States of America and also published country visit reports on Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Country visits will continue to feature prominently on our 2017 agenda, with follow up visits to Uzbekistan and Canada accompanying visits for the first time to the Russian Federation, Denmark and Mongolia. Reports detailing specific recommendations and outlining best practices from my country visits to Turkey and Armenia in 2016 are also to be published in early 2017.

I also look forward to our next **Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference**. The event will take place in April, 2017, and will address the complex issue of **children** and trafficking. Taking advantage of the multi-agency and cross-sectorial features of the Alliance as a forum for partnership and expert debate, our focus will be on the various ramifications human trafficking has on the most vulnerable section of our society. We will examine this

from various perspectives, with the ultimate aim of shedding light on the vulnerabilities and specific needs of children.

In conclusion, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all our funding donors, in particular the generous support from the governments of Andorra, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Monaco, Switzerland, the United States of America and in-kind support of the United Kingdom. A special thanks to Italy, Kazakhstan and the United States of America for seconding staff to my Office, your support is very much appreciated. I also wish to thank the German chairmanship for their keen interest in our work during 2016.

Finally, as concrete plans and ideas have already been laid out during informal discussions, I also express my enthusiasm for similarly excellent co-operation with the Austrian Chairmanship to further advance the fight against trafficking in human beings, in the best interest of its victims.