



United States Mission to the OSCE

Working Session 11
Humanitarian issues and other commitments, including:
Address by the OSCE Special Representative and
Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings;
Combating trafficking in human beings;
Refugees and displaced persons

As prepared for delivery by David J. Kramer, U.S. Head of Delegation
OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting,
Warsaw, September 28, 2015

Political violence and terrorism, financial instability, and uncertainty have driven many around the world to leave their homes in search of safe haven, often to OSCE participating States. This migration crisis highlights the need for participating States to implement OSCE commitments to protect vulnerable populations from victimization by migrant smugglers and human traffickers. As President Obama has said, the migration crisis in Europe requires cooperation among all the countries of Europe, along with the rest of the international community, in order to ensure people are safe; they are treated with shared humanity; and we ultimately deal with the sources of the problem. We understand the huge challenges that European states are facing and welcome continuing efforts to seek a comprehensive, coordinated response. Any approach to the crisis should focus on saving and protecting lives, ensuring that the human rights of all migrants and refugees are respected, and promoting orderly and humane migration policies.

Mr. Chairman, the **Hungarian** government this year conducted an anti-immigrant media campaign that portrayed foreigners as a threat to Hungarian culture and jobs. It has persistently characterized the flow of refugees and migrants as unlawful and has focused less than would be desirable on meeting their humanitarian needs. We acknowledge the efforts made by many Hungarian and international NGOs, as well as the Hungarian people, to provide for the migrants crossing their borders. We continue to urge the government to treat migrants and refugees appropriately, with dignity and humanity. We were heartened that the EU has begun to develop a consensus approach to this immense challenge and urge all EU members, including Hungary, to do their part.

Some estimates project that new arrivals will remain in the OSCE region for a decade or more. Accordingly, shared long-term solutions for those eligible must include access to employment, education, protective services for victims of crimes like human trafficking, and other integration opportunities for participation in host societies. They must include proactive efforts to prevent human traffickers from preying on these highly vulnerable groups and to prosecute those responsible. Given the vitriol of anti-migrant campaigns, policies promoting tolerance should also be part of these efforts. We must think creatively, utilizing our existing commitments and toolbox to respond as an Organization to this crisis.

One critical commitment of the participating States is addressing the circumstances of source countries and the individuals fleeing those circumstances. One significant source of mass migration and refugees is war-torn Syria. The United States has provided more than \$4.5 billion

in humanitarian assistance since the start of the Syrian crisis to help address dire humanitarian conditions faced by 7.6 million displaced people inside Syria and more than 4 million Syrian refugees. It is our hope that, by increasing support to humanitarian assistance and protection efforts in Syria and neighboring countries, fewer refugees will seek to relocate and they will be able to return home more easily when the conflict ends. In addition to the contributions from **Germany, Sweden, and Austria**, the assistance of other OSCE participating States is urgently needed.

In **Ukraine**, more than 2.3 million Ukrainians, including at least 1.4 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), have been uprooted as a direct result of Russian aggression in Ukraine and the Russian occupation of Crimea. This has understandably posed a tremendous challenge for the Ukrainian government and we welcome the establishment of additional policies to help IDPs with social assistance, documentation, employment, education, and integration into host communities. We applaud the generosity of and commend OSCE participating States that have offered assistance, including **Canada, Germany, and Switzerland**, as well as the Ukraine-European Commission (ECHO), but we remind all parties that humanitarian appeals for the Ukraine crisis remain in dire need of funding.

Another significant commitment of its participating States is addressing trafficking in persons. The United States strongly supports the OSCE commitments to combat trafficking through prosecution, protection, and prevention — as reflected in the goals of the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and the 2013 Addendum to the Action Plan. These commitments aim to reduce the vulnerability of populations susceptible to human trafficking. Robust implementation of these commitments is key to degrading criminal networks that seek to exploit vulnerable populations for their own gain. This implementation is not only possible, but a reality in many OSCE participating States.

Victim identification is a key result of effective anti-trafficking efforts. In excellent news for OSCE countries in Europe, the successful identification of trafficking victims was the highest in five years—and included the most labor victims ever identified in the region. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** tripled the number of victims identified. This is remarkable progress, given the hidden nature of this crime and the challenges all our governments face in identifying these victims. **Portugal** was placed on Tier 1 in the 2015 TIP Report. We commend Portugal's efforts to increase the accountability of their data gathering related to labor and sex trafficking in 2014.

Prosecutions also increased markedly in 2014 in the OSCE region. Unfortunately, we have not yet seen an increase in convictions commensurate with the increase in prosecutions. Convictions among European OSCE participating States fell by 40% during the reporting period, as noted in the U.S. State Department's Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report. The United States saw an increase in trafficking convictions domestically. **Cyprus** achieved its first two convictions for child sex trafficking, and despite cuts in social welfare, maintained funding to shelter victims.

We are also committed to look internally within our own countries and our fellow participating States. A few OSCE participating States still permit state-sponsored forced labor. **Belarus** requires citizens to work on occasional Saturdays and donate their earnings to finance government projects. Some students are forced to work on farms without pay, as are those who are interned at “medical-labor centers” and inmates of prisons. **Russia** continues an agreement with **North Korea** for 20,000 North Korean citizens to work in Russia, especially in the logging industry, despite reports of North Korean citizens' forced labor. We recognize

Uzbekistan's efforts to end forced child labor in the cotton harvest, and we urge fulfillment of its international commitments to address forced labor of adults.

Those who face economic marginalization are highly vulnerable to trafficking. In 2014, some of the 20 OSCE participating States with Romani victims of human trafficking made concerted efforts to prevent trafficking of this highly vulnerable community. We welcome efforts to prevent or remedy trafficking of Roma, such as measures undertaken by **Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovakia**, and urge additional action—such as ensuring access to education and addressing work place discrimination—to address the root causes of vulnerability.

In another step forward, the **United Kingdom** this year adopted the Modern Slavery Act, which should make trafficking prosecutions more efficient and permit penalties up to life imprisonment for trafficking offenses. The Modern Slavery Act also requires some commercial organizations to outline annually steps those organizations have taken to ensure that human trafficking is not taking place in their supply chain. Northern Ireland updated its trafficking law this year to criminalize the purchase of sexual services, which will reduce demand for trafficking victims.

Child sex tourism, in which an individual from one country travels to another country for the purpose of engaging in commercial sexual activity with a child, is also a serious concern. As the United States is one of the main countries of origin of the people engaging in such activity, we are leading an international cooperative alert system that will warn countries in advance about individuals who may be traveling for child sex tourism.

It is the time of great challenge for which the OSCE has prepared. The United States commends the Serbian Chairmanship for its efforts to coordinate with other European bodies, such as the Council of Europe, in the effort to maximize current overlapping frameworks to fight human trafficking and address refugee needs. The United States appreciates the hard work of Ambassador Madina Jarbussynova, the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings and U.S. Congressman Chris Smith, who is also the current Chair of the U.S. Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Special Representative on Human Trafficking Issues. Their work helps to ensure that best practices are implemented in the OSCE region.