



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Ambassador Madina Jarbussynova
OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator
for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Opening Address

CoEPSU 1st Simulation Exercise
Combating Human Trafficking along the Migration Routes

14 November 2016

Dear General Barbano,

Dear Mayor,

Distinguished Guests,

Dear Participants,

I am pleased to open, in my capacity as OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the very first live simulation exercise on combating human trafficking along migration routes.

Today's training would hardly have been possible without the vision and dedicated support of the Italian Carabinieri and the Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units (CoESPU). I therefore wish to express my deepest gratitude to the new Director of CoESPU, Brigadier General Giovanni Pietro Barbano – **Dear Director**, thank you for having taken up the challenge to host this ambitious programme and for committing such a great deal of resources. The OSCE will derive considerable benefit from this important partnership with the Italian Carabinieri and I wish to thank the international co-operation department of the General Command, and Colonel Giuseppe Battaglia, for inaugurating this collaboration.

Allow me to greet the Mayor of Vicenza, who is honouring us with his presence. Thank you for hosting us in this beautiful city, Mister Mayor, and for actively supporting this international exercise with remarkable human resources and logistics.

Dear Participants,

I am so pleased to see you present here today as a result of hard preparatory work that has been keeping many of us busy. You represent a multi-disciplinary, cross-sectorial group from a variety of fields, covering over 30 OSCE participating States. It is rewarding to see such a wide-range of stakeholders eager to participate in this exercise, which has, as far as I am aware, never been utilised thus far on such a large scale, and in such a far-reaching scope.

You are in fact the first group of trainees of a module that we developed to foster innovative “learning by doing”; a format that we wish to be successful, operational, and that can help protect the most vulnerable segments of our society. Later this week, your feedback will be crucial to improving and refining this pilot project so that we may fully meet the expectations of those 150 practitioners who will follow in your footsteps in 2017.

In 2016, conflicts and political instability in and around the OSCE region pushed more than 300,000 people to cross the Mediterranean. More than 4,000 have already lost their lives along their journey, while many of those who survive find themselves in a situation of high vulnerability, subject to diverse forms of violence and to heightened risks of being trafficked. In these circumstances, the shift from a situation of migration to one of trafficking can easily occur. Migrants and refugees are forced to engage in risky behaviour in their struggle to survive, and often have no choice but to depend on unscrupulous trafficking syndicates operating along their paths.

Confronted by this challenging situation, and acknowledging the multi-dimensional aspects of human trafficking, the purpose of this live exercise is to assist you in at least two directions. Firstly, we wish to enhance the criminal justice response to prosecute human traffickers operating along migration routes, while placing a special focus on sexual exploitation, forced labour and

financial probes in doing so. Secondly, we aim to better equip front line operators and practitioners to identify potential victims and ensure adequate and effective referral mechanisms.

Yet on another level, there is also, I believe, a third and vital element to this training. By gathering experts from different fields such as law enforcement, prosecutorial offices, labour inspectorates, financial investigation units, NGOs and local administrations, we hope to foster among you a renewed spirit of goal-oriented co-operation to fight complex phenomena such as human exploitation. I hope you will take advantage of this diversity, and benefit from each other's experience and positive examples over the course of this busy and intense week at CoESPU.

In conclusion, let me address the generous support we have received in the framework of this project, a broad network of people that enthusiastically joined our efforts, proving once more that inter-institutional co-operation can be effective and operational.

As such, I would like to thank the municipality of Venice for so graciously allowing countless staff for the simulation, together with all other local authorities and civil society actors of the Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia anti-trafficking networks who have enthusiastically embraced this effort in various forms.

I extend a warm thank you to all partner agencies supporting us in this complex endeavour, especially to UNODC, UNHCR, IOM, EUROPOL and INTERPOL who we are grateful to have sharing their knowledge and expertise here during the week.

My gratitude also goes to the NGOs *Lefo* and *MEN-VIA* for their kind engagement. I cannot insist enough on the extent to which cooperation with grassroots' organizations and practitioners is imperative to our work and to achieving our goals.

A special mention should similarly be made to the core team of experts who, under the coordination of my project manager, Alberto Andreani, tirelessly worked to transform what was once only a very ambitious idea into a tangible reality, with hundreds of people and stakeholders actively involved. Well done to Alberto Perduca, Marco Bufo, Gianfranco Albanese, Carmine Tordiglione, David Mancini, Roberto Magni, Pierpaolo Sinconi, Francesca Nicodemi, Maja Bova, and Giada Furlan! My appreciation also goes to the Italian Guardia di Finanza for kindly contributing its staff and expertise to the simulation.

Thank you to the colleagues in the OSCE family, including ODIHR and SPMU, along with the many OSCE field operations who tirelessly reached out to beneficiaries. Your work is invaluable!

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank our institutional donors, namely Andorra, Austria, Italy, Monaco, Germany, Hungary, and Switzerland for their invaluable contributions.

I am looking forward to your active and engaged participation, and wish you a fruitful and productive week!

Thank you