United States Mission to the OSCE

Working Session 6: Combating trafficking in human beings, with a particular focus on trafficking in children (continued)

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Moderator,

As we convene on the eve of the Summit in Astana, the United States would like to reiterate the need for a prominent reaffirmation of OSCE commitments to combat human trafficking in all its forms. This Summit will conclude a decade that has marked a substantial increase in awareness of the tragedy of human trafficking and its implications. Yet OSCE Special Representative Maria Grazia Giammarinaro noted in our Warsaw session, "Trafficking shows no sign of abating world-wide." Thus, our commitment of political will and resources should be commensurate with this growing tide.

The United States stands committed to partnering with the participating States of the OSCE to combat human trafficking, especially trafficking in women and children. To this end, we continue to focus on improving the capacity of our institutions to combat trafficking internationally and domestically. The United States pursues a "whole of government" approach, with cooperation among the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, Homeland Security, Defense, Education, Labor, and State, as well as USAID. This year, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which investigates discrimination charges against employers, participated for the first time in the Senior Policy Operating Group on Trafficking in Persons meetings as a full partner. The EEOC committed to active participation nationwide in order to identify additional labor trafficking cases. Consistent coordination among these entities has resulted in a substantial increase in the identification of victims, as well as more effective prosecution and conviction of those responsible for these crimes. This collaboration manifests itself in 38 regional taskforces and regular interagency cooperation in Washington, DC. In addition, the United States Congress continues to consider new initiatives to improve the effectiveness of our efforts, including particular emphasis on combating trafficking in children.

Modern slavery is a fluid phenomenon that responds to market demand and operates in zones of impunity that are created by vulnerabilities in the legal systems, law enforcement, weak penalties, natural disasters, and economic instability. It is a crime that is not limited to one gender, faith, or geographic area but impacts individuals and societies in all our countries. The

Trafficking in Persons Report (or TIP Report), published annually by the Department of State, is an important tool for the United States as well as for other countries committed to combating trafficking. The analysis in this report is conducted according to standards set forth in our national legislation, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. These standards are similar to the provisions of the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, ratified by most participating States. Our *2010 TIP Report* for the first time features a tier-ranking and country narrative examining the situation in the United States, as well. This narrative includes programs of particular interest to our discussion, such as the Innocence Lost Initiative of the Department of Justice. This collaboration of federal and state law enforcement authorities and victims assistance providers has focused on combating the prostitution of children since 2003. In 2009, this initiative helped identify 306 child victims and obtain 151 convictions of traffickers.

The *2010 TIP Report* also features a number of topics of special interest relevant to today's discussion including the conscription of children to serve as soldiers, forced and child marriages, breaking the supply chain of products manufactured through modern slavery, and the feminization of trafficking, with women and girls making up a majority of those trapped in commercial sexual exploitation as well as in forced labor situations. Women and girls are held in modern slavery through deceit and force, picking cotton, mining conflict minerals, harvesting rice, toiling as domestic workers, dancing in nightclubs, exploited for pornography and commercial sex. In this regard, we applaud the initiative of the Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons which organized a high-level conference this past June, focusing on trafficking for domestic servitude, as one of the most invisible forms of trafficking for labor exploitation in the OSCE area.

It is also important to note that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) has been active in promoting new avenues for our efforts to combat human trafficking and protect children throughout the OSCE region. The recent Oslo Declaration of the OSCE PA included U.S. delegation proposals to combat the demand for electronic forms of exploitation, including child pornography. The United States has taken up this effort through substantial investments in facilities used to monitor for electronic exploitation, such as the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. It is vital that the OSCE engage its operational structures in assessing how the internet facilitates exploitation within our region and appropriate counter measures that do not limit freedom of expression.

As our delegation highlighted in Warsaw, the United States Congress continues to consider the Child Protection Compact Act, a legislative initiative that would authorize the U.S. Secretary of State to provide assistance through grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts to or with any eligible entity in a country that enters into an agreement with the United States to support policies and programs that assist the country to eradicate of child trafficking. Such bilateral cooperation is essential in our efforts, but similar initiatives could be tailored to the specific needs of children trafficked in the OSCE region. This could be undertaken within the multilateral framework of the OSCE under the stewardship of the Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

It is necessary also to acknowledge the importance of identifying potential traffickers in efforts to ensure the emancipation of the exploited. In particular, we continue to take action to fight the demand which fuels sex trafficking by, for example, aggressively investigating and prosecuting those who engage in child sex tourism in violation of the Prosecutorial Remedies and other Tools to end the Exploitation of Children Today (PROTECT) Act and other U.S. laws. Tracking those suspected of exploiting the victims of sex trafficking will continue to be a means to identify victims, as well as sources of potential victims. It is our hope that greater bilateral law enforcement cooperation to alert countries within the OSCE region of the potential travel by previously convicted sex-offenders will also combat recidivism. We note the connections and convergences, in some instances, of transnational organized crime, illicit drugs, illegal arms trafficking, money laundering, and human trafficking and we would like to reiterate the need for enhanced cooperation at the national, sub-regional and cross-regional levels in order to strengthen a comprehensive multi-dimensional response to this security threat.

The United States believes it is important to recognize that government response will not, in and of itself, end human trafficking. A transformative paradigm shift throughout the entirety of our societies is necessary. This shift requires recognition of the problem and action by all of our citizens to stifle the demand for exploitation and its products. As Secretary Clinton noted in a speech earlier this month: "*The problem of modern trafficking may be entrenched, but it is solvable. By using every tool at our disposal to put pressure on traffickers, we can set ourselves on a course to eradicate modern slavery.*"

Thank you.