

Delegation of Belarus

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT DELEGATION OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF BELARUS TO THE OSCE AT THE 953rd MEETING  
OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

16 May 2013

**In response to the report by the OSCE Special Representative and  
Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**

Mr. Chairperson,

We welcome the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Ms. Giammarinaro, to this meeting of the Permanent Council and would like to thank her for her most recent regular report on the activities of her Office.

In our view, it is of vital importance to continue dynamic, system-wide OSCE efforts to combat trafficking, one of the most serious threats to our common security, in close co-operation with participating States, other international organizations and civil society.

In this regard, we welcome the high priority accorded to the topic of counter-trafficking by the Ukrainian Chairmanship, as well as the two major OSCE high-level conferences on combating trafficking in human beings to be held this June. We hope that these events will provide further momentum and lay solid groundwork for further collaborative endeavours to adapt the OSCE's counter-trafficking activities in order to tackle traditional and new forms of modern-day slavery and improve the effectiveness of international co-operation in this area. Among other things, this would involve reaching specific and substantive decisions in time for the OSCE Ministerial Council in Kyiv.

Mr. Chairperson,

The key framework document for international counter-trafficking efforts is the 2010 United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

Against this backdrop, the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 13 and 14 May 2013 to assess progress in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action was undoubtedly of great importance. It was the first meeting of this level and scale to be held under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of high-level representatives of numerous member States, the leadership of the United Nations and of other specialized international organizations, as well as of non-governmental organizations actively involved in fighting trafficking in human beings.

Unfortunately, as we understand it, Ms. Giammarinaro was unable to take part in that meeting. The OSCE was thus not represented at the most significant counter-trafficking event of 2013, even though the relevant United Nations General Assembly resolution included a call to competent regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations to contribute to the discussion.

In our opinion, the fact that the OSCE did not participate represents a missed opportunity, not only to properly present the counter-trafficking endeavours of our Organization and its participating States at the United Nations, but also, more broadly, to increase the OSCE's visibility – something so talked about within the Helsinki+40 process.

Speaking at the UN Security Council on 7 May 2013, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Leonid Kozhara particularly underscored the importance of close co-operation between the OSCE and the United Nations on issues related to combating trafficking in human beings. We feel that the Office of the Special Representative must become more active and ensure that its voice is heard on this issue. In its work, the Office should take into account the broader international context and the various existing co-ordinating mechanisms, rather than remaining fixated solely upon the OSCE's own Alliance against Trafficking in Persons.

Mr. Chairperson,

We would also like to draw the Permanent Council's attention to the adoption on 26 April 2013 at the 22nd session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice of a resolution proposed by the Republic of Belarus on the Implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Indeed, this document expresses for the first time the need for the international community to combat trafficking in human beings for the purpose of removing organs, tissues and cells. In this context, we support the thematic investigation on the issue currently being undertaken by experts from the Special Representative's office, and we look forward to learning of its results and conclusions.

Furthermore, we trust that the Special Representative's office will support and actively participate in the seminar of the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking on 29 and 30 May 2013 in Minsk at the International Training Centre for Migration and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. Representatives of the law enforcement agencies of several OSCE participating States will take part in this seminar.

In conclusion, we should like to wish Ms. Giammarinaro further success in her efforts in her eminent post.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.