

ENGLISH only

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Office of the Secretary General Section for External Co-operation





2013 OSCE Mediterranean Conference on "Enhancing the Role of Women in Public, Political and Economic Life"

Monaco, 28 and 29 October 2013

Consolidated Summary

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1 General information

1.1 Venue

The Conference was held on 28 and 29 October 2013, at the conference center of the Le Méridien Beach Plaza Hotel, Monte Carlo.

1.2 Participation*)

- 1.2.1 Thirty OSCE participating States, including Lithuania/EU, took part in the Conference.
- 1.2.2 All the Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia) participated.
- 1.2.3 The OSCE Secretariat participated in the Conference, as did the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.
- 1.2.4 The following international organizations were represented: Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, Council of Europe, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), International Labour Organization (ILO), League of Arab States, Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean.
- 1.2.5 At the invitation of the host country, representatives of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries took part in the Conference. Libya and the Palestinian National Authority were also invited, but did not participate.
- 1.2.6 Representatives of non-governmental organizations were able to attend and contribute to the Conference in accordance with the relevant OSCE provisions and practices.

1.3 Timetable and organizational modalities

- 1.3.1 The Conference began at 9.15 a.m. (opening ceremony) on 28 October 2013 and ended at 1 p.m. on 29 October 2012.
- 1.3.2 The Conference was conducted in three sessions. The first session had three parts.
- 1.3.3 Each session had a moderator and a rapporteur.
- 1.3.4 The working language was English. At the request of several participating States, interpretation was provided from and into French.
- 1.3.5 Arrangements were made for press coverage.
- 1.3.6 The rules of procedure and working methods of the OSCE were applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Conference.

^{*)} See part 5, list of participants.

1.4 Agenda

Background

The 2013 OSCE Mediterranean Conference focused on the three dimensions of security, with an emphasis on the role of women in public, political and economic life, as requested by the Mediterranean Partners.

The Conference provided opportunities for the sharing of views and experiences between OSCE participating States and Mediterranean Partners in view of identifying avenues for concrete cooperation and exchanges of best practices. The Conference adopted a participatory approach, with limited time devoted to presentations of keynote speakers, and substantive inputs and exchanges from the floor. All participants were encouraged to actively contribute to the discussions.

Monday, 28 October 2013

8.30–9.15 a.m. Registration of participants

9.15–10 a.m. **Opening session**

The goal of the opening session was to set the scene for the following discussions on the main topic of the Conference.

- H.E. Mr. Paul **Masseron**. Minister of the Interior, Monaco
- H.E. Ambassador Ihor **Prokopchuk**, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the OSCE and Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council
- H.E. Ambassador Lamberto **Zannier**, Secretary General of the OSCE

Keynote speech:

• H.E. Ms. Eglantina **Gjermeni**, Minister for Urban Development and Tourism, Albania

10.00-10.30 a.m. Coffee break

10.30 a.m.–12.45 p.m. Session I (Part 1): Enhancing women's participation in public and political life

In many ways, the challenges facing the OSCE Mediterranean Partners in enhancing women's participation in political life are similar to those encountered by the participating States in their attempts to ensure women's meaningful political participation. Women confront entrenched gender-based stereotypes regarding their roles, responsibilities, capacities and suitability for politics. Likewise, they often do not enjoy equal access to political resources – whether money, networks, the media, or decision-makers – which means

their opportunities for political advancement are limited. Even upon reaching elected office, women are confronted with institutions that are highly gendered in the way they operate, and usually not to women's advantage. At the same time, it is also important to include more women in political mediation and facilitation processes. In shaping the content of a settlement, mediation and facilitation processes can offer unique opportunities to advance gender equality and women's empowerment at both the community and national levels. Such challenges highlight the need for effective, concrete strategies and mechanisms that support women's advancement in the political and public sphere while taking into account political realities. The aim of this session is to identify current problems faced by women in the Mediterranean Partners countries, as well as policy gaps to effectively respond to them.

Moderator: H.E. Ambassador Dubravka **Šimonović**, Permanent Representative of Croatia

to the OSCE, the UN and the International Organisations in Vienna

Rapporteur: Mr. Yachar Nafissi-Azar, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of

Switzerland to the OSCE, the UN and the other international Organisations in

Vienna

Speakers:

• H.E. Ambassador Colette **Avital**, former Member of the Knesset (Parliament) and Senior Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel

- H.E. Ambassador Hussam **Al Husseini**, Permanent Representative of Jordan to the OSCE
- Ms. Almudena **Muñoz**, General Manager, Research Institute Casa Mediterráneo, Spain

Discussion

12.45–2.15 p.m. Lunch hosted by the OSCE Secretary General

2.15–3.45 p.m. Session I (Part 2)
Implementing equal opportunities for women

Women have the potential to change their own economic status, as well as that of the communities and countries in which they live. Women's economic empowerment and their capacity to bring an economic change for themselves, is one of the most important contributing factor to achieving equality between women and men. Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. Women make enormous contributions to economies, whether in businesses, on farms, as entrepreneurs or employees, or by doing unpaid care work at home. The OSCE works to foster women's economic empowerment in the region, including by implementing several projects in the areas of women entrepreneurship development through SME and small handicraft businesses support, as well as mentoring projects that help women attain the goals they set for themselves.

The aim of this session is to look at different tools to support women's economic empowerment and how they can be adapted and applied by those present in their own contexts.

Moderator: H.E. Ambassador Aviv Shir-On, Permanent Representative of Israel to the

OSCE

Rapporteur: Ms. Teresa **Albano**, Adviser, Office of the OSCE Special Representative and

Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Speakers:

- H.E. Ambassador Ali **El Hamdi**, Permanent Representative of Morocco to the OSCE
- Ms. Elena Ruiz **Abril**, Gender Expert from the EBRD
- H.E. Ambassador Miroslava **Beham**, Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, OSCE Secretariat

Discussion

3.45–4.15 p.m. Coffee break

4.15–5.45 p.m. **Session I (Part 3):**

The way forward: is there a potential for more co-operation with the OSCE?

The last session of the day was used to identify concrete ways forward in the co-operation between the OSCE and the Mediterranean Partners. Where do the partners see a potential for more cooperation? What can the OSCE offer to help remedy some of the problems identified throughout the day? How can the experience of the participating States be helpful?

Moderator: H.E. Ambassador Samir Koubaa, Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the

OSCE

Rapporteur: Ms. Andrea Rauber Saxer, Minister, Deputy Head of the Swiss Delegation to

the OSCE

Speakers:

- H.E. Ambassador Khaled **Shamaa**, Permanent Representative of Egypt to the OSCE
- H.E. Ambassador Lamberto **Zannier**, Secretary General of the OSCE
- Ms. Beatriz **Balbin**, First Deputy Director, ODIHR

7.30 p.m. Dinner hosted by Monaco

Tuesday, 29 October 2013

8.30–9.30 a.m. Session II: The social and economic impact of trafficking for labour exploitation, and the role of the business sector

Trafficking for labour exploitation represents a growing phenomenon in the Mediterranean region. While migration flows in the area have mostly been taken into consideration in the framework of smuggling of migrants, recent research and investigation demonstrate that a strong linkage exists between irregular migration processes and subsequent exploitation taking place in European countries. Effective prevention requires action-oriented and targeted action, to be adopted in co-operation between sending and receiving countries. The purpose of this session is to discuss how cooperation can be enhanced in the Mediterranean region to prevent human trafficking for labour exploitation. The private sector should also play a major role in the prevention of human trafficking.

Moderator: H.E. Ambassador Claude **Giordan**, Head of the Delegation of Monaco to the

OSCE

Rapporteur: Mr. Raffaele **Festa**, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Italy to the OSCE

Speakers:

- Mr. Khalil **Amiri**, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State for Immigration and Tunisians Abroad, Tunisia
- Mr. Alain **Neri**, Senator, Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, France
- Ms. Maria-Grazia **Giammarinaro**, OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

9.30–10.30 a.m. Session III: Efforts to combat the financing of terrorism, particularly payment of ransom to free hostages

Many countries, including some OSCE participating States, have been subject to terrorist kidnappings for ransom as well as for political reasons. The number of kidnappings has risen in North Africa, the Sahel and other territories in the Mediterranean region. Terrorist and crime groups are increasingly resorting to kidnapping, targeting tourists, foreign workers and diplomats, in order to obtain political concessions or funding. Kidnapping allows such organizations to grow, pay bribes, recruit or buy weapons thereby impacting the security of the region. Two Universal Antiterrorism Instruments, the Financial Action Task Force Recommendations, and the Algiers Memorandum on Good Practices on Preventing and Denying the Benefits of Kidnapping for Ransom by Terrorists, recently adopted in the framework of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum, make recommendations regarding the challenges associated with illicit flows stemming from kidnapping for ransoms. This session aims at encouraging a multi-stakeholder dialogue and exchange of expertise, and seeks to identify potential topics in this field where the OSCE could continue facilitating further

activities at regional, sub-regional and national levels, in co-operation with its Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation.

Moderator: Mr. Abdenour **Hibouche**, President of the "Cellule de Traitement du

Renseignement Financier" (Financial Information Processing Unit), Algeria

Rapporteur: Mr. Manuel Marion Mainer, Senior Programme Officer, Action against

Terrorism Unit, Transnational Threats Department, OSCE Secretariat

Panellists:

- H.E. Ambassador Ralf **Heckner**, Head of the Crisis Management Centre of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Bern, Switzerland
- Mr. Richard Cowin, Deputy Head, Strategic Engagement Team, Counter Terrorism Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom

10.30 a.m.-11 a.m. Coffee break

11 a.m.–12 noon Closing session

Concluding statement by H.E. Mr. José **Badia**, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Monaco

Concluding statement by Ambassador Thomas **Greminger**, Head of the Delgation of Switzerland to the OSCE and Chair of the Mediterranean Contact Group (MCG)

Concluding statement by H.E. Ambassador Ihor **Prokopchuk**, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the OSCE, and Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council

12.00–13.30 p.m. Buffet lunch hosted by the OSCE Secretariat

2 Summary of the opening ceremony

Report by Ms. Rita Marascalchi, Senior External Co-operation Officer, OSCE Secretariat

The Conference began with opening remarks by **H.E. Paul Masseron**, Minister of the Interior of Monaco, Ambassador **Ihor Prokopchuk**, Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council, and Ambassador **Lamberto Zannier**, Secretary General of the OSCE. A keynote speech was also delivered by **H.E. Eglantina Gjermeni**, Minister for Urban Development and Tourism of Albania.

Mr. Paul Masseron, speaking on behalf of the Government of Monaco, noted that the geopolitical developments witnessed by the region brought about new challenges to which the OSCE owed responses in the three dimensions of security. Such challenges could only be addressed through co-operation across the Mediterranean. The 2011 Vilnius Ministerial Council Decision on the Partners for Co-operation had given a new impetus to the Mediterranean Partnership. Under the Ukrainian and Swiss Chairmanships of the MCG, efforts had been made to provide concrete responses to the Partners' demands. The initiatives undertaken on publicizing the OSCE Code of Conduct concerning the role of armed forces in democratic societies and on combating human trafficking and terrorism provided good examples, as well as the focus of the 2013 Mediterranean Conference on the empowerment of women, continuing the discussions started at the 2012 Conference in Rome. During its Chairmanship of the Forum for Security and Co-operation at the end of 2014, Monaco would contribute to promoting further rapprochement and shared progress across the Mediterranean.

Ambassador **Ihor Prokopchuk** also stressed the importance of the Vilnius Decision in promoting a more result-oriented and demand-driven approach to the Mediterranean Partnership. This was evident also in the new and more focused format for the annual Mediterranean Conference agreed on with the Partners during the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the MCG. The challenge of enhancing the role of women in public, political and economic life was relevant for participating States and Mediterranean Partners alike. Thus, both sides could benefit from exchanging experiences and enhancing co-operation.

Ambassador **Lamberto Zannier** elaborated on the work done in implementing the Vilnius Decision. He gave information on his high-level contacts with Partners' representatives, coupled with a regular informal dialogue in Vienna geared to enhancing practical cooperation. Initiatives undertaken in areas of interest to the Partners, including in combating human trafficking, countering terrorism and promoting the Code of Conduct, played a significant part in the process of moving from dialogue to concrete co-operation. A number of additional projects were ready for implementation, pending support from donors. Also, as discussed at the 2012 Mediterranean Conference, progress had been made with regard to the initiative for more Track II interaction between academia and think tanks across the Mediterranean.

Ms. **Eglantina Gjermen**i outlined her experience as a women's rights activist and, more recently, as a Minister, describing the challenges faced and the progress achieved in Albania. She then drew attention to three main lessons learned: firstly, political and economic empowerment needed to be advanced at the same time in order to be successful; secondly, a decentralized approach encompassing multiple initiatives in the fields of education, health, literacy, leadership and legal empowerment was crucial; thirdly, women's participation in decision-making must be supported not only in terms of numbers but also in terms of impact.

The OSCE and its participating States had developed a good toolkit for promoting gender equality. The promotion of gender mainstreaming in local government by the OSCE Presence in Albania was a good example. The OSCE also provided an excellent platform for exchanging good practices. The decision to devote the present Mediterranean Conference to the topic of women's empowerment highlighted the relevance of the topic and the need to encourage further exchanges.

3 Reports by session rapporteurs

3.1 Session I, Part 1: Enhancing women's participation in public and political life

Report by Mr. Yachar Nafissi-Azar, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE

In her opening remarks, the moderator, **Ambassador Dubravka Šimonović**, Permanent Representative of Croatia to the OSCE, underlined the fact that women's political and economic empowerment were two sides of the same coin. There were still many obstacles for women at all levels: at the entry point, during a career, and even when senior positions were reached. She also stressed the need to include more women in conflict resolution, as called for in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

Ambassador Colette Avital, former Member of the Knesset and Senior Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Israel, started on a positive note, pointing out that there were today far more women Heads of State and Ministers of Foreign Affairs or Defence than 20 years ago. But women remained globally underrepresented. Efforts should be focused on changing attitudes and structures. She noted that in order to enhance democracy and institutions' legitimacy, women must take part in the legislative process and must therefore be better represented in Parliament. To achieve that objective, measures that allowed women to combine a family with professional life needed to be taken. There was also a need for an election system that allowed for more female participation, such as a proportional voting system, as opposed to quotas, which could have a negative effect and limit women's representation. The role that religion played in shaping the image and role of women should also be addressed. Finally, she underlined that there existed a different type of leadership exercised by women, a leadership less based on rivalry or confrontation and more on co-operation, mutual respect and consensus-building.

The second speaker, **Mr. Hussam al Husseini**, Ambassador of Jordan to the OSCE, gave an overview of progress made in Jordan with regard to women's representation in Jordanian national institutions. As a result of the electoral law reform adopted in 2012, which contained specific regulations to enhance the representation of women in Parliament, the number of women elected had increased by 25%, from 8 to 12 representatives. He underlined the work of the Jordanian National Commission for Gender, which set priorities for mainstreaming gender-related issues in government policies. He stressed the need to give concrete expression to internationally recognized women's rights in national regulations. He called for enhanced coordination between the work that was being carried out in the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership and that of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), which Jordan co-chaired with the European Union.

The third speaker, **Ms. Almudena Muñoz**, General Manager of the Research Institute Casa Mediterráneo, Spain, underlined the fact that access to education for women was a prerequisite for gender equality. The main obstacles faced by women in Spain concerned access to senior positions. That was partly due to a lack of enforcement of parity regulations or weak representation criteria. She underlined the need to see quotas as a means and not as an objective *per se*. Quotas should only serve as a temporary measure to enhance women's

representation in senior positions. She also stressed the need for the Spanish media to portray women differently. The traditional role of the woman as a housewife was still too prominently presented.

During the discussions, participants debated the issue of quotas. Some Partner countries referred to successful reforms that allowed a better representation of women in national institutions through quotas, while stressing the need for more systematic vocational training for non-qualified women, a clear policy of gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting. Some delegations underlined the need for better networking among women. The idea behind enhanced networking among women would be to facilitate access to financial resources for leading campaigns, access to education, access to the public sphere and fairer protection by the judicial system. Discussants also mentioned the possibility of an information-sharing platform on good practices. Delegations from participating States and Partner countries expressed the desire for an enhanced role for the OSCE in this field, while some other delegations underlined concrete actions and projects led by the OSCE, such as the Guidance Note on Enhancing Gender-Responsive Mediation. The participants also touched upon the cooperation between the OSCE and the UfM, calling for a regular exchange of views between the two institutions.

3.2 Session I, Part 2: Implementing equal opportunities for women

Report by Ms. Teresa Albano, Adviser, Office of the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

The second part of the first afternoon session of the Mediterranean Conference was chaired by **Mr. Aviv Shir-On**, Ambassador of Israel to the OSCE. Before giving the floor to the panellists, the Ambassador underlined the need to understand the reality in the Mediterranean Partner countries better in order to examine how to progress concretely on the basis of the current situation and achievements, underlining that, despite undeniable positive developments, including in Israel, the situation in the region was far from being satisfactory.

Ms. Elena Ruiz Abril, Gender Expert from the EBRD, described the challenges that women faced in pursuing economic empowerment. She touched upon the fact that, despite research showing how higher female participation in economic activities had a direct impact in increasing gross domestic product, the level of women's involvement in the financial and business sectors across the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEMED) countries was very low. This imbalance was felt not only in top managerial positions but throughout the working chain, in middle management and low-skilled positions, as well as in the self-employment sector considering the current limitations affecting access to credit lines and the availability of tailored services for business development and networking opportunities. She described the main tools that the EBRD promoted in this field through its Strategic Gender Initiative, which was being piloted in Turkey, Egypt and Jordan with promising results. On the basis of a solid collection of quantitative and qualitative disaggregated data, through a combination of institutional capacity-building activities targeting the banking, financial and human resources sectors, together with the development of tailored financial products and credit lines for women, the outcomes of this multi-level strategy were progressively impacting at the level of lending and recruitment policies, with progress being made towards the breaking of the glass ceiling for an increasing portion of the female population in the countries concerned.

In the context of the sharing of lessons learned and ongoing experience in the promotion of the role of women in public, political and economic life in the Mediterranean region, **Mr. El Hamdi**, Ambassador of Morocco to the OSCE, offered an overview of the women empowerment process in Morocco since 1950, when women had obtained the right to vote. Despite the presence of an active feminist movement, he recognized that until recently the process of empowerment of women had been more formal than substantial, with some positive achievements but the situation still being far from satisfactory. The year 2011, with the revision of the Moroccan Constitution, had represented a pillar in a peaceful revolution, with renewed impetus given to the process of promoting equal opportunities through a combination of legislative reforms and operational measures. At international level, the Moroccan Government had withdrawn all reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. At national level, the adoption of a new

Family Code enshrining the principle of the shared responsibility of the spouses, the revision of the citizenship law to allow women to pass on their Moroccan citizenship to their children, formerly an exclusive prerogative of men, and the reform of the labour laws – promoting equality of salaries, equal opportunities in recruitment policies and freedom for women to associate in trade unions – had contributed substantially to building up momentum in progressing towards the goal of effective equality of opportunity. The Moroccan Government had opted for a policy of "positive discrimination", introducing a quota system in electoral law, which had impacted significantly on the proportion of women active in political life. One of the major obstacles to achieving effective equality of opportunity lay in resistances deriving from a still widespread patriarchal culture, involving a number of further challenges, particularly in the field of education. In this regard, the National Human Development Initiative launched by His Majesty King Mohammed VI in 2005 and the 2012-2016 Plan of Action for Education represented tools for a long-term strategy aimed at substantial cultural change.

The OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, Ms. Miroslava Beham, underlined that the time had come to discuss how women could be effectively empowered, since the "why" was no longer under debate and the principle of equality was now firmly grounded. No country could progress if half of its population was left behind. The enhanced attention paid to the female population should be duly reflected in national budgets, with due allocations for mainstreaming gender equality in State policies. For the Mediterranean countries, women empowerment and gender equality represented a critical aspect of the transition process. Investing in women was a key factor for improving security and the economy as well as bringing about more transparent democracies. The Arab Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme had confirmed that the exclusion of women from public life had been a prime factor undermining overall economic progress across the region. In this connection, the OSCE had developed a diversified set of tools and measures that had been implemented throughout the OSCE region and could be offered to the Mediterranean countries as complementing and reinforcing other ongoing actions at national, subregional and regional level. Mentoring had been identified as a strong empowerment tool that could not only impact the individual but also have far-reaching effects on empowerment in the social, economic and governance sectors. The OSCE project for creating mentor networks was transforming the ad hoc best practices and the lessons learned across the OSCE region into a unified and strategic programme that could be offered as a major resource tool to the Mediterranean Partner countries. The tenth anniversary of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality in 2014 could offer the opportunity to develop more tailored proposals, which the Gender Section would be ready to elaborate jointly with the relevant Mediterranean countries' counterparts.

During discussion from the floor, one delegation underlined that a "positive discrimination" approach could be useful in the early stages of an effective gender equality strategy and particularly in the field of access to education, and described a pilot project for the promotion of higher, university education of young mothers as a good example in this context. However, such an approach should be dropped at a later stage, as long as more balanced approaches

were promoted. In this regard, an open exchange of experiences, where the opportunity was offered, could be extremely profitable.

Another delegation reflected on the issue of motherhood and the need to tackle discrimination against working mothers, and called for more effective family-work reconciliation policies, mentioning as a good model the Resolution (2000/C 218/02) adopted on 29 June 2000 by the Council and Ministers for Employment and Social Policy of the EU on the balanced participation of women and men in family and working life. The importance of access to education for girls and the risk of a stereotyped image of women as mere objects of pleasure rather than active subjects in their individual, family and community moral and material development were also highlighted.

With respect to family-work reconciliation policies, the availability of part-time jobs was mentioned by some as a useful tool. On the other hand, it was noted that part-time jobs were one of the main reasons for men-women inequalities in the labour market. In this regard, child care services should be expanded and more balance established between the roles of fathers and mothers by introducing, for example, mandatory fathers' leave in line with the experience of some of Europe's Nordic countries. With regard to further tools to strengthen the presence of women in the labour market, micro-finance was recognized as an effective tool to promote income-generating activities, but it was stressed that the real challenge was graduating from the informal to the formal sector. It was very difficult to change the traditional culture of property ownership in some communities and women could not in practice provide properties to secure loans. The EBRD offered its growing experience in promoting the use of other assets than land to secure loans and in developing specifically tailored financial products for women. The **ILO**'s Decent Work Agenda was mentioned as a useful institutional framework for further action. In this context, the ILO Convention on domestic work which had recently entered into force was also recalled as an effective tool to protect the economic rights of women, who were most often found in low-valued, less regulated and labour-intensive sectors like domestic work.

The session clearly offered a methodology for future work, providing for the following main axes:

- Rights: normative revision for the introduction in national legislations of international standards;
- Local responses: considering the specificities of local contexts, responses must be tailored according to cultural, social and economic features, based on the common denominator of international standards and taking into account specific resistances and difficulties:
- The operational mechanisms: education and awareness-raising should always complement operational strategies in this field in order to create the necessary preconditions for a cultural change.

A strong call emerged for a synergic approach to all the experiences put forward during the sessions, as well as for enhanced co-operation between participating States and

Mediterranean Partner countries, but also among international organizations; the ILO, the EBRD and the OSCE were invited to outline and exchange good practices and experiences meaningful for the specific needs and features of the Mediterranean Partner countries, so as to complement each other's roles and capacities, bearing in mind that political and economic empowerment went hand in hand and that the contribution of different actors could bring fruitful outcomes for all.

3.3 Session I, Part 3: The way forward: is there a potential for more cooperation with the OSCE?

Report by Ms. Andrea Rauber Saxer, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE

In his opening remarks, the moderator, Ambassador **Samir Koubaa**, encouraged a discussion on concrete issues of co-operation in order to take advantage of the unusual opportunity to promote peace and development of democratic structures in the Euro-Mediterranean region. While the Partner countries had no formal way of participating in the decision-making processes of the OSCE, they were interested in getting a strong signal of a willingness to increase co-operation by the participating States. Civil society in the region asked for swift support from the international community and for signals of solidarity.

The first speaker, Ambassador **Khaled Shaama**, Permanent Representative of Egypt to the OSCE, discussed the history, heritage and characteristics of women's political activities in his country. He underlined the importance of developing an exchange of concrete examples and best practices in the enhancement of women's role in the political and economic sphere.

The Secretary General of the OSCE, Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, stressed the interest of the OSCE in promoting a dialogue with the Partners for Co-operation on various issues, including today's main topic of women's empowerment. The sharing of experiences between Partners and participating States would be a good starting point. In addition, the OSCE could offer concrete projects to enhance women's skills, for example by establishing mentor networks. There was also potential for developing partnerships with other regional organizations like the EBRD, the Council of Europe and the League of Arab States. In addition, he was of the opinion that more work could be done in close coordination with the United Nations on the basis of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. He also mentioned that gender mainstreaming in all projects was a common procedure.

Ms. **Beatriz Balbin**, First Deputy Director, ODIHR, said that the ODIHR had much to offer to the Partners for Co-operation. There were 18 ODIHR publications translated into Arabic. A project on "*Promoting democratic structures among OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation*" has just entered phase 2. This project, even though not yet fully funded, offered the Partners an extensive menu of co-operation. She would share it with interested countries and explain where the ODIHR could offer concrete forms of co-operation. She underlined that, particularly in the human dimension and the promotion of women's equality, a strategic long-term approach was needed.

In the discussion, it was stressed that co-operation must be concrete and demand-driven. The OSCE offered a platform for dialogue on various issues and the sharing of good practices and experiences (examples were mentioned including privileged access for young mothers to university studies and study tours for women leaders). Several participating States underlined the need to focus on issues that were within the mandate of the OSCE – for example, on the role of women in conflict prevention and meditation or, more generally, on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women and peace and security. Others pointed to the general need for gender mainstreaming in all areas. In addition, it was emphasized that the OSCE had much to offer in building capacities. The OSCE Senior Adviser on Gender Issues offered to visit the Partner countries in order to give information on what her office could do in this field. Several participants proposed the

inclusion of the Union for the Mediterranean in future meetings; others underlined that the Union was already regularly invited to the Mediterranean Conferences. Generally, there was a strong desire to consolidate interaction between the OSCE and the Partners, not only on the issue of gender equality. It was suggested that the next Contact Group meeting on 15 November 2013 should be used for more concrete discussions on the follow-up to the present Conference.

3.4 Session II: The social and economic impact of trafficking for labour exploitation, and the role of the business sector

Report by Mr. Raffaele Festa, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Italy to the OSCE

The first part of the session was chaired by Ambassador Claude Giordan, Head of the Delegation of Monaco to the OSCE, who underlined that a co-operative approach was at the heart of strategies to prevent, counter and prosecute human trafficking, as very often the phenomenon involved more than one country – of origin, transit or destination.

In this regard, Mr. Khalil Amiri, Senior Adviser to the Tunisian Secretary of State for Immigration and Tunisians Abroad, called for enhanced action-oriented co-operation involving major players at national and transnational level. He stressed that the business sector was crucially placed, considering that trafficking for labour exploitation could undermine fair competition through the use of an exploited labour force. In this context, governments, the international community and the private sector could play a pivotal role. For instance, under the normative framework introduced in California to promote an exploitation-free supply chain, big textile companies were requested to report on their efforts to eliminate slavery and human trafficking from their supply chains. The United Nations Global Compact initiative encouraged businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies and to report on their implementation. The Global Business Coalition against Human Trafficking started by Microsoft provided another example of the involvement of the private sector in preventing the use of an exploited workforce. Tunisia was currently enhancing its efforts to address the phenomenon of human trafficking for labour exploitation. On the supply side, following initial research carried out by the International Organization for Migration, the Government was assuming its responsibilities by raising awareness and improving public security. In this connection, information and orientation for the at-risk population was a critical area in order to deal with the disturbing increase in the use of the Internet and social networks for fraudulent recruitment and job placement for positions abroad. Irregular flows from the country were increasingly under control and readmission of irregular migrants, particularly from Italy, was also practised, although it was worth recalling that regular migrants could also be vulnerable to exploitative rings. On the demand side, Tunisia was primarily a country of origin and transit but the persistent political and economic unrest in sub-Saharan and neighbouring countries made Tunisia a destination for migration flows in the region, although such flows had decreased after the Revolution owing to the slump in the local entertainment and tourist industry. With respect to the social impact of human trafficking, it was important to build the capacities of social workers to address the assistance needs of the at-risk population and de facto trafficked persons.

In line with Tunisian experience, the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Ms. **Maria Grazia Giammarinaro**, stressed that preventing human trafficking was central to economic and social challenges often reflected in political and operational dilemmas facing all countries, including in the Mediterranean

region. Social vulnerabilities deriving from poverty, lack of equal opportunities, conflicts and interpersonal violence were exacerbated as a result of insufficient channels for legal migration; a significant number of migrants sought out intermediaries to facilitate the migration process and job placement, and often fell prey to criminal organizations. Many factors contributed to fuelling exploitative practices in the region. The impact of the financial crisis had, *de facto*, increased the demand for inexpensive labour, particularly in some sectors that were more labour-intensive and less suitable for outsourcing, such as agriculture, construction, tourism, commercial fishing and domestic work. In this connection, she reported on the consultation process undertaken with the support of experts from the Mediterranean Partner countries, which had helped identify the following areas for enhanced co-operation in the field of preventing trafficking for labour exploitation:

- Promoting the positive role of the business sector through the development of a combination of voluntary codes of conduct and State-based regulatory initiatives, particularly in the field of public procurement;
- Regulating, licensing and monitoring recruitment and job placement agencies, particularly in some sectors that were more prone to exploitative practices;
- Enhancing the accountability of employers, establishing clear and accessible complaint mechanisms and remedial action for workers and facilitating access to justice, including compensation for lost wages and other damages, for trafficked and exploited migrant workers, including after their return to the country of origin;
- Enhancing the role of civil society as an actor complementary to governments particularly trade unions and employers' associations as well as diaspora associations, these latter as "natural" interlocutors for newly arrived compatriots along with the governments of the destination countries and institutions in the countries of origin. She concluded by underlining that an agenda for trafficking prevention did not imply preventing people from migrating, blocking their aspirations and opportunities for access to better employment, living and income-earning conditions. In this regard, she stressed that purely restrictive migration policies were part of the problem rather than part of the solution as they increased social vulnerabilities of migrants. She therefore called for a balance of responsibilities between sending and receiving countries in order to create an area of shared responsibility over migrant workers that should reflect the shared benefits that both groups of countries received from migrant work.

Migration was also the main focus of the intervention of Mr. Alain Neri, Senator and Vice-President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, France, who underlined the need to regulate migratory flows in order to reduce what he called "la migration sauvage", and the vulnerabilities of those who fell into the clutches of traffickers and smugglers. He called for enhanced channels for legal migration and in particular for gender-sensitive legal migration channels. In the case of women, the situation of irregularity and the impossibility of entering the job market legally often resulted in tragic involvement in the exploitation of their bodies. France had renewed its efforts to reinforce reintegration measures targeting women entrapped in the sex market. He underlined the reality of migrant women exploited in private households and providing invisible domestic work. He concluded his intervention by calling

for enhanced commitment to the protection of migrant workers in order to counter abuses linked to immigration.

The discussion from the floor underlined that the trafficking phenomenon was a crossdimensional topic requiring a multifaceted approach, and that political dialogue could support the identification of preventive and counteracting strategies, as in the case of the Seminar on Co-operation to Prevent Trafficking in Human Beings in the Mediterranean Region, held in Rome on 8 February 2013 and financially supported by Italy and Luxembourg. The United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families was also recalled during the discussion as an important tool for effective strategies to prevent trafficking, although this international instrument still suffered from a limited number of ratifications, particularly from what were called the developed countries. Different approaches for curbing irregular migration as a contributing factor to human trafficking and exploitation of migrant workers were also debated: in line with the recent appeal from the Director-General of the ILO, Guy Ryder, it was underlined that ways to enhance legal channels for labour migration needed to be pursued in the dialogue with the EU, and that purely restrictive migration policies exacerbated the vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking of migrants, including those entitled to international protection. It was also emphasized that the collection of reliable quantitative and qualitative data could help a proper understanding of the magnitude of the problem in the Mediterranean region, as well as its specific features, with a view to elaborating tailored responses. The persistence of wellknown forms of exploitation - such as the sexual exploitation of sub-Saharan female migrants in the North African countries in transit to Europe, or the sexual abuse of women from Eastern European countries and Russia in Israel – was combined with other emerging forms of exploitation - labour exploitation in various sectors, including domestic work, forced begging, forced marriage, forced criminal activities – which called for further reflection and in-depth analysis. In addition, a better understanding of the root causes of human trafficking in the region was needed. Enhanced co-operation was required, not only between countries of origin, transit and destination or between the private and public sectors, but also to complement the ongoing efforts at regional level, such as the EU summit, and support further regional mechanisms like the Mediterranean Union, the League of Arab States and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. The Slovak Chair of the Economic and Environmental Committee and the Swiss and Serbian Chairs of the MCG offered their respective platforms to further discuss the trafficking phenomenon and its impact on the social and economic development of the Mediterranean region.

3.5 Session III: Efforts to combat the financing of terrorism, particularly payment of ransom to free hostages

Report by Mr. Manuel Marion Mainer, Senior Programme Officer, Action against Terrorism Unit, Transnational Threats Department, OSCE Secretariat

The moderator, **Mr Abdenour Hibouche**, President of the Algerian Financial Information Processing Unit, said that payment of ransoms encouraged terrorists to continue using this method of financing. Kidnapping for ransom (KFR) had significantly increased during recent years: not only the number of kidnappings had increased but also the amounts demanded. There was also an obscure side, because criminals were making a lucrative business of KFR.

Ambassador Ralf Heckner, Head of the Crisis Management Centre in the State Secretariat of Switzerland, explained that one of his tasks was to ensure the safety of Swiss citizens who travelled abroad, and particularly to keep them safe from kidnapping. He acknowledged that a "no ransom" policy was very hard to adopt, as it was a matter of life and death, and the decision was a dilemma. He elaborated on three challenges that were faced: the first was how to increase the chances of getting hostages released without paying a ransom; the second was how to make the population aware and convince them that a "no ransom" policy was the only option, and he suggested that a public discussion was necessary; the third was to make private businesses and non-governmental organizations that operated in dangerous territories part of the policy. This would certainly also entail a dialogue with them. The efforts should concentrate on prevention, and this could be central in the planning of OSCE regional cooperation with the Mediterranean Partners in 2014.

A second pillar of Swiss policy in this endeavour, he said, was outreach at bilateral and multilateral levels. In this connection, the upcoming Swiss OSCE Chairmanship was planning to organize an OSCE counter-terrorism conference at the end of April 2014 in Interlaken (Switzerland), where the issue of cooperation and mutual assistance on KFR would be included in the agenda.

Finally, he stressed that Switzerland devoted much effort to providing development aid in order to combat poverty in the world, something that would also contribute to reducing kidnappings in deprived regions.

Mr. Richard Cowin, Deputy Head, Strategic Engagement Team, Counter Terrorism Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, United Kingdom, stated that his country had a long history of a "no payment for ransom" policy. He wished to answer four main questions with his presentation. To the question of what the trends were concerning KFR, he said that the figures showed a clear increase, the numbers of KFR having doubled in 2012 compared with 2010. The second question was for what purposes terrorists used the money obtained with KFR: it was used for many purposes, from recruitment to training, paying bribes, buying weapons and vehicles and covering related logistics, but also for paying wages to the terrorists and the families of "martyrs" who died in action. Many young people were attracted by this chance of obtaining an income significantly higher than the average earnings in their region. Yemen was an example where terrorists paid for electricity and water for many families. As for the methods used by terrorists to get funds, his third question, he said that although there was a diversified spectrum of financing methods, kidnappings had been recognized as the most profitable. The last issue was the reason why this way of financing

had spread so quickly: he explained that terrorist groups were copying from each other. Finally, KFR had a circular effect, with the payments made encouraging terrorists to continue or even intensify this method of financing.

The moderator reminded participants that there were a number of United Nations Security Council resolutions and international and regional counter-terrorism instruments relating to the issue of terrorism financing and kidnapping. He also described the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force that addressed terrorism financing.

In the subsequent discussion, the representative of a Partner country expressed agreement with Ambassador Heckner that the adoption of a policy of "no ransom" was quite difficult and it had to be discussed with the public, arguing that the payment of ransom would not solve the problem but only aggravate it. He also recalled the recent Group of Eight statement condemning the payment of ransom. He hoped that support for the "no ransom" policy would grow in the near future and that payment of ransom would soon be criminalized. An OSCE political declaration in that regard would help, in combination with other international and regional efforts.

A representative of a participating State said that the OSCE should not be too worried about the limits of its own mandates, but should focus on the added value of work by the OSCE on this subject. The OSCE must be selective and practical, avoiding duplication and aligning itself with the work of other organizations in this area. The Algiers Memorandum contained practical recommendations that could guide OSCE action. He recommended that the issue of trafficking and KFR addressed during the Conference should be given further attention in future OSCE cooperation with its Mediterranean Partners.

The moderator said that, if the OSCE adopted a political declaration, that might encourage the United Nations to consider amending some of the existing counter-terrorism instruments in order to emphasize KFR, or to draw up a new specific international instrument on KFR.

Another representative of a participating State referred to the human factor and asked whether one was ready to try to convince people that a close family member should be sacrificed for a "no ransom" policy, and how this situation could be tackled.

A representative of a Partner country said that that was an operational matter that had to be dealt with by co-operation between security agencies. The practice of providing weapons to non-State actors must be stopped as it would not help to solve the problem. He did not consider that an OSCE political declaration was necessary. He stressed the importance of co-operation on the ground and the usefulness of discussions.

Ambassador Ralf Heckner and Mr. Richard Cowin agreed that, although political declarations were important, so also was co-operation on the ground.

The moderator concluded the session by recommending that a specific instrument to prohibit payment of ransoms should be adopted within the United Nations framework.

4 Summary of the closing session

Report by Ms. Rita Marascalchi, Senior External Co-operation Officer, OSCE Secretariat

Concluding statements were delivered by Mr. José Badia, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Monaco, Ambassador Prokopchuk, Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council, and Ambassador Greminger, Chair of the MCG.

Mr. José Badia stressed that the discussions had highlighted the importance of the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership. He pointed to exchanges of good practices as a good way to continue interaction between the OSCE and its Partners. Improving women's participation in public, political and economic life needed to remain a priority, despite the progress already achieved in some cases. Co-operation among international organizations and the involvement of civil society and of the business sector were also of crucial importance for further progress. More co-operation was likewise needed in combating human trafficking and the financing of terrorism. The Mediterranean Partnership should figure prominently at the upcoming Ministerial Council meeting and in the Helsinki+40 process. During its Chairmanship of the Forum for Security and Co-operation, Monaco would make the Mediterranean Partnership its main priority.

Ambassador Prokopchuk expressed his appreciation for the level of the discussions and the concrete ideas for co-operation presented. He encouraged the pursuit of closer co-operation in the field of fostering women's participation in peace mediation and facilitation processes. He further encouraged the Mediterranean Partners to continue their co-operation with the OSCE. In conclusion, he referred to the preparations for the Kyiv Ministerial Council meeting and urged the Mediterranean Partners to ensure high-level participation.

Ambassador Greminger said that the discussions had highlighted the progress achieved and the obstacles still faced in empowering women. He also recalled the concrete proposals made for possible OSCE responses, including the publicizing of the OSCE Guidance Note on Enhancing Gender-Responsive Mediation and the development of an effective monitoring tool on the implementation of the OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality. Referring to the dialogue conducted in the framework of the Mediterranean Partnership, he took note of the Partners' requests for greater involvement and more informal exchanges. He referred to the practice of inviting each Partner to set the agenda for an MCG meeting in the course of the year and announced that the Chair would circulate a concept paper on the follow-up to the Conference for discussions at the last MCG meeting of 2013, to take place on 15 November. As recommended by several participants, closer contacts could be sought with the UfM, and co-operation with the League of Arab States could be intensified. In the field of combating human trafficking, he referred to the proposals made by the Special Representative for focusing on the role of the business sector, recruitment methods and the role of civil society, inviting the Partners to continue engaging in closer co-operation. The session on combating the financing of terrorism, particularly the payment of ransoms, had highlighted outstanding challenges such as ensuring the survival of hostages, the adoption of "no ransom" policies and public understanding for such an approach. Possible areas for work ranged from preventing trips in risky regions to inter-State co-operation and assistance. Part of the Conference to be organized by Switzerland in Interlaken in April 2014 would be devoted to examining this issue further.

5 List of participants

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6 Seating arrangement

	Albania
	Germany
	United States of America
	United States of America
	Austria
	Bosnia and Herzegovina
	Bulgaria
	Canada
	Cyprus
	Croatia
	Spain
	France
	United Kingdom
	Greece
	Ireland / OSCE Troika
	Italy
	Lithuania / EU
	Luxembourg
	Malta
	Monaco
	Monaco
	Monaco
	Monaco
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	Netherlands Poland Russian Federation Russian Federation Holy See Serbia Slovakia Slovenia Switzerland / OSCE Troika Turkey Ukraine/OSCE CIO