

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Conference on

“The Public-Private Partnership in the Fight Against Human Trafficking”

Moscow, Russian Federation

Welcome and Opening speeches 20 July 2017

Statement By

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Check Against Delivery

His Excellency Minister Lavrov,

Her Excellency Ambassador Jarbussynova,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to convey the congratulations of the ILO Director-General, Mr. Guy Ryder, to His Excellency Minister Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and Her Excellency Ambassador Madina Jarbussynova, Special Representative and Coordinator for Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings of the OSCE, for organising this important Conference.

Excellencies,

Human trafficking often happens where individuals are trapped by promises of jobs beyond what they could expect in their national or local settings. According to the latest statistics published by the ILO, globally 21 million people are coerced into forced labour. They are trafficked, held in debt bondage or are working in slavery-like conditions. 20% are victims of sexual exploitation and 80% are victims of labour exploitation in different industrial sectors. 44% of all victims have migrated internally or across borders. According to the ILO estimates, 150 billion USDs are generated annually as illicit profits from forced labour.

It is therefore timely that this Conference, on the “Public-Private Partnership in the Fight Against Human Trafficking”, is being held with such a broad and high-level participation, under the joint leadership of the Russian Federation and the OSCE. This will no-doubt raise visibility, mobilise political commitment and strengthen the existing international alliances and cooperation against forced labour and human trafficking.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Participants,

I would like to take this opportunity to present a number of ILO initiatives that are most relevant to the theme of the discussions in this Conference.

First, as you would know, a new land mark instrument, the 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention offers specific guidance on measures to prevent forced labour, provide victims with protection and ensure their access to justice and remedies. The 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention is already ratified by 17 countries. Several others are in the process of ratification. We encourage all countries to do so as a concrete step towards the eradication of forced labour.

Secondly, the ILO is actively promoting Alliance 8.7 which is a multi-stakeholder initiative that brings together the governments, workers’ and employers’ organizations, UN agencies, regional organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society to work towards Target 8.7 of the 2030

Sustainable Development Goals. It aims to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour. Under Alliance 8.7, “supply chains” was selected as one of the priority areas resulting in the creation of the Supply Chain Action Group. Interesting work is underway and you can join forces with others to rip the benefits of the work already in progress under Alliance 8.7.

There is also the Global Business Network on Forced Labour and Human Trafficking, created in response to the request by the private sector. It facilitates development of tools, testing interventions and sharing of information on how companies can prevent and mitigate the risk of forced labour and human trafficking in their operations and supply chains.

Another multi-stakeholder arrangement, built on public-private premises, is the Fair Recruitment Initiative which aims at prevention of human trafficking and protecting the workers, including migrant workers, from fraudulent practices during their recruitment.

Distinguished Participants,

The International Labour Organization looks forward to our cooperation with you on the above and in the follow-up to the outcomes of this Conference.

The ILO’s holistic approach has been a case in point in the global reduction of child labour which is also connected to human trafficking. More governments have now put in place strong laws and policies. Companies have adopted stronger policies to prevent child labour in their supply chains. The ILO’s Child Labour Platform, a partnership with the UN Global Compact, brings together major multinational brands to combine their efforts.

The ILO has a longstanding experience in partnering with private companies, foundations and public-private multi-stakeholder initiatives. There are several success stories of collaboration from the International Cocoa Initiative in Cote d’Ivoire to the hazelnut production in Turkey. In Uzbekistan, the ILO supported the government and social partners to end child labour in cotton picking. We are also an active partner of the multi-stakeholder initiative to promote human rights in mega-sports events, including here in Russia ahead of the 2018 World Cup.

We look forward to sharing our experiences with you, particularly in the up-coming IV Global Conference to Eradicate Child Labour which will be held by the government of Argentina this November. It will also address forced labour, human trafficking and youth employment and we invite all to participate.

In conclusion, may I underline that the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, through the efforts of the Office of the Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, has worked tirelessly to mobilize national and international action and has been a leader in this regard. This Conference, co-organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation will bring new impetus to those efforts. We wish much success for this Conference.