

**Statement delivered by H.E. Ms. Györgyi Martin Zanathy, Ambassador,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Hungary to the United
Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Vienna**

(Check against delivery!)

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

At the outset allow me to express our appreciation to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for launching the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking and convening the Vienna Forum. I would also like to extend the congratulations to other members of the Steering Committee (ILO, UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR and OSCE) who have been actively involved in the preparations for this Global Initiative. Finally we pay tribute to the United Arab Emirates for its contribution to the event.

Reinventing slavery in a renewed form is a shame of the modern societies. We all have to raise our voices against this offence against the dignity and integrity of human beings.

There is no doubt that this phenomenon can only be dealt with by forging a new type of alliance of state and non-state actors, civil society, artists, academia and the media. In this respect Hungary attaches great importance to the UN.GIFT which aims at mobilizing all stakeholders to prevent and eradicate human trafficking by reducing vulnerability of potential victims, providing support and protection to the victims and bringing the perpetrators to justice. The Vienna Forum will foster dialogue on this issue as well as it could contribute to the creation of a more effective toolkit to fight trafficking.

Please allow me to say a few words about our experience in fighting human trafficking.

Hungary is a Party to almost all existing internationally binding legal instruments in this field.

We signed and ratified the most important UN documents , among others the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and its two relevant supplementing protocols. It should also be mentioned that in 2007 Hungary signed the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, and as an EU Member, is actively involved in the initiatives of the European Union.

Regarding the national legislation, trafficking in human beings, constitutes a serious criminal offence, which is to be punished by an imprisonment of up to 15 years.

The Act on Protection of Witnesses outlines the rules of participation in the Victim Protection Program, which includes moving the witness to a shelter and alteration of identity of the witness either within the country or – upon mutual agreement – to another state.

The Act on support and compensation of victims provides various forms of support including legal, social, financial and psychological aid.

The new Act on entry and stay of foreigners could prove to be one of the most important tools in the field of victims' support. Pursuant to this act a certificate of temporary residence shall be issued to the victim of trafficking, and in case the victim decides to cooperate with the law enforcement authority, a residence permit on humanitarian grounds shall be granted.

Mr. Chairman,

As far as the implementation of the existing legal instruments is concerned, an Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings was initiated in 2005. Within the framework of the Action Plan the law enforcement authorities have prepared specific regulations regarding the tasks of the police on both national and local level. These norms follow a victim-centered approach and include regular monitoring and evaluation of results and trends.

Among the recent initiatives, the inter-agency working group against trafficking should be mentioned. The working group was set

up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2004. in cooperation with the United States Embassy in Budapest. One of its main achievements is the framework agreement of the related ministries, non-governmental and international organisations which established a victim referral mechanism. In this mechanism important role is played by the National Crisis Intervention and Information Helpline of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and the shelter which is run by an NGO with the logistic and financial support of the Office of Nationality and Migration. The Hungarian Police participated in the regional program of ICMPD on trafficking and took part in the elaboration of a manual for police personnel, which was released to all concerned police units.

The Government of Hungary strongly believes that particular attention should be made to the protection and support of the victims. One of our main achievements in this field is a complex training program in cooperation with IOM Hungary for law enforcement, child protection, health and education professionals on the phenomenon of trafficking and on victim identification. IOM is also one of the main partners of the Hungarian government in the anti trafficking campaigns. Several initiatives were launched, with the prevention program "Don't fall for it!" being the first and the largest.

Though many efforts were made in order to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings and protect victims, the relatively low number of criminal investigations, identified and supported victims show that efficiency of these efforts must be further advanced. Thus the Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement has recently prepared a National Strategy against Trafficking in Human Beings, which is to be approved in the near future. The Strategy will form – among others – the basis of a national coordinating mechanism which is to coordinate, monitor and evaluate results and challenges of prevention, prosecution and protection. Pursuant to the Strategy a Renewed National Action Plan will be elaborated. The Strategy foresees the appointment of a National Coordinator, who will be responsible for the coordination of the preparation, implementation and monitoring of the Action Plan as well as for the coordination of counter-trafficking activities among the various government authorities and NGO-s. He will also act as a contact point for international organizations and agencies involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

Mr. Chairman,

By concluding, let me reiterate our sincere hope that this eye-opening Forum will give further momentum to our efforts, and significantly contribute to developing more effective measures against trafficking in human beings as well as to an increased global and regional cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.