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Humanitarian issues and other commitments II

Ms. Moderator,

Ladies and gentlemen!

Challenges and threats of the transnational organized crime constantly increase, creating huge danger to political, economic, social development of the international community. Adequate counteraction to it demands vigorous efforts at global, regional and national levels, and one of priorities in counteraction of criminality in moment of the safety and legality is fighting against the trafficking in human beings.

The problem of fighting against the human trafficking demands a global estimation, the analysis of developed conditions and a situation, objective and all-round forecasting of variants of its development, and also planning of the coordinated actions of all world community and each country separately at all levels of the government, with wide attraction of the nongovernmental organizations, press and the public.

The law enforcement agencies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, in particular police structures, consider a problem of fighting against human trafficking in parallel with

other displays of criminality, such as terrorism, illegal circulation of drugs and the weapon, money laundering, and also corruption, as trafficking in human beings in many cases is closely connected with them.

In sphere of fighting against trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Azerbaijan the operating legal base has been advanced and the process of integration of the country in the international community has amplified.

Azerbaijan has joined to all important international agreements, on combating trafficking in human beings. «The National Action Plan on combating trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Azerbaijan» has been approved on the basis of the Convention of the United Nations «Against the transnational organized crime», signed by the Republic of Azerbaijan in December on 2000 and the Law confirmed by the Republic of Azerbaijan on May of 2003, and also on the basis of the Report supplementing it «Prevention and punishment for human trafficking, in particular trafficking in women and children», on the basis of positions of the Brussels Declaration taken into consideration «On prevention and struggle against trafficking in human beings».

«The National Action Plan on combating trafficking in human beings» in the Republic of Azerbaijan was approved by the Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on May 6th, 2004. According to the National Action Plan, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been appointed as the responsible person - the National Coordinator on realization of the Action Plan on combating the trafficking in human beings. Special Working Group on the implementation of the Action Plan comprised of different state agencies has been set

up. Department on combating Human Trafficking at the Main Department on Fighting against Organized Crime of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan has also been established. Considering the transnational organized character of combating trafficking in human beings and practice of some European countries, in the year 2006, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan signed the decree establishing the Department on combating Human Trafficking, which operates as independent structural division within the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In June 28th, 2005 the Law on "Combating the trafficking in human beings» was enacted in Azerbaijan, which regulates the legal and organizational basis of preventive maintenance of human trafficking, fighting against the trafficking in human beings, protection of victims of such kind of crimes and rendering assistance to them.

On September 2005, the criminal code of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been amended to include the provisions defining the trafficking, the forced labor and dissemination of confidential information on victims of trafficking as a criminal act.

Another important step was the establishment of the specific shelter in Baku on October 12, 2006, which operates with the aim of ensuring the safety of the potential victims of trafficking, the witnesses of such criminal acts and rendering them mental, medical and legal assistance

The normative-legal acts on the combating trafficking in human beings are the following: Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan from August 4th, 2005 «On use of the Law on combating human trafficking», the Decision of the Cabinet from November 9th, 2005 «On rules of creation, financing, activity for victims of

human trafficking of special institutions, including the supervision of their activity», the Decision of the Cabinet from January 12th, 2006 «On position of Fund of the help to victims of human trafficking», the Decision of the Cabinet from March 6th, 2006 «On rules of carrying out of social rehabilitation to victims of human trafficking».

At the beginning of 2006 test examinations to the position of operative employees at the Department of Fighting against Human Trafficking at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan were held with the participation of the representatives of the Baku office of OSCE, Embassy of the USA in the Republic of Azerbaijan, International Organization of Migration, and American Association of Lawyers, as well as different NGOs. We actively investigate the experience of other countries in direction of fighting against human trafficking and we put into practice the developed positive methods of work. With the purpose of increase in efficiency of activity of service on combating against the trafficking in human beings, the employees of Department of Fighting against Human Trafficking participated in various study-training actions in Georgia, Turkey, Russia, Kazakhstan, Austria, Germany, Italy and in Moldova, Belarus.

It has to be underlined that, together with the non-governmental organizations, series of seminars have been held in Baku and different regions of the country with the aim of raising awareness of the population on trafficking issues and organization of monitoring for determining causes of this phenomena. Seminars on the role of religious leaders in combating trafficking have been conducted in collaboration with the State Committee on the work with religious communities and different religious communities in Azerbaijan.

Protection of the human rights and freedoms of the individual, strengthening of international legal basis of the cooperation in combating trafficking in human beings, cementing bilateral, regional and multilateral links are fundamental priorities in combating trafficking in human beings. I would like to stress that, combating trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Azerbaijan is implemented also in the framework of the GUAM- Organization for Democracy and Economic Development Working Group on fighting terrorism, organized crime, illegal drug trafficking and other crimes.

Dear delegates,

As you are aware, uncontrolled areas currently are subjected to large scale utilization for trafficking purposes. I would like to particularly underline that 1/5 of the territories of Azerbaijan, occupied by Armenian forces, for many years have remained uncontrolled, thus creating favorable conditions for prospering of transnational organized crime, including human trafficking.

Utilization of those territories as a transit for transnational crime, inter alia for human trafficking seriously undermines efforts to combat this phenomena and significantly diminishes effectiveness of the relevant undertakings. The resolution of the conflict and restoration of the territorial integrity of our country will pave the way to the solution of the problem related to the control of the borders. I am of the opinion, that this factor should concern us, and we all ought to take consolidated efforts to resolve this global problem.

Notwithstanding the efforts that have so far being undertaken, we are mindful that the tasks that we have ahead of us require further strengthening and accelerating

practical measures, raising professionalism, improving the links and mutual cooperation with all relevant agencies both within the country and with the other international actors. Therefore, we build our activities upon those principles.

I thank you Ms. Moderator.