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PRESS RELEASE

OSCE Special Representative publishes human trafficking report on Portugal, praises immediate steps taken

VIENNA, 10 December 2013 – In a report issued today, the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, praised the Government of Portugal for the measures taken following her visit to Portugal in November, 2012.

“I welcome the recent legislative amendments that broaden the scope of the definition of trafficking in human beings and that authorize the use of seized or confiscated funds to improve victims’ rights to compensation,” the Special Representative said.

Authorities have also taken significant steps to increase the role of NGOs, in particular through their participation in the inter-ministerial committee and the Co-ordinating Body for the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings, Giammarinaro noted.

“I note with great appreciation the creation of the Support and Protection Network for Victims of Trafficking (RAPVT), composed of State and non-State actors, that will strengthen the referral mechanism, enhance knowledge of victims about compensation and improve protection and reintegration of victims.”

Giammarinaro advised the Government to strengthen victims’ access to justice by supplying more information about their rights and by providing legal counselling on available remedies. She suggested enhancing the criminal justice response by systematically training justice sector officials on new features of human trafficking. Giammarinaro advised to improve child protection by ensuring that the measures already in place are being fully implemented.

The Special Representative built upon the open exchange of ideas established in the country visit with a second trip to Portugal in October 2013, appearing at an international conference of judges, prosecutors and other members of the judiciary.

The report is available at <http://www.osce.org/cthb/109372> .

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<http://www.osce.org/cthb/109387>