

*Council of Europe*  
*The Secretary General*

Strasbourg, 15 June 2015

Dear Minister,

I am pleased to write to you in relation to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197). On 16 June in Strasbourg, a high-level Conference will take place to mark the 10th anniversary of the opening for signature of this ground-breaking Treaty.

To date, 43 European countries have ratified this Convention, including Belarus, which as you know is not a Council of member States, which established GRETA - an effective and independent monitoring mechanism controlling the implementation of the obligations contained in the Convention.

GRETA has so far evaluated the policies in 39 countries, and concluded that much progress has been made. But still much more needs to be done.

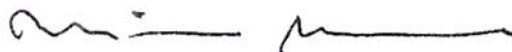
In order to reach our goal, we need to continue to ensure a pan-European response to human trafficking challenges, using the tools provided by international treaties, particularly the Council of Europe's Anti-trafficking Convention.

Over recent years a growing number of States which are not members of the Council of Europe have also expressed interest and indeed have acceded to this Convention. This positive development underlines the value of the standard-setting activities of the Council of Europe internationally.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of this important Treaty, I would urge your country to take the necessary steps towards the signature and ratification of this important Convention without delay. I am aware that the Russian Federation has signed the Programme of Co-operation between CIS Member States against Trafficking in Persons. I would be grateful for confirmation of your intentions at the earliest opportunity.

The involvement of all Council of Europe member States is particularly important for safeguarding the sustainability of these mechanisms.

Yours sincerely,



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