

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE  
LA PROTECTION DES ENFANTS CONTRE LA VIOLENCE SEXUELLE



## High Level Cross-Regional Meeting on the Protection of Children from Sexual Violence

co-organised by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the Council of Europe

**Strasbourg, 18-19 June 2015**

### **Closing remarks by Marja Ruotanen, Director of Human Dignity and Equality 19 June 2015**

Excellences,  
Dear participants,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

These two days have offered a unique opportunity to plunge in stimulating discussions and exchanges between participants from different regions on how we can develop further progressive strategies, policy frameworks, legislation and good practices to prevent and eliminate sexual abuse and exploitation of children across the world.

I truly feel empowered by the multifaceted contributions from all of you and I feel confident that together we are on the right track and a step ahead in achieving a future where the rights of children to freedom from violence – in particular sexual violence – are a reality for every child.

On behalf of the Council of Europe, I would like to thank you all for your strong commitment to achieving a violence free world for children, for your generosity in sharing you experiences – successful ones as well as challenging ones - and last but not least for making the long journey to Strasbourg.

A special thank YOU goes to the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations on Violence against Children – Ms Marta Santos Pais - for our long-standing partnership and for entrusting us in hosting the 5<sup>th</sup> Cross Regional Meeting together with her and her team. It has been a true pleasure for us.

A warm thank you also to the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Ms Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, for partnering, guiding and supporting us, yet again.

As exemplified by the inspiring and sometimes thought-provoking debate in the last two days, the Council of Europe is as committed as ever to continue contributing to global and regional efforts to combat all forms of violence against all children, and in particular to fight sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children.

In the Council of Europe, we will continue our work to act as a regional initiator and coordinator of initiatives to eliminate all violence against children in Europe. As the European forum for the follow up of the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children we will continue to support the mandate of the Special Representative, as well as the UN Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

Thank you all once again for participating and for continuing our joint journey to end all forms of violence against children. I look forward to our steps together.  
Thank you.