



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

Office of the Special Representative and
Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings

Co-sponsored by the



World Health
Organization

**Expert Meeting
On Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the Removal of Organs**

HIGHLIGHTS

6-7 July 2020
Zoom VTC



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The views, opinions, conclusions and other information expressed in this document are not necessarily endorsed by the OSCE, the OHCHR and the WHO.

Introduction

Despite being specifically mentioned in the internationally-recognized definition of trafficking in human beings (THB)¹, trafficking in human beings for the purpose of the removal of organs (THB/OR) remains one of the most unknown and least addressed forms of human trafficking globally. UNODC's Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018 underlines that "trafficking for organ removal is primarily detected in North Africa, Central and South-Eastern Europe, and Eastern Europe"², suggesting that the OSCE region is not immune from this form of human trafficking. While the number of identified victims of human trafficking for organ removal remains limited³, evidence suggests that this form of trafficking is perpetrated by organized criminal networks able to operate over prolonged periods of time with high numbers of victims before being caught⁴. Moreover, trafficking in human beings for the removal of organs is reported to be a highly lucrative form of human trafficking⁵. In addition, it is reported to be an age-specific and gendered crime, affecting adult males the most⁶.

Given that trafficking in human beings for the removal of organs remains a persistent challenge that requires further policy action, the Office of the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (OSR/CTHB) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) co-organized an Expert Meeting on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the Removal of Organs. The event was co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO). The Expert Meeting gathered legal, criminal justice, medical and anti-trafficking experts and academics from 20 OSCE

¹ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) provides in Article 3(a) that:

" 'Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or **the removal of organs**;" [emphasis added]

² UNODC, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018, p. 11.

³ UNODC, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018 notes that "Over the last 13 years, UNODC has collected information on about 700 victims of trafficking in persons for removal of organs detected in 25 countries as compared to 225,000 victims of trafficking in persons for all other purposes."

⁴ UNODC, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018, p. 30.

⁵ UNODC, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018, p. 39, and <https://conductscience.com/global-data-on-human-trafficking/> (accessed on 25 March 2020).

⁶ UNODC, Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018 suggests that 1% of male victims of trafficking globally suffered from trafficking for organ removal.

Participating States and Partners for Co-operation as well as international organizations to discuss the OSCE region's response to THB/OR and ways of enhancing that response through raising awareness, increasing political profile and building capacity of the stakeholders involved.

The meeting's two intensive days fostered exchange on the root causes for THB/OR and the need to improve methods of victim identification. The meeting also facilitated a dialogue on practical methods of improving national responses to THB/OR by sharing positive developments and successful techniques for identifying instances of THB/OR and strengthening domestic transplantation systems to reduce the demand for THB/OR and trafficked organs.

The Expert Meeting participants underlined the need for enhanced regional and international co-operation to ensure the effective investigation and prosecution of THB/OR due to the often-transnational nature of the crime. They highly praised the event as a unique platform for such thematic dialogue on an under-reported and often overlooked aspect of THB and noted the need to implement its recommendations within national and regional anti-trafficking efforts.

Welcoming and Opening Remarks

Valiant Richey, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, **Yury Boychevko**, Chief Anti Racial Discrimination, OHCHR, **Mariângela Simão**, Assistant Director-General Access to Medicines and Health Products, WHO delivered the welcoming and opening remarks.

The high-level speakers unanimously acknowledged the importance of the event as THB/OR is not well understood as a form of THB, and is characterized by limited visibility into existing cases, difficulty with victim identification, and challenges associated with determining the degree of exploitation of the donor. They collectively emphasized the importance of gathering data from across the spectrum of stakeholders to inform effective policies on prosecution, prevention and victim assistance. It was particularly stressed that THB/OR is a form of trafficking which impacts the most vulnerable in society, who either have no choice but to sell organs or are forced to do so through violence or other means of coercion. The effect of various geopolitical and socioeconomic crises, including the impact of COVID-19, was also raised as exacerbating the inequalities within society, which may in turn negatively affect THB/OR.

The speakers raised the strong stance taken by the international community against the commercialization of the human body and THB/OR through legal instruments and other tools, including:

- Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000);
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography;

- Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine;
- 2003 OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, its 2005 and 2013 Addenda;
- UN General Assembly resolution on “Strengthening and promoting effective measures and international cooperation on organ donation and transplantation to prevent and combat trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal and trafficking in human organs”; and
- WHO Guiding Principles on Human Cell, Tissue and Organ Transplantation.

Additionally, the need for well-developed and robust national transplantation systems to cover the demand in donated organs and therefore reduce the recourse to THB/OR and trafficked organs was emphasized. Recognition of this issue reinforced the collective call for collaboration across stakeholder groups, both domestically and internationally, to reinforce national systems and strengthen methods of data sharing.

Session 1 – Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the Removal of Organs: Root Causes, Scope and Legal Frameworks

Session 1 was moderated by **Tetiana Rudenko**, Senior Co-ordination Advisor, OSCE OSR/CTHB, with **Zoi Sakelliadou**, Criminal Justice & Crime Prevention Officer, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), **Youla Haddadin**, Senior Advisor on Trafficking in Persons, OHCHR, **Efstratios Chatzixiros**, Consultant on Transplantation of organs, tissues and cells, WHO, **Petya Nestorova**, Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe (CoE) Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, **Ashot Khachatryan**, Judge of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia, **Dina Dominitz**, National Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinator (Israel), and **Mehmet Haberal**, Rector of Başkent University Turkey and current President of The Transplantation Society (TTS), featured as session speakers.

The discussion focused on the scale and root causes of THB/OR as well as the legal frameworks governing the international and national responses to the phenomenon. It covered the hidden nature of the crime and the sophisticated methods employed by traffickers, taking advantage of limited data sharing between jurisdictions and unclear legal frameworks, creating challenges in prosecuting the crime under existing anti-trafficking statutes. The session also examined the way international legal instruments and high-level platforms of international organizations might be helpful to address THB/OR, including in distinguishing THB/OR from trafficking in human organs and other related issues, and the pull factors associated with the crime, such as the economic vulnerability of victims and poor domestic transplantation systems.

The key points raised during the session include:

- The international legal frameworks governing THB/OR and trafficking in organs are separate and distinct, with THB/OR a specifically enumerated form of THB as listed within the Palermo Protocol. Beyond the global agreements, regional instruments,

including the CoE Convention and the EU Directive, provide for THB/OR as a form of trafficking for States within the OSCE area.

- THB/OR remains the least reported form of trafficking, accounting for only 2% of identified cases of THB. It is, however, a form of THB that is increasing, particularly in conflict areas where displaced population may be vulnerable to exploitation. An estimated 5-10% of kidney transplants are related to THB/OR.
- Despite previous efforts at data collection, more data is needed to fully assess the scale of the phenomenon, both globally and within the OSCE region. Additional research should be undertaken to quantify the number of victims and size of the markets of THB/OR.
- International organ trade, which might involve THB/OR, was described as being broadly conducted by four different methods⁷, varying based on the location of the recipient and donor and their travel to and from jurisdictions. The extra-territorial nature of the crime, which has reduced knowledge and awareness of the act within some States, is one of the key factors limiting the successful identification of victims and prosecution of traffickers, as is the sophistication of trafficking networks engaged in this activity.
- Demand for THB/OR originates from the unavailability of transplantation programmes, the lack of government support for those programmes, and the lack of accessibility to the programmes that do exist with the supply of organs broadly insufficient to meet demand. This leads to victims of THB/OR becoming exploited due to their extreme economic vulnerabilities and the creation of tourism for the purpose of organ transplantation.
- THB/OR is a demographically targeted crime. It is highly gendered, primarily affecting adult men, who account for two-thirds of identified victims. Female victims are also targeted for gendered reasons, often being trafficked for gender-specific tissues and cells.
- Combating THB/OR should be done through a human rights-based approach that is victim-centered and trauma-informed, ensuring adequate support for victim identification and assistance. The desire for a single international instrument to outline this approach and obligation for States was raised as a potential positive development of the legal framework which could increase harmonization of legislation between jurisdictions.
- Information sharing between States and amongst state parties is a primary obstacle to victim identification and an effective law enforcement response. In most States, medical professionals and other actors do not have a positive legal obligation to inform law enforcement if they suspect an individual has undergone an organ transplantation abroad or observe other possible indicators of THB/OR. Limited data sharing within national systems, and the absence of comprehensive information on donors, recipients and transplantations within the States also hinders prevention and identification of THB/OR.

⁷ Yosuke Shimazono, 'Global situation: mapping transplant tourism.' World Health Organization, Second Global Consultation on Human Transplantation, March 28–30, 2007, Geneva
https://www.who.int/transplantation/publications/ReportGlobalTxConsultation_March_2007.pdf

- Unclear legal standards and lack of training on the part of law enforcement leads to failures in qualifying the crime as a form of trafficking. National legislation must be altered to reflect THB/OR as a form of exploitation so that elements of the crime can be properly identified as criminal acts.
- States should be encouraged to undertake national reviews of their organ transplantation and anti-trafficking systems to better inform an effective domestic policy response. This response should prioritize capacity building for law enforcement and medical practitioners to sensitize them to THB/OR, and increased assistance provided to survivors.
- Criminal liability for THB/OR should be extended beyond the direct trafficker to include brokers, medical staff, legal personnel and financial intermediaries, in order to encompass the entire trafficking chain. Positive obligations on medical staff to report suspected instances of THB/OR or tourism for the purpose of organ transplantation should also be introduced.
- Improved access to legal and ethical forms of organ donation was stressed as a necessary component of any response to THB/OR by reducing the demand for tourism for the purpose of organ transplantation. As per WHO guiding principles, donation from deceased persons should be developed to its maximum therapeutic potential and national systems must be strengthened in order to avoid the inherent risks to live donors.

Discussion on ways to increase the political profile of and legislative response to trafficking in human beings for the removal of organs

The second discussion within Session 1 was moderated by **Efstratios Chatzixiros**, Consultant on Transplantation of organs, tissues and cells, WHO, with

Kristof Van Assche, Research Professor in Health Law and Kinship Studies, Department of Law, Antwerp University (Belgium), **Robert Walsh**, Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Transplantation, **Gamal Saadi**, Professor of Internal Medicine and Nephrology, Cairo University (Egypt), President of Egyptian Transplantation Society (ETS), **Andriy Kravchenko**, Department to Combat Crimes Related to Trafficking in Human Beings, National Police of Ukraine, **Iris Visser**, National Police (Netherlands), **Ana Pires Silva**, Legal and Ethical Adviser of the Portuguese Institute of Transplantation; National Focal Point on Transplant-Related Crimes: Expert of the European Committee on Organ Transplantation (CD-P-TO), and **Marisa Herson**, Professor in Ethics, Deakin University (Australia) and General Secretary - World Union of Tissue Banking Associations (WUTBA) featured as session speakers.

The conversation focused on the current trends and patterns regarding THB/OR observed at the national and regional levels, the ways to increase understanding and political will to combat THB/OR, and the challenges and lessons learnt in translating the provisions of the international legal instruments to address THB/OR into the national laws and policies. The speakers further discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on THB/OR.

The session presented the following considerations:

- Domestic legislation governing the prosecution of THB/OR needs to be altered to better enable prosecutors to prove elements of trafficking, including subtle means of coercion such as abuse of a position of vulnerability. Laws which penalize any illegal organ removal or related offences to the same extent as THB/OR could be an effective legal remedy to achieve this aim.
- Legislation governing THB and THB/OR should also provide priority to the THB framework which prioritizes the non-punishment principle and the provision of victim assistance, so as to minimize the risk of prosecuting victims of THB/OR who serve as donors.
- National transplantation systems should enact a strict regulatory regime, which operates a controlled list of all patients currently seeking or awaiting an organ transplantation, so that medical professionals and law enforcement can easily identify when a patient has been removed from the list without having a domestic transplantation, which will provide additional clarity on potential instances of tourism for the purpose of organ transplantation.
- Procedures governing the consent for living organ donations should highlight the voluntary nature of such donations and mandate that all living donors be informed that it is a crime to receive any financial benefit for donating an organ.
- States should institute policies and procedures which encourage altruistic organ donation as well as deceased organ donation, encouraging the establishment and regulation of unrelated organ donation. Engaging with community and religious leaders can play an important role in increasing public awareness and acceptance of organ donation.
- Co-operation between THB authorities, including National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators and Rapporteurs, and transplantation officials should be established so that data on THB/OR and suspected victims and recipients can be shared between all relevant stakeholders. Further methods of educating medical practitioners about the risks and indicators of THB/OR, including in States with highly developed transplantation systems, should be pursued.
- Medical codes of ethics should be amended to mandate that potential instances of THB/OR and tourism for the purpose of organ transplantation be reported to law enforcement, without compromising their deontological duties (medical confidentiality). This change in medical codes of ethics should be partnered with a mechanism for communication with law enforcement to report suspected cases (e.g. Standard Operating Procedures). Medical practitioners should also be provided with indicators to help identify instances of THB/OR.
- Legal systems currently allow for the sale of human tissues and cells that would otherwise fall under the standard of THB/OR in the event the transaction involved a solid organ. Legislation covering THB/OR should therefore be examined to consider the potential inclusion of the sale of tissues and cells which involve donors undertaking medical procedures they would otherwise not undergo.

- Political will and awareness of THB/OR can be generated through the sharing of victim testimonials and shedding light onto the workings of the organized criminal groups engaged in THB/OR, to further educate law enforcement, prosecutors and judges on how to identify and respond to potential instances of the crime.
- Donation and transplantation have suffered a major decrease due to COVID-19 pandemic, which might lead to an increased demand for organs. Due to travel restrictions, however, there might also be a decrease in transplant tourism. Nevertheless, risks for vulnerable populations to fall victim to THB/OR domestically remain as the root causes of THB/OR, which include extreme economic vulnerability, are likely to have been exacerbated.

Session 2 – Practical Response to Trafficking in Human Beings for the Removal of Organs: Challenges and Positive Practices in line with 3Ps Approach

Moderated by **Youla Haddadin**, Senior Advisor on Trafficking in Persons, OHCHR, Session 2 featured presentations from **Assya Pascalev**, Executive Director, Bulgarian Center for Bioethics, **Carla Bury**, Senior Multilateral Affairs Advisor, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (US), **Jonathan Ratel**, Senior Advisor on Prosecution, EUAM, Former Head of Kosovo's Special Prosecution Office (SPRK), **Beatriz Domínguez Gil**, Director, Organización Nacional de Trasplantes (Spain), **Christina Bain**, Visiting Researcher, Center for the Study of Europe, Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Boston University, Tech Against Trafficking Advisory Group, **Joseph Mari**, Founder of Project Organ; Director within the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) at Scotiabank (Canada), and **Vasileios Georgiadis**, Department of Combating Human Trafficking, Subdirectorate of Countering Organized Crime and Human Trafficking of the Hellenic Police (Greece).

The session focused on the modus operandi in cases of THB/OR as well as legal and practical challenges and lessons learnt in investigating and prosecuting THB/OR. Particular attention was paid to the specific needs of the victims of THB/OR and the ways they might be addressed by the national anti-trafficking mechanisms. Moreover, the speakers also shared their views on the measures to prevent THB/OR, including to address supply and demand.

The key observations of the session include:

- States should seek to enable or strengthen deceased donation systems and to institute complimentary efforts to expand the domestic donor pool for solid organs by allowing programmes for controlled paired donation. In general, living donors should be genetically, legally or emotionally related to their recipients.
- Travel for transplantation should take place under the auspices of international co-operation programmes or formal arrangements between referral centers and the medical locations where the transplantation procedure will take place.
- Indicators developed during the European Commission funded HOTT project as well as other tools, e.g. UNODC assessment toolkit for trafficking in persons for organ

removal, might be shared and utilized by relevant national stakeholders, including civil society organizations to develop tailored national tools.

- Victims should be the focus of any response to THB/OR, with States utilizing a human rights-based, victim-centered and trauma-informed approach. This should seek to minimize the re-traumatization associated with the criminal justice process and empower survivors. Front line responders, law enforcement and medical practitioners should be trained on how to implement these approaches so they can properly assist identified victims, including through appropriate interview methods.
- States should consider establishing legislation that promotes extra-territorial jurisdiction in instances of THB/OR and trafficking in organs, so that nationals who partake in trans-border THB/OR can be prosecuted upon return.
- Criminal liability for medical professionals should be established in instances where they acted with the knowledge that the donor of the organ being transplanted was a victim of THB/OR. A case was discussed in Kosovo whereby medical practitioners were charged with a crime after being complicit in trafficking persons for the purpose of the removal of organs.
- Governments and relevant stakeholders should establish a framework and mechanisms for medical practitioners to communicate directly with law enforcement that allows for non-anonymized information to be transferred. This communication tool should adopt a multi-agency approach so that all relevant stakeholders can best implement their mandates as relates to THB/OR.
- States are encouraged to consider establishment of National Focal Points for Transplant Related Crimes. States with National Focal Points for Transplant Related Crimes should utilize that network to share and analyze data and information on the scale of THB/OR to better inform policy responses. Data sharing between national transplantation agencies should also be promoted to help identify potential instances of THB/OR.
- National health authorities and private insurance providers should adopt policies banning the reimbursement of transplantation procedures conducted abroad if THB/OR or trafficking in organs is suspected. Upon their return, patients who underwent a transplantation abroad should be provided the necessary care, though should also be required to register the relevant information about their procedure to the appropriate transplantation authorities.
- Better education of prospective organ recipients should be conducted to reduce potential demand for THB/OR. Transplantation candidates should be counseled as to the effects of a transplant, and the dangers associated with an illegitimate transplant procedure, including unscreened organs and insufficient post-procedure care, as well as the impact THB/OR has on victims.
- Partnerships between law enforcement, anti-trafficking stakeholders, medical professionals, financial intelligence units (FIUs) and financial service providers should be developed to help utilize anti-money laundering (AML) processes to spot suspicious financial transactions linked to THB/OR, including identifying potential offenders through adverse media searches. Developing the capacity to understand and spot indicators for THB/OR within financial service providers and FIUs in particular is critical in addressing the transnational nature of the crime.

- National anti-trafficking stakeholders should foster further engagement with financial service providers, including those specializing in financial technologies such as cryptocurrencies, to help increase their understanding and monitoring of suspicious transactions that could be related to instances of THB/OR.
- Investigations of THB/OR need to be conducted in a thorough manner which allows for the entire organized criminal organization to be properly mapped and assessed. A case in Greece was discussed which demonstrated the sophisticated nature of the criminal operation and its interconnectedness with both traffickers and medical professionals. To successfully address the crime, law enforcement must have sufficient understanding of all its elements.

Discussion on ways to enhance the response to trafficking in human beings for the removal of organs as related to: Raising awareness and building capacity of the stakeholders involved

The discussion following a technical break was moderated by **Tetiana Rudenko**, Senior Co-ordination Advisor OSR/CTHB OSCE, with **Gilad Erlich**, Prosecutor, State Attorney Office, Ministry of Justice (Israel), **Mirela Busic**, National Transplant Co-ordinator, Department for Special Health Care and Transplantation, Ministry of Health (Croatia), **Mohannad Dweikat**, International consultant on Trafficking in Persons, former Head of the police counter-trafficking unit (Jordan), **Lyalya Gabbasova**, Assistant to the Minister of Health (Russian Federation), **Sergiu Russu**, Head of the Anti-Trafficking Section of the General Prosecutor's Office (Moldova), **Francis L. Delmonico**, Chief Medical Officer, New England Organ Bank (NEOB), Professor of Surgery in Harvard Medical School at the Massachusetts General Hospital; Pontifical Academy of Sciences (US / Holy See), **Axel Rahmel**, Medical Director, German Organ Transplantation Foundation, **Frederieke Ambagtsheer**, Assistant Professor, Internal Medicine, Transplantation & Nephrology, Erasmus MC (Netherlands) featured as session speakers.

This discussion focused on the practical challenges in combating THB/OR that should be prioritized in awareness raising and capacity building efforts; the ways to raise awareness about THB/OR among front line practitioners, at risk groups and communities at large; and the scope and scale of capacity building efforts which might be beneficial for health care practitioners, law enforcers, judiciary and the broader range of anti-trafficking stakeholders to enhance the response to THB/OR at the national and local level. Speakers also discussed at length the need for broader forms of co-operation between law enforcement and medical practitioners across jurisdictions, and the need to enact sufficient oversight mechanisms for organ donation and transplantation facilities and processes. The positive role of civil society organizations and a multi-disciplinary approach to capacity building were also mentioned.

The key considerations of the session include:

- The 2010 WHO Guiding Principles on Human Cell, Tissue and Organ Transplantation should be updated to bring it in line with existing best practice in the area of THB/OR and provide additional clarity for States in the drafting of national legislation that allows for additional control over the processes of organ donation and transplantation. This

should be aligned with UN General Assembly Resolution 71/322, “Strengthening and promoting effective measures and international cooperation on organ donation and transplantation to prevent and combat trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal and trafficking in human organs” (A/RES/71/322) which outlines methods of strengthening co-operation in the area of THB/OR and mechanisms for oversight of medical facilities that undertake transplantation procedures.

- Changes to domestic legal frameworks should be made to increase the ability of law enforcement, prosecutors and the judiciary to investigate, prosecute and convict individuals involved in THB/OR. Legal statutes should account for the organized nature of the criminal groups involved in THB/OR and respective burden of proof on the prosecution.
- States should consider developing transplantation registries, including registries of donors and recipients to increase transparency in transplantations. Domestic law should be adjusted to provide for the audit of transplantation facilities and transplantation registries to identify irregularities and potential instances of THB/OR and trafficking in organs.
- The importance of the ratification and implementation of the CoE Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs was stressed as a significant step States can take to improve their legal frameworks and generate political visibility into THB/OR.
- The importance of civil society organizations (CSOs) in identifying challenges present in the field and victims of THB/OR has been overlooked in some jurisdictions. CSOs should be empowered to collect data, as well as identify and assist victims.
- Further awareness needs to be created on the scale and impact of THB/OR. While many States do not report instances of THB/OR, this lack of identification of victims and cases may be the result of insufficient training and education on the crime. National Anti-Trafficking Co-ordinators or equivalent mechanisms are recommended to foster the development and implementation of multi-agency capacity building efforts on THB/OR.
- Co-operation between law enforcement and transplantation professionals in different jurisdictions should be enhanced to increase knowledge and awareness of THB/OR. The example of the Declaration of Istanbul Custodian Group and its 2016 meeting was raised as a mechanism that has helped foster additional capacity for identifying and prosecuting instances of THB/OR outside the borders of the State of the organ recipient.
- Law enforcement should undertake training on evidence collection in THB/OR cases, including using electronic data methods, which often involve the online recruitment of victims. Training should also be devised for medical practitioners on how to report knowledge of an illegal event, and the indicators of THB/OR.
- Agencies responsible for investigating THB/OR should meet regularly with medical practitioners engaged in organ transplantation to increase their knowledge of relevant laws and regulations as well as receive information on potential victims of THB/OR and recipients of organs from trafficked donors.

Closing Remarks

Youla Haddadin, Senior Advisor on Trafficking in Persons, OHCHR, **Efstratios Chatzixiros**, Consultant on Transplantation of organs, tissues and cells, WHO, and **Valiant Richey**, OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings delivered the conference closing remarks.

In concluding the expert meeting, the speakers reiterated their gratitude towards the hosts and co-organizers of the event as well as the conference speakers and participants. The two-day discussion proved the need for adopting a human rights-based approach towards combating THB/OR and the importance of co-operation across jurisdictions and stakeholders, including those not normally engaged on issues pertaining to THB. Collective agreement was expressed over a need to do more to enhance political will within national systems and to mitigate the root causes of THB/OR, including by improving domestic transplantation structures and their oversight mechanisms. A belief that the international legal framework governing THB/OR should be updated to provide more guidance to States was also shared amongst the speakers.