



**U.S. COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE**  
**(Helsinki Commission)**  
**Rep. Chris Smith, Co-Chairman**

October 4, 2014

Members of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly  
Assembled at the 2014 Fall Meeting in Geneva

Dear colleagues,

As the Special Representative to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on Human Trafficking, it is my responsibility to speak out against recent drastic cuts in OSCE budgeting to fight human trafficking.

**Just a few months ago, as part of a last minute deal to get agreement on a budget after almost six months of acrimonious negotiations, the OSCE's resources to combat trafficking in persons were cut by almost half.** All of ODIHR's positions to combat trafficking were cut, and the OSCE Special Representative on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings is now seconded, rather than paid out of the regular unified budget.

Tragically, the message this drastic cut sends to each participating and partner state is that the OSCE no longer believes combating trafficking in persons is a priority. This is mistaken. Just last December in Kyiv, our governments adopted a strong addendum to the OSCE Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings—and the OSCE as an institution took on new commitments to lead the way in the fight against human trafficking. The drastic cut is not a considered policy decision, and certainly not a wise one.

I have been vigorously pressing the U.S. State Department to increase U.S. funding to the OSCE, and in particular for resources to combat the horror of human trafficking, and I will continue to do so.

Governments have just begun negotiations for the 2015 OSCE budget. **I urgently ask that you press your governments to see that funding is restored for OSCE positions and programs to combat trafficking in persons.**

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, Member of Congress  
Co-Chairman