



## HELSINKI COMMISSION HEARING

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UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON  
SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

# Testimony :: Hon. Laura Richardson

Member of Congress - U.S. House of Representative

Chairman Cardin and Chairman Hastings, thank you for convening this very important legislative hearing this morning on the 2010 Trafficking in Persons Report (“TIP”) published by the State Department in May of this year.

Let me also thank our witnesses for being here:

- Ambassador Luis Cde Baca, Director of the State Department’s Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons
- Dr. Maria Grazia Giammarinaro of Italy, the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
- Jolene Smith, the co-founder and CEO of Free the Slaves, the highly-regarded anti-trafficking NGO, and
- Holly Burkhalter, Vice President for Government Relations of International Justice Mission, another highly regarded NGO

Mr. Chairmen, thank you for including me as a member of the delegation that travelled to Vienna, Austria last February to participate in the Mid-Winter Meeting of the European Parliamentary Assembly. With your support it was at that meeting that I met Dr. Giammarinaro and had the opportunity to share with our European colleagues my firm belief that:

“human trafficking is a problem across the globe, in the United States, in my home state of California, and even in the 37th Congressional District, which I am privileged to represent in Congress.”

In particular, I urged the Parliamentary Assembly to give greater emphasis to the subject of labor trafficking beyond the agriculture sector. Specifically, I recommended that the following actions be taken:

1. Expansion of efforts to identify victims of labor trafficking in non-agriculture sectors such as manufacturing;

2. The OSCE and its Special Representative convene a meeting to consider ways and means to combat labor trafficking in the manufacturing sector;
3. Develop a partnership with the private sector to assist in the identification and apprehension of unscrupulous employers; and
4. Develop an official certification mechanism to reward good labor practices.

I am pleased that these suggestions were well received and that progress was made in the area of combating human trafficking at the Annual Meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly last week in Oslo, Norway. I regret that I was not able to join you in Oslo but I look forward to continuing our work together in the future.

### 2010 Trafficking in Persons Report

I wish to extend my appreciation and thanks Ambassador Luis diBaca and his colleagues at the State Department for their exceptionally fine work in compiling the 2010 TIP Report. It is remarkably detailed and comprehensive in its scope and breadth. It is also sobering in its findings that while much progress has been made in the 10 years the Department has been publishing these annual reports, much work remains to be done. Consider the following findings from this year's report:

- Around the world there are more than 12.3 million adults and children are in forced labor, bonded labor, and forced prostitution;
- 56 percent of these victims are women and girls;
- \$32 billion annual trade for the traffickers
- Worldwide nearly 2 out of every 1,000 persons are trafficking victims; (in Asia and the Pacific it is 3 out of every 1,000)
- There are 62 countries that have yet to convict a trafficker
- There are 104 countries without laws, policies, or regulations to prevent the deportation of trafficking victims

Perhaps the most disturbing trend of all is the increasing feminization of labor trafficking, which was once thought of as the male counterpoint to sex trafficking of women. But the 2010 TIP Report documents "women, like their brothers, husbands, and sons, are trapped in fields, factories, mines, and restaurants, often suffering the dual demons of forced labor and sexual assault."

Clearly, we have much work to do rid the world of the scourge of human trafficking. Having accurate and reliable data to measure the extent of our progress and the distance we have yet to travel is an essential first step.

The State Department's TIP Reports are the U.S. government's principal diplomatic tool to engage foreign governments on human trafficking and are the world's most comprehensive resource of governmental anti-human trafficking efforts. The fact that the United States conducts these studies and publishes the results reflects our nation's commitment to global leadership on this critically important human rights issue.

Again, thank you Mr. Chairmen for convening this hearing and I look forward to hearing from Ambassador Cde Baca, Dr. Giammarinaro, Ms. Smith, and Ms. Burkhalter.

Thank you and I yield back my time.