



## Welcome and Introduction

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Seminar on

*Trafficking with a Special Focus on Children*

Casina Pio IV, Vatican City, 27 April 2015

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I would like to welcome you all to the Casina Pio IV, headquarters of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences. My special greeting goes to Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden and to Ambassador Lars-Hjalmar Wide and I would also like to thank Cardinal Peter Turkson, who is here to represent the Holy See. Today we also have the honour of the presence of the two Presidents of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Professor Margaret Archer, and of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, Professor Werner Arber.

We are well aware of Her Majesty's longstanding commitment - and that of her country - in the fight against human trafficking, in particular of children.

We are also following very closely the Swedish Model of legislation, which, for the first time, criminalizes the clients of prostitution. We are delighted with its vastly recognised success.

Pope Francis considers human trafficking, prostitution and forced labour as forms of modern slavery and crimes against humanity. In 2013 he sent me a brief note indicating that the Academy should focus its studies precisely on this topic. Since then, we have come a long way. Just last week we came back to the subject during our Plenary Session and I am sure that Margaret Archer will mention the recommendations and conclusions that came out of it. I therefore consider today's workshop as a decisive step in our commitment to Pope Francis and to all the world's people to eradicate these horrendous crimes. It is our intention to understand every aspect of them in detail and to help find the best practices to combat them.

We consider Queen Silvia, the people who have come with her and the representatives of our Academies here today the most authoritative figures to teach us about these crimes. I thus declare the workshop open, in the hope that we will arrive at a decisive contribution for the service of humanity and thank Her Majesty for choosing this venue to spread the word about her work in this field.