



## 2002 CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

*Informal presentation to OSCE delegations  
Vienna, 11 April 2002*

In order for the ODIHR's anti-trafficking work to be most effective, we strongly feel that increasing our information exchange and co-operation within the OSCE and with other relevant international organisations, governmental bodies and non-governmental organisations is of crucial importance. This co-operation results in complementary efforts avoiding duplication and maximising the use of limited resources to combat trafficking in human beings throughout the OSCE region. It also furthers the development of international and national standards to prevent trafficking, to prosecute perpetrators and, most importantly, to protect the human rights of victims.

When the ODIHR's Anti-Trafficking Unit last made an informal presentation to the OSCE delegations in July 2001, several delegations requested more information regarding our co-operation with other international actors. The following is a brief summary highlighting some of our key partnerships and activities in the first quarter of 2002, most of which are in addition to projects included on the ODIHR's implementation calendar. This is not meant to be a comprehensive list, but rather an indication of the diverse initiatives taken on by the ODIHR.

The **Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings (SPTF)** (<http://www.osce.org/odih/attf>) provides a forum wherein a number of different international organisations exchange information and expertise with the aim of improving co-ordination of their anti-trafficking initiatives in the Balkan region. The ODIHR has a new formal role together with the **Council of Europe (CoE)** co-ordinates the area regarding "Legislative Review and Reform". Moreover, the ODIHR co-operates with the CoE in its project on "Criminal Law Reform in South Eastern Europe" and supports these efforts through exchange of expertise and complementary political lobbying. In this field of activity, the ODIHR and CoE pursue a co-ordinated approach towards specific issues of legislative reform such as calling attention to the need for one country to address human rights concerns raised by the implementation of an ordinance, which deals with illegal border crossings.

Another significant partner in the field of legislative review and reform is the **American Bar Association/Central and East European Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI)**. The ODIHR together with the OSCE Mission to Moldova in co-ordination with the ABA/CEELI, CoE and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is supporting the Moldovan Government in its efforts to revise its Criminal Code and Criminal Procedure Code.

An ODIHR representative has participated in the last two annual meetings of the ABA/CEELI. Most recently, at the annual meeting held in Bratislava this year, an ODIHR representative presented at the breakout session on trafficking issues. Furthermore, ABA/CEELI has distributed the ODIHR's *Reference Guide for Anti-Trafficking Legislative Review* to its field offices in 23 countries and expressed interest in translating the guidelines therein into other languages such as Ukrainian.

It is within the SPTF framework that the ODIHR launched several anti-trafficking projects inter alia the joint project "Responses to Trafficking in Human Beings in South Eastern Europe" with the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** and the **United Nations Office of the High**

**Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)** in Sarajevo. This report is an assessment of the situation on trafficking, as well as all the activities of governmental, non-governmental and international actors and will serve as a basis for further SPTF strategies and policies. The report will be made available in the near future. Furthermore, ODIHR staff are also consulting directly with UNHCHR in Geneva, which is currently elaborating the “United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking.”

The ODIHR and OSCE Missions continue to co-operate closely with **IOM** in many areas such as raising awareness and assisting victims. In February, an ODIHR representative made a presentation at the “Expert Workshop on Counter-Trafficking Legislation Programme” organised by IOM-Almaty. The ODIHR also provided materials for the training and the ODIHR’s Grassroots Democracy Project Fund sponsored the participation of an expert from Moldova, where the OSCE Mission and ODIHR are supporting the government on legislative reform efforts.

Recognising the vital role **NGOs** play in preventing trafficking and assisting its victims, the ODIHR also collaborates closely with non-governmental organisations such as the **International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights** and La Strada organisations, which are working on the regional and international levels. Since it first began to work on trafficking issues in 1999, the ODIHR has supported **La Strada** efforts to prevent trafficking, to lobby for relevant reforms and to provide direct services to victims. Yet, the ODIHR is always looking for opportunities to create new partnerships to combat trafficking and recently has supported new NGO initiatives, which are emerging on the regional and national levels within the OSCE region.

For instance, earlier this year ODIHR staff served on the review panel for the selection of NGO partners that will work with the **International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX)** to implement its Regional Empowerment Initiative for Women (REIW) in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation and Serbia. The REIW seeks to empower women through job skills training and awareness raising on trafficking related issues. The ODIHR will continue to co-ordinate prevention efforts in the field with IREX and grassroots NGOs. More information on IREX’s anti-trafficking projects is available on-line at: [www.irex.org](http://www.irex.org).

From March 1-4, the ODIHR also provided support and expertise during the training seminar “Delivering Democracy: Organizing Resources to Create Secure Societies,” which was organised by the **National Democratic Institute** as part of its Central and Eastern Europe Regional Initiative. Held in Warsaw, Poland, the seminar brought together 22 women political activists from Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Montenegro. Seminar participants were provided information on trafficking in the region and their governments’ national plans of action. They participated in training sessions to enhance their political and advocacy skills in order to empower them to take on an active role to promote and further the fight against trafficking in the region. More information about the training and related initiatives will be made available on-line at: [http://www.ndi.org/worldwide/cee/regionalinitiative/regionalinitiative\\_women.asp](http://www.ndi.org/worldwide/cee/regionalinitiative/regionalinitiative_women.asp)

In closing it is important to note that the ODIHR is taking concrete steps to follow-up on the Berlin Conference “Europe Against Trafficking in Persons,” which focused on the response to trafficking in countries of destination. In addition to disseminating the conference report to key decisionmakers, the ODIHR is planning to launch a project in partnership with **Anti-Slavery International** to develop advocacy materials aimed at reforming national legislation in countries of destination. In order to strengthen this initiative, the ODIHR has increased its outreach and networking with NGOs in Western Europe, as well as with the **European Commission** and other relevant actors. As one Berlin Conference participant, Lord MacLennan of Rogart, recently stated in the British House of Lords: “We in Western Europe must take responsibility for the matter and, notwithstanding the complexity of delivering the results, make a serious commitment to deal with it. When we view the Government’s domestic legislation on trafficking, we shall bear in mind that it must not only deal with the repression of the offences but, in particular, with the protection of the human rights of the victims.”

ODIHR co-ordination and co-operative efforts to prevent and to address trafficking shall continue to prioritise the promotion and protection of the human rights of at-risk groups and victims.