

**Statement delivered by Ms. Brankica Grupković  
Assistant Federal Minister for Interior Affairs  
of the FR of Yugoslavia  
at the Informal Group on Gender Equality and Anti-Trafficking  
on actions taken by the FRY, 22 May 2002**

Madam Co-Chairs,

It is my pleasure to participate in the work of this meeting and to present the activities of the Yugoslav team to combat trafficking in human beings and achievements in the very first year of our work. In addition to the Federal team, we have a Coordinator at the level of Republic of Serbia and Montenegrin Anti-trafficking Team. It should be noted that Montenegrin team started its work earlier and it is planned that we will carry out our activities closer in future.

Perhaps there is no need to recall the old times, but I must say that during the previous regime the problems of trafficking and organized crime were completely denied, as it was the case with the of human rights in general. Therefore, the starting point was the need to tackle seriously the problem of organized crime, while on the other hand to respect the human rights and dignity of victims.

The FR Yugoslavia signed the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime with the additional protocols in December 2000, while the Federal Parliament ratified those documents in June last year. By signing relevant international documents Yugoslav Government has expressed the political will to respect the obligations arising from them. Above all, the obligation to prevent, investigate and prosecute cases in trafficking of human beings.

In order to fulfill our obligations, within the Yugoslav Team four Working groups were created, which are composed of governmental, non-governmental and international actors: 1. Prevention, awareness raising and Campaigning against trafficking, 2. Assistance to and protection of victims, 3. Amendment of the legislation and strengthening of law enforcement, 4. Collection of data research and evaluation.

The methodology of work was created with the help of Anti-trafficking Task Force of Stability Pact and the OSCE Mission to the FRY, while the financial support was provided by the Governments of Austria, Germany, Switzerland, USA, Netherlands, Canada and Greece. I would like to use this opportunity to thank them for this valuable assistance.

1. Within the Prevention Awareness raising WG, the media campaign “Open your eyes” was launched – with TV spots. Educational programs for female high-school students that include issues of prevention of trafficking, conflict resolution and violence against young girls are under way. Within the same project the SOS info hot-line was established with the main goal to disseminate information on the risk of trafficking in human beings. The compilation of the texts concerning trafficking in women was also published. Documentary movie was made. During this year there will be several other activities, starting from capacity building and prevention in Southern Serbia, education for journalists on trafficking and violence against women and municipal training for broad awareness. Concerning the root causes of the problem, there is a plan for the regional women’s empowerment initiative program.

2. The WG for the assistance to and protection of victims had the most challenging task. The first shelter for the victims was opened in Belgrade earlier this year where the necessary support for victims, including medical and psychological care, legal advice and social assistance are being provided. The Code of conduct of a shelter for trafficked woman was also prepared, while the referral mechanisms of trafficked persons - the target groups, source of information, the establishment of mobile teams, returning and reintegration mechanisms were identified.

Return and reintegration assistance that facilitates the safe and dignified return of trafficked persons and children stranded in Serbia and Montenegro are carried out from the last year by IOM.

3. Concerning the Legislation and law enforcement group, the new Federal Criminal law, that will contain the provision on trafficking and related crimes is prepared and will be presented to the Federal Parliament in May or June this year. The new Law on criminal procedure with the special provision on witness protection has been adopted and enforced. Several other laws are in the procedure such as Aliens’ law and Asylum law. The

intention is to build in the legislation the provisions that will enable the stay of repatriation for the victims during four weeks period and probably some special provisions on the stay of deportation for those who are willing to testify or to give the assistance in relating proceedings.

In November 2001, regional training on criminal law reform on trafficking in human beings in South East Europe was held. Several other trainings were held as well: Strengthening the cooperation of police, social institutions and NGO to build up mechanism for victims protection and educational program for the police officers working on prevention of trafficking. It is planned that a logistical support from the US State Department for the activities of the newly established law enforcement and Anti-trafficking task forces will be provided as well as their integration within regional activities. Later this year several other trainings are planned: training for representatives of judicial system and law enforcement, training for law enforcement representatives, judicial and NGOs and training for court judges who handle prostitution cases on trafficking related issues.

Within the law enforcement cooperation and coordination special regional awareness raising training for the police started in October last year.

4. Concerning the collection of data and research it is important to stress that the Regional clearing point was established in Belgrade. The regional Clearing point has the main task to increase the capacity and effectiveness for victim assistance and protection in the region, enhance the development and regional coordination of national referral mechanism and shelters, return and reintegration projects, ensure quality standards of return, reintegration and shelter projects and to provide relevant information exchange. NGOs are carrying out two projects, the first one that has already started, research on the media presentation of trafficking of women and the survey on trafficking in women.

In conclusion , I would like to once again to express my satisfaction for being able to exchange the experience with the colleagues from other OSCE participating States. We support the OSCE efforts in combating this dangerous and complex phenomenon and we wish the two Co-chairs of the Informal Group for Anti- Trafficking all possible success in their future work.