



DELEGATION OF ALBANIA

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

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Address of Ambassador Florent ÇELIKU
Head of the Albanian Delegation

Ms. Chairperson,

After 2002, Albania is not considered anymore as a suitable route for transiting victims; therefore, it is currently a country of origin, with tendency to a destination country. The closure of the maritime route in which speedboats were mostly used, diverted, on an opposite direction, both the internal and regional trafficking routes towards the north.

A very positive effect in the fight against organized crime in general and trafficking in persons in particular has had the law no. 9509, dated 03.04.2006 “On the Moratorium of vessels and boats”, which stops the use of dinghy in Albanian territorial waters for a period of three years for the main purpose of fighting illegal trafficking.

The number of trafficking cases has recently decreased considerably, due to a number of factors, such as the seriousness shown to address this phenomenon and the improved cooperation and coordination between police structures, both in the country and abroad, mostly with the Italian, Greek, Montenegrin and Macedonian. This progress has been widely recognized by the international community, including OSCE.

The Albanian Office of the National Coordinator on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings was established in November 2005. It is the first time that Albania has had an office with an exclusive anti-trafficking mandate reflecting the importance with which the Albanian Government takes this problem. The Office of the National Coordinator is the central point for coordinating the anti-trafficking efforts of the different government ministries, both at a national and international level.

In the Order of the General Director of State Police, dated 03.11.2006 on the “Procedures performed on Albanian and foreign citizens returned from other countries”, an important part is focused on the identification of victims of trafficking through interviewing them in the presence of border and migration police and anti-traffic police, representatives from the State Social Services and other relevant actors such as NGO-s in order to offer the necessary assistance for any identified case. Border and Migration Police have set up standard interviewing procedures, enter the relevant data in a single system and have started to set up the necessary logistic infrastructure. This good practice already initiated required further consolidation in order for the standards to be applied in all border crossing points.

Important instruments in the anti-trafficking efforts are the bilateral and multilateral agreements in the framework of international and national institutional cooperation. Albania has ratified the UN Convention on Transnational Crime and its supplementary Trafficking Protocol as well as the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings. Albania has also signed readmission agreements with several EU countries.

A prescreening procedure has been established and reception centers have been activated at the main border checkpoints for returnees and potential victims of trafficking by an order of the General Director of State Police. The prescreening procedures are being carried out by border and anti-trafficking police for returned, inadmissible and deported people from third countries to Albania. These procedures also help to identify victims and potential victims of trafficking at the border crossing points upon their return and refer them to police and social services that will follow them further.

A new law on foreigners is in the process of drafting and it will give the possibility to provide foreign victims of trafficking with temporary residence, thus, fulfilling international standards.

The Office of the National Coordinator on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings is currently focusing its attention on internal trafficking of women and children. To this end a number of measures have been taken:

The project “Second Chance” has been launched. It is run by the Ministry of Education and Science to encourage the education structures to readmit children who have dropped out of school as a result of their family situation.

A Joint Operational Regulation for Tourism Agencies that prohibits the sexual exploitation of women and children on hotel premises has been agreed with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports. The regulation was the product of negotiations between the Ministries of Interior, Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and OSCE Presence in Albania.

The Office of the National Coordinator on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings has taken steps to prevent trafficking by raising public awareness of this crime. It maintains open communication lines with nongovernmental organizations that develop and run awareness campaigns directed at the public, targeting mostly women and children. For example, TV awareness campaigns have been launched and brochures produced by foreign and Albanian consular staff to inform the public about the risks, likelihood and causes of trafficking in persons.

Additionally, an agreement has been signed with Ministry of Education and Science to include classes on trafficking in human beings in the school curriculum. Special classes have also been set up for children who have dropped out or do not attend school.

In order to assist the prevention of illegal migration an amendment to Article 298 to the Criminal Code has been approved by the Council of Ministers. Article 298 of the Criminal Code was approved by the Parliament in the Law no.9686, dated 26 February 2007.

Great efforts are being made within the structures of the Ministry of Interior and OSCE, the main supporting partner of this project, to finalize the establishment of, and activation of the database that will operate within the Responsible Authority. This system will enable representatives of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Labor and Centers for Protection of Victims of Trafficking to record cases of victims returned, referred, handled and protected in Albania.

Thank You.