



REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRIË

MINISTRIA PËR EVROPËN DHE PUNËT E JASHTME

## ALBANIAN MINISTRY FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

### OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting Warsaw, 11-22 September 2017

#### **Working session 11: Humanitarian issues and other commitments: combating trafficking in human beings, refugees and displaced persons, persons at risk of displacement**

---

Mr Moderator,

Albania fully supports and aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

The Albanian authorities put special attention to the prevention of the trafficking, as well as the protection and assistance to its victims, and welcomes the opportunity to share its experience within this session.

Following the ratification in 2002 of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two Additional Protocols and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in 2007, aware of the integrated and cross-dimensional approach needed to counter human trafficking in all its forms the efforts of the Albanian authorities have focused mainly on the completion of the national regulatory framework and putting in place appropriate national mechanisms at a central and regional level.

With a view on enhancing the effectiveness of cooperation on a nationwide level, the Government of Albania has established the following institutional mechanisms:

In 2005 the Office of the National Coordinator for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings responsible for coordinating all anti-trafficking activities within Albania was set up and a national referral mechanism was established. In the period 2006-2009 Albania established a Transnational Referral Mechanism in the framework of the Program to Support the Development of Transnational Referral Mechanisms for Trafficked Persons in South-Eastern Europe funded by USAID and implemented by ICMPD.

The Albanian government and its Ministry of Interior consider the fight against trafficking of human beings a high priority issue and has hence taken concrete measures to deal with it effectively as listed below:

- Improvement of the legal framework and its compliance with international law;
- Enhancement of the capacities of the anti-trafficking structures;
- Improvement of the processes for identifying victims of trafficking through a pro-active approach and the processes of their re-integration into society;
- Alleviating the dire phenomenon of human trafficking by raising the public awareness about the issue;
- Intensification of. The regional and international cooperation in the fight against trafficking.

In the meantime, in the *area of human trafficking*, significant achievements have been made in Albania during the past year as listed below:

1. The *establishment of some important cross-sectoral structures* for the co-ordination of anti-trafficking efforts. The main anti-trafficking structures currently in place in Albania are: the State Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings; the National Anti-trafficking Task-force; the Office of the National Coordinator for the Fight against Trafficking in Persons; the Responsible Authority for the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Trafficking; the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees.
2. The adoption of the *Fight Strategy against Human Trafficking* in 2014 and the *Action Plan 2014-2017*, with the purpose of increasing the number of proactive investigations of victims of trafficking, the purpose of identification, referral, assistance and reintegration of victims/potential victims of trafficking, which is being monitored by the Office of the National Anti-trafficking Coordinator
3. The approval of the *Action Plan for the Social and Economic Reintegration of Women and Girls Victims of Trafficking* in 2016 within the implementation of the *Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2017*;

4. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding "On the identification of cases of forced labor and trafficking with the intention of exploiting work of others" on October 2014;
5. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding "On the Establishment of a Task Force for Integrated Analysis of Outbound and Neglected Human Trafficking " in December 2015, in order to ensure a multi-institutional approach for a detailed review and quality improvement of anti-trafficking actions and for conducting an analysis of the criminal legislation on human trafficking;
6. The support for the employment of 12 social workers in non-state "Vatra" and "Next Vision" centers for 2015, and for the years 2016 and 2017 the employment of 24 social workers in "Different and Equal" centers, "Vatra" and "Other Vision";
7. The raising of the sensibilization and awareness of the public and the state institutions thru a number of significant activities for the community, such as: the National Summer Campaign; the Anti-Trafficking Month (in the framework of the European Anti-Trafficking Day) in the 12 districts of the country; information meetings at universities, high schools as well as elementary schools; compilation and dissemination of awareness materials, etc. All of these activities were made possible do to a specially accorded budget that the Ministry of Internal Affairs has granted to the Anti-Trafficking Directorate since 2014;

It is due to these measures and the increased capacity of our law-enforcement agencies that the fights against trafficking of human beings and the protection of victims of trafficking have seen major improvements.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to express appreciation for the fruitful cooperation with the OSCE Presence in Albania, whose support has been particularly important in regards to the training of human resources of our law enforcement structures, as well as different state and civil society stakeholders.

The UN Security Council Resolution 2331 which Albania has cosponsored recognizes that human trafficking represents a threat to international peace and security. Furthermore, it identifies the complex nexus that exists between trafficking of. Persons, transnational organized crime, conflict and terrorism. As the first action-oriented resolution of the Security Council in addressing this issue it was an important step forward.

During the last years we have intensified meetings with high-level political representatives from strategic points of view with such key countries as the United Kingdom, USA, Italy, France, etc. The main topics of these discussions have been the establishment and implementation of common approaches regarding modern slavery, assisted voluntary return and reintegration of victims of trafficking, and the problems associated with unaccompanied children.

At the regional level Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo signed last December have signed a *Joint Declaration* on cooperation against trafficking, expressing their commitment to ensure the application of unified procedures for the identification and protection of victims of trafficking, on intensification of cooperation in the fight against human trafficking and improved identification, referral and assisted return of victims or potential victims of trafficking, with a particular focus on children and similar.

In order to improve the protection, identification and referral of the victims/potential victims of trafficking, the Anti-Trafficking Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs is in the process of reviewing of the Standard Operating Procedures, including suggestions and comments from the members of the State Committee and the National Referral Mechanism.

Since the Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Persons and the Action Plan 2014-2017 end this year, measures are being taken to draft the Action Plan to Combat Trafficking of Persons for the period 2018- 2020.

Dear Madam Moderator,

Albania is committed and resolved to relentlessly fight against all the phenomena of trafficking and smuggling of human beings, to increase cross-border cooperation and to improve return procedures, to strengthen cooperation with all partners in terms of prevention activities and to sustain an effective partnership with the civil society and international organizations in ensuring the protection and reintegration of victims or potential victims of trafficking and smuggling.

Thank you for your attention.