



HDIM.DEL/44/06
3 October 2006

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
OFFICE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
2006 HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
Warsaw, 2 – 13 October 2006

TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Dear sir/madam, chairman/chairwoman,
Ladies and gentleman,

I am pleased to participate in the debate about Trafficking in Human Beings and to present numerous activities held by the Croatian Government in collaboration with non-governmental and international organizations for the purpose of controlling and combating the problem mentioned above.

The Republic of Croatia is dealing with this problem systematically and comprehensively. The Croatian Government has implemented the National Programme for Suppression of Trafficking in Person 2005 – 2008, as a strategic document that defines goals and aims that need to be achieved during that period. The document offers plans, which include certain measures and activities that need to be done in order to achieve its goals for every year of the period.

The comprehensiveness of this approach can be seen in different areas of dealing with the problem, for example: the development of legal framework, efficient victim identification and efficient discovering and prosecuting of the perpetrator, appropriate assistance to and

protection of the victim, education of certain groups, restoration of international collaboration and co-operation of the activities.

From the first of the October this year, the Republic of Croatia has implemented certain modifications and supplements of the Penal Code. According to those modifications, the Article 175 has been supplemented with new paragraph that states that a client who knowingly takes advantage of a person who is victim of human trafficking and its situation, or lets somebody else take advantage of that person is held responsible and shall be sentenced to imprisonment from three months up to three years.

Keeping in mind a tendency of growing number of minor victims and being aware of the fact that children as an especially vulnerable group seek a special approach and means of help and protection, the Croatian Government has reached the National Plan for Suppression of Trafficking in Children. Trafficking in children presents qualified form of trafficking in human beings and Penal Code for that crime predicts jail sentence for at least five to fifteen years. We need to emphasise that all the activities that are coming from mentioned plan are designed with a purpose of protecting the child best interest. The principles of the mentioned plan are protection of the child's best interest, non-discrimination, protection of the secrecy of child personal data, finding a solution while keeping in mind child s best interest, efficiency of the legal procedure, child's right to be informed and its safety.

I would especially like to enhance the role of civil society organisations in implementation of the policy for suppression in persons. I would like to emphasise the partnership that exists in Republic of Croatia between the National Committee for Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and civil society organisations that deal with the same issue. The non-governmental organisations gathered in network called Petra are included in realisation of all the activities defined by the National Plan and Programme as well as in shaping and forming the document mentioned above.

Their contribution in developing the whole system is exceptional. Being aware of the fact that trafficking in human beings is a form of internationally organised crime and realising the necessity of international co-operation between the countries that victims come from, transit countries and the countries where victims actually become victims in full sense of that word, I can proudly emphasise Croatia's participation in international and regional initiatives. Keeping all that in mind, I must express my content that this topic is being represented at meetings like this.

Thank you for your attention.