

**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
Alliance against Trafficking in Persons
Everyone has a Role: How to make a Difference Together
Vienna, 23-24 April 2018**

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Intro: Alex

Your Excellencies, dear Ambassador Jarbussynova, ladies and gentlemen

I would like to thank the Office of the Special Representative for inviting me to intervene in the Alliance Conference and my special gratitude goes to Alberto Andreani, for involving me in this project.

I have participated at 4 simulations; being a participant (I “played” lawyer as in the real life) in the first one in November 2016, and a member of the direction of the exercise in the following 3 editions, being two international (June and September 2017) and, the national Italian one in January 2018.

My involvement in the first simulation was rather coincidental.

At that time, I was involved in the planning and delivery of a series of trainings done by our NGO (UNHCR implementing partner): for our network of pro bono lawyers, the Slovak immigration police in the realm of the Border Monitoring and Access to the Territory project. We were also looking into the component of identifying trafficking in mixed migratory situations. I saw the Call, considered it very interesting, and have decided to apply.

Even after having studied diligently all legislative framework and documentation prepared for the simulation which was made part of the Call, I still did not really know, as strangely as it may seem, **what I was applying for. I was ready to play, I knew the name of the game, I understood that the authors wanted to create ideal legislative framework inspired by elements of good practises seen in the OSCE pS, but I had no idea what it would look like.**

So, let me very briefly summarise at least the main elements of our simulation training for you to better understand what are we going to talk about.

Simulation is **not a role play**, so the participants **do not know the script/storylines** (have a very limited knowledge of storyline).

Trainees work in teams according to their professional background and are expected to act as they would have acted in reality applying Dreamland’s legislative framework, **focusing on multi-agency cooperation and human rights**

based approach, and based on information input from the Direx. By their actions, they actually do shape the stories as the script is not carved in stone and may vary depending on their conduct.

The Teams are: NGO, CIU, LIU, FIU, PSS, Lawyers, Immigration Police, Asylum Authority.

Each team has a corresponding **HICON** (scriptwriter and Director of Segment), in the **DIREX**. Participants **do not communicate** with HICONS (Direx) and vice versa while playing, **only through the individual, joint and in plenary debriefings at the end of each day.**

Any team, which needs to communicate with a particular agency **not actually present in the simulation** (such as e.g. Tribunal for Minors) communicates with the WHITE CELL located in the Direx and vice versa.

HICONS inject messages to give a start to a concrete activity, in accordance with the storyline.

HICONS send corrective injects if there is no action and/or if the action severely deviates from the learning objective, or the actions may put the exercise considerably on hold, or even block the exercise.

ANTENNAS are the right hand of HICONS. They are specific to each team, and **assigned following a precise logic to each action to monitor the fulfilment of learning objectives and report live to the Direx** (Watsapp). On the basis of the input from Antennas, injections may be sent. Antennas do not communicate with the trainees during the play, only at debriefings.

ACTORS are the heart of the exercise. They **play characters** invented for the simulation (based on real trafficking cases). **Profiles of the characters vary.** Not everyone may be a trafficked person. It is up to the participants to discover and act accordingly.

Only actors communicate with the participants during the game, following their storyline, known to a perfection. They speak Dreamish (Poorish, Warlandish). Most of them in all 4 simulations were professionals working for Comune di Venezia, as well as students. They are trained by a professional Italian actress.

It is precisely them, who, together with the participants shape the game.

Now that I have given you some basic information on the skeleton and the processes, I would like to invite Thomas to tell you about his beginnings in the simulation exercise.

Thomas:

Esteemed participants, Ladies and gentlemen

Thank you Alex, for the introduction. I am grateful to the OSCE for this opportunity to come here and benefit from all the insight you provide as well as a chance to share my experience with the simulation based training with you.

One of my core responsibilities in real life work is conducting screening interviews with potential victims of trafficking.

Learnings from the training

I have been involved in 2 simulation based trainings. In September 2017 I was cast a director of the NGO Rights and Future. In the all Italian simulation in January of this year I was observer and played a small role of a trafficker.

Information sharing

At one point of the simulation an email ticked in. It was sent from The Virtual White Cell.

The content of the email was a report of recent outreach work conducted by an **external part of the NGO.** In other words **this unit was virtual.**

The report had names of individuals met and addresses of the places visited. As an NGO Director, I acknowledged the team's hard work and asked them to follow up on one or two issues. I got a reply saying that they all were going on vacation. That left me rather confused and **a few emails were exchanged back and forth. I seemingly failed to get it right.**

Then **an injection** was sent **from the DIREX hinting** that the information **could be of interest to other agencies. So I handed over the report to the law enforcement unit.** Sure enough the investigators were thrilled to receive this as it held vital information for their ongoing investigation.

So why did I need an injection from the Direx to do the obvious?

At the time I did not think that this information would have any particular relevance to other agencies. It did not point to any clear course of action. Secondly, I may have handed over the report too fast. I did not have the consent of the people whose names were in the report.

So how do we make sure that information is passed on to relevant agencies? How do we balance the need for exchanging information between agencies and at the same time honouring potential victims' right to informed consent as well as making their own decisions regarding their case?

Thomas to Alex: how did you view this situation from the Direx?

ALEX: I recall this episode very well Thomas (*my note only: inject 22.4, Action 22 SES*) This is Cruz Ramirez and Lightning McQueen moment in Cars 3, when you feel like: you have crashed, you have crashed....right?

I think the colleagues who were involved would agree with me that we had come to realise that:

- 1) the investigation was ongoing, you had in your care a minor trafficked person related to the report received. it was **not understood, that the message which was hinting you start the action came from the White Cell**, so the virtual agency, which led to some further confusion. There was no particular need for the email exchange there, but definitely there was a need to see your thinking on how to approach this report, how to initiate multiagency, and mainly **what data to share and how to preserve data protection, informed consent**, etc. All that was up to you. The idea was that email exchange starts with others, not necessarily with the White Cell. A corrective inject was subsequently sent by the HICON SOCIAL.
- 2) You acted as you would have usually acted in your real life. Until you attended the simulation of course.
- 3) For the Direx, the immediate lesson was, that **the understanding of the processes heavily influences the substance** in the simulation scenario. Participants need some time to **digest masses of information** literally thrown at them before and during the simulation, **including what White Cell is, which influences their choices. Processes must be simple to foster brainstorming into substantive work to promote HR approach.**

THOMAS

Applying a multi-disciplinary approach

Despite this clearly being a simulation – a make believe world with countries called Warland, Poorland, Transaviland and Dreamland - people became fully immersed. We became a part of Dreamland and went along with the simulated world as if it was real.

Immediately after the simulation went live, trainees were faced with multiple tasks. It was intense from the get go. All agencies participating had to create a fully operational organization, dividing responsibilities devising logistical solutions **while everybody was getting to know each other.**

At the same time the simulation required trainees **to respond to the tasks thrown at them by** the Direx. Everyone got into it. There were disagreements and heated discussions. I had one of my colleagues in the NGO threatening to quit her job because she did not agree with one of my decisions. Maybe because I made a poor decision, but this is also a testimony to the fact that people lived the simulation as if it was real life.

THOMAS

Simulation based training consists of **briefing – training – and debriefing.** Part of the briefing was reading through a heap of material written specifically for this simulation outlining the legal framework for the country of Dreamland, Standard Operating Procedures etc.

All the more interesting it was to realize that when the heat was on, most all of us went on our merry way doing business as usual – serving within our own agencies.

When we are put under pressure it becomes challenging to adopt new ways of doing things.

And so went the first day. A lot of work was completed internally in the agencies – as far as interagency cooperation **far less was accomplished.**

Naturally this was a substantial part of the Direx debriefing. So despite the strong emphasis on multi-agency approach in the briefing and despite the simulation providing the ideal framework for this - it was difficult to put the intentions into practice. **Had the simulation ended here, I think the learning outcome would have been limited.**

ALEX

The same situation has perpetuated itself throughout all 4 editions. In the Direx, we have come to realise that participants need to spend the first day team- building, getting to know each other, working together on a problem solving exercises unrelated to THB under the guidance of a professional trainer, to get to know each other, see the dynamics of their respective groups, personalities and most importantly, to build trust.

THOMAS

Audience participation

Please stand up/raise your hand if you

- have concrete hands on experience with fighting trafficking?
- Stand/raise your hand if you have been involved in policy making and creating frameworks conducive to counter trafficking?
- Stand/raise your hand if you have otherwise been involved with anti- trafficking measures?
- Remain standing/raise your hand if you have been part of a meeting, seminar, conference, or other sort of learning process with ambitions to change behavior and habits and if you have left this process inspired and then when returning to work ending up doing business as usual in spite of good intentions.

This underlines the need to give careful consideration to the challenge of implementing newly acquired knowledge and competencies into our everyday work.

After the debriefing on the first day the multi-agency efforts improved step by step.

I recall a multi-agency meeting called by the Law Enforcement Unit. Around the table were representatives from Law enforcement, labour inspectors, financial investigators, legal counsellors and the NGO.

As each agency openly shared information an image materialized that indicated links between 2 different companies under investigation. So a plan was drafted to raid and responsibilities were divided. Each participant went out of that meeting with newly acquired insights and with a plan of action.

I left that meeting all excited. You know the feeling. When things just fall into its right place. When it clicks. It was exhilarating. That was what partnership should feel like.

ALEX

You can see the photo of that meeting on the screen now. That has truly been the best multi-agency meeting of the four simulation editions. Our joy in the Direx was immense. The excitement and exhilaration Thomas is talking about was passed onto antennas and Direx and it was a moment where all shouted “yes”....

Real life

Applying what I learned from the simulation in real life

Hold on as I fast forward to the beginning of this month.

I received an email from another agency with information about an employer that they obtained from a former worker. The information did indeed indicate labour exploitation. The email was not a request of our services to conduct a screening interview with potential victims. It did not point to a specific course of action. Very much like the email I received during the training.

So with this in mind I discussed with my colleagues how to act on this information.

We agreed to consult one of the trade unions to hear if they knew about the company. It turned out that they had a lot of information about the employer and other related companies.

Information that indicates that this is a case of exploitation so severe that it is reasonable to talk about trafficking in human beings. Then we proceeded to involve other relevant agencies with the purpose of **setting up a multi-agency meeting**.

So shortly I will attend a meeting bringing together professionals of very different backgrounds and representing different agencies. We will discuss the information available and decide on how to go forward. I also hope that this meeting will help to build trust among the different participants as they have not worked together like this before. My hope is that all participants will get to experience the exhilarating feeling of taking appropriate measures. But it is not a given.

ALEX

This is simply music to the ears of all DIREX members and everyone in the OSCE involved in this project and I am so happy that even those who cannot be here today are all now tune up to the live-stream of the Alliance conference to hear this directly from you Thomas.

Trafficked persons were identified, and better assisted, joint investigations started, study visits planned, new joint projects discussed to mention just a few of such good news coming from the OSCE pS.

Endless discussion about whether we have achieved our objectives as least a tiny little bit, always striving to improve things are now harvesting! Let's hope we will have more and more of such positive news in the future.

THOMAS**Trust**

Why is it so challenging to carry out multi agency cooperation in real life? What are key ingredients to make these multi-lateral partnerships successful?

Trust!

Trust that everybody is working **within the framework provided** and **with a clear understanding of their role and how it meshes into the roles of the other agencies.**

But also trust that **confidential information will remain confidential even if this means that each agency has to look closely at the way confidential information is being handled in the agency.**

We have to find ways to share information in this manner. **Remaining passive with vital information is not an option.**

We have to trust that each agency will play their role diligently regardless of the fact that there may be a difference in mandates and organizational values.

ALEX

We need to trust and respect more, think out of the box, take a step back and adopt a helicopter view. Reiterate our aim, goals, and steps we are taking to

achieve them clearly. We need to find courage to foster little change in our own agencies, that may remove such administrative or bureaucratic obstacles to trust creation, taking a step back and concentrating on what unites us not divides us all the way down to technical details. The devil is in the detail. We fail on details. Traffickers win on details.

THOMAS

Recommendation

During the training it was Direx through their debriefings as well as the scenarios that facilitated the multi-agency approach.

Outside of the simulation, who is going to take on this responsibility?

In the real life case I mentioned in the context of my country, it was the Danish Centre against Human Trafficking that took on that role. Every OSCE participating State, which have adopted a National Referral Mechanism, would have an equivalent agency in place, or some amendments may be needed to achieve this goal of leadership. It is the role of this **coordinating body** to facilitate and drive the process forward. Assigning this task to an authority has some clear advantages:

1. An authority can ensure

- that we are working toward common goals if we communicate and plan prior to carrying out interventions
- genuine multi-agency work not only mere multi-agency presence.
- That it is clear, which agency takes the lead in which situations preventing shifting the responsibility as a hot potato between agencies
- An authority will need to have the ability, the mandate? and the leverage to motivate other agencies to partake although they may not see the immediate relevance for this
- An authority can ensure that a human rights based approach is being employed by all agencies as an overriding principle.

ALEX

I would like to add a few points on lessons learnt to implement in the future simulations (one of them stronger role of public social services - being municipalities actually in the simulation)

- antennas would be assigned to a concrete character which they follow throughout the whole process for improved monitoring
- not individual but shared de-briefings to voice impressions of the days and clarify issues not leaving frustration to another day
- better explanation of the role of HICONS to the participants:
- debriefings DIREX, antennas and actors as well
- process influences the substance so
- simplification of storylines
- simplification of SOPs (a graphic scheme rather than text)
- re-calling our objectives:
 - 1) fostering multiagency work
 - 2) identifying trafficking in mixed flows
 - 3) referring to assistance
 - 4) providing such assistance
 - 5) investigating criminal cases

overall approach to all actions: Human rights based approach and best interest of the child.

THOMAS

Between the two of us, Alexandra and I have participated in and conducted countless seminars and trainings to build capacity among relevant stakeholders in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

But we have never been part of an initiative with an impact like the OSCE simulation based training.

The simulation challenges us professionally and intellectually while at the same time engaging us through our senses and feelings.

It left us inspired, and with the experience that trusting and respectful multi- lateral partnerships holds an enormous potential.

Along with the rest of the trainees we are now taking active steps to continue the efforts and to realise this potential outside the simulation – in the real world. No more “business as usual”.

This way of building capacity and competencies has changed the way we understand and fill our roles in our common efforts to combat human trafficking.

Thank you.