

Joint Declaration
of
the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators of South-East European (SEE) countries
on
**Enhancing Transnational Referral Mechanisms (TRM) and
Strengthening Cooperation in Cases of Human Trafficking**

We, the National Anti-Trafficking Coordinators of the South-East European (SEE) countries gathered in Ljubljana on 4 October 2012 for a joint meeting organised within the framework of the Brdo Process, chaired by Slovenia with the support of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

On this occasion, as part of our mandate to coordinate national activities against human trafficking and support the efforts of all those involved in combating this grave violation of human rights – prosecutors, law enforcement officers, representatives of non-governmental organisations, labour inspectors, judges, social workers -

- Bearing in mind the **international and European norms and standards** for the anti-trafficking effort and taking into consideration our **national legislative frameworks, strategies and action plans**;
- **Upholding the highest human rights standards** in dealing with cases of trafficking in human beings, with due consideration of the **gender perspective**;
- Acknowledging the importance of **local, regional and international cooperation** in order to ensure comprehensive and effective assistance, support and protection for trafficked persons;
- Encouraging the **inclusion of new actors** in the anti-trafficking community, thus nurturing wider **partnerships**;
- Making **accessible** and **regularly updating a national contact** list of focal points at all institutions involved in anti-trafficking activities;
- Being proud of the **progress** we have made in combating human trafficking in the SEE Region;
- Advocating the **thorough implementation of both national and transnational referral mechanisms**;
- Welcoming the **policy efforts undertaken by the European Union** in the fight against trafficking in human beings, and in particular **the EU strategy** on the eradication of trafficking;
- Recognising that the **priorities set out in the EU strategy** reflect our own **policy priorities** during the last decade;

in a spirit of mutual trust, and supporting the **priorities set by the *EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-201*** we commit to:

- Continuing to work on the **effective and proactive identification** of trafficked persons, sharing lessons learned and exchanging good practices with our counterparts from the

European Union, especially with regard to the development of **functioning Transnational Referral Mechanisms** (TRM) as developed by us in cooperation with ICMPD;

- Calling on EU Member States to join and develop **Transnational Referral Mechanisms** as a tool that has proven its usefulness in providing **adequate protection and assistance** to trafficked persons and enhancing coordination and cooperation among key actors by way of regular information in order to ensure **coherence of actions inside and across borders** and thus uphold uniform high standards;
- Maintaining **an interactive dialogue with all governmental and non-governmental actors involved**, thus applying a **multidisciplinary approach and** continuing to promote more efficient communication, cooperation and **policy coordination** between countries and regions of origin, transit and destination;
- Continuing to apply innovative approaches to **preventing trafficking in human beings** by addressing vulnerable groups, **especially children**, as well as adopting a **proactive approach** to the identification, protection, assistance and referral, in the **best interests of the child**;
- Stepping up the efforts, together with our counterparts from the European Union, to decrease the demand for services provided by trafficked persons, including cheap labour;
- Supporting the **establishment of new partnerships**, in particular with the private sector;
- Increasing the **knowledge base** on trafficking in human beings by conducting targeted research, focusing on thematic and geographical priorities and using this research to devise evidence-based responses to emerging concerns related to all forms of trafficking in human beings.

We shall therefore foster structured and efficient communication and effective cooperation across borders with partners in the wider European region, acting together to prevent trafficking in human beings, protect the rights of those exploited and prosecute those who take advantage of other people's vulnerability.

Ljubljana, 4 October 2012