



# STABILITY PACT

## FOR SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

### TASK FORCE ON TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

#### Fact Sheet

#### Vienna, May 2003

The Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings (SPTF) is an instrument of coordination to encourage and strengthen co-operation among the countries of South Eastern Europe (SEE) in order to streamline and accelerate existing efforts to combat human trafficking in the region. Working under the auspices of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the SPTF is dedicated to promoting collaboration and integration of anti-trafficking activities in SEE to improve their long-term effectiveness and to avoid needless duplication of efforts.

It has developed a comprehensive regional strategy for the fight against human trafficking with the following priority areas identified for action: prevention; awareness raising; victim assistance and protection; return and reintegration of victims; legislative reform; law enforcement cooperation; training, exchange and capacity building.

The SPTF's activities are based firmly on the priorities and needs of the countries of the region. A core objective of the SPTF is to achieve regional ownership of these efforts. The SPTF ensures that the regional dimension of all issues involved in addressing the multi-faceted elements of human trafficking are fully considered and included in the international community's activities in SEE.

The SPTF acts as a clearing house. It is not an international organisation or institution and is not in competition with international or local organizations for project implementation. Instead, by intensively fostering regional co-ordination and collaboration by all actors and actively supporting and monitoring the development and implementation of regional anti-trafficking measures, the SPTF advances the shared interests of both donor and recipient countries to achieve maximum results with the funding made available to implement anti-trafficking initiatives.

The expert coordination team, comprised of the following international organisations and NGOs, offers its input and expertise in order for the SPTF to provide governments with a comprehensive picture of the interrelated and complex challenges of human trafficking and to offer guidance and best practices in anti-trafficking management.

**Central Mechanisms for Coordinated Anti-Trafficking Results in SEE**  
**The Task Force Secretariat**  
**The Task Force Expert Co-ordination Team**

**The SPTF Secretariat**

The Task Force Secretariat, located in Vienna, is the driving force in the development of coordinated anti-trafficking activities, policies and structures in SEE. Within this framework of fostering national and regional collaboration, it assists, guides and assesses the implementation of anti-trafficking measures and projects in the region. The Secretariat is comprised of:

Minister Dr. Helga Konrad, Chair

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**The SPTF Expert Co-ordination Team**

The SPTF Expert Co-ordination Team, in close co-operation with those on the spot, developed the regional anti-trafficking strategy for South Eastern Europe. Each organisation within the SPTF Team provides input and expertise reflecting their fields of experience and along their philosophy and best practices. The TF Team members are:

- OSCE/CPC OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre; Senior Adviser on Gender Issues
- OSCE/ODIHR OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
- COE Council of Europe
- UNHCHR United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- IOM International Organisation of Migration
- ICMPD International Center for Migration Policy Development
- IMP International Migration Policy Programme
- ILO International Labour Organisation
- UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund
- ICMC International Catholic Migration Commission
- SCF Save the Children Fund
- SECI Southeast European Co-operative Initiative
- SPOC Stability Pact Initiative Against Organised Crime
- UNODC/CICP United Nation Centre for International Crime Prevention, Office on Drugs and Crime
- EC European Commission
- UNIFEM United Nations Development Fund for Women
- UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

## **Activities of the Stability Pact Task Force**

The SP Task Force has, within a very short time, raised the awareness of the complexity and acuteness of the problem, bringing human trafficking to the top of the political agenda in the countries of the region and beyond. For the first time the problem is dealt with in a co-ordinated way; regular cross-border co-operation on the issue has been established and there is gradual recognition that no institution nor country alone will be able to combat human trafficking effectively.

### **Adoption and Implementation of Regional and Nation Plans of Action**

Consistent with its mission as an instrument of coordination, the SPTF pursued and achieved adoption of the *Multiyear Anti-Trafficking Action Plan for South Eastern Europe*. This resulted from a process involving SPTF fact-finding missions in the countries of the region, which identified capacities, needs and gaps. This Multiyear Action Plan constitutes a comprehensive framework for all relevant actors and addressing all main areas of concern, including: awareness raising, training and capacity building, law enforcement co-operation, victim protection, return and reintegration, legislative reform, and prevention.

In addition, the SPTF provided guidelines to countries to develop *National Plans of Action* in which the SEE Governments identified their respective priorities in the fight against human trafficking and their need for international support.

Following the recommendations of the SPTF, all countries in SEE have established mechanisms for implementing these plans. Each country has:

- identified a *national/governmental co-ordinator*, a high ranking official who coordinates anti-trafficking measures within the Government and is the contact person for all actors involved in the fight against human trafficking in that country; and
- set up *multidisciplinary national working groups* comprising the main relevant actors from the ministries, international organisations, NGOs and intergovernmental organisations;

Now that these mechanisms have been established, they must operate in practice to a satisfactory level. Accordingly, the SPTF oversees, coordinates and conducts monitoring initiatives as needed to support and guide the concrete implementation of regional and national anti-trafficking efforts by these national mechanisms within the regional and national frameworks created.

### **Task Force Meetings**

Twice a year, the SPTF invites all representatives of Stability Pact participating States, OSCE Delegations, principle IOs and selected international NGOs and NGOs from the region to participate in the Task Force Meeting. These meetings have proven to be critical working sessions for coordinating the efforts of all of the key actors working on this issue

in the region. The steady progression of the logical steps of regional coordination coming out of each Task Force Meeting is clear:

- At the 1<sup>st</sup> Task Force meeting on 18 September 2000, the *international community* formulated their concerns about the ever-increasing problem of human trafficking in SEE and articulated their expectations to those responsible in the region concerning appropriate responses to the problem.
- At the 2<sup>nd</sup> Task Force meeting on 27 April 2001, it was the *international organisations* who formulated the need for a comprehensive approach to the complex and challenging issue of human trafficking, and offered their international know-how and expertise to Governments in the region regarding management of anti-trafficking projects.
- At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Task Force meeting on 14 December 2001, the *Governments of the region* presented their national plans of action and set out their national priorities in combating human trafficking and further developed ways and means of enhanced regional co-operation.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> Task Force meeting on 4 June 2002 focused on *the non-governmental sector* and discussed how NGOs and Governments could collaborate and involve NGOs in decision-making processes of country anti-trafficking activities.
- At the 5<sup>th</sup> Task Force Meeting on 28 March 2003, participants discussed the issue of **child trafficking** and agreed upon guidelines for concrete action. The meeting's second focus was on **victim/witness protection**. The outcome document of the Working Group on Victim/Witness Protection was discussed and governments were called upon to switch from an exclusive law-enforcement approach to a victim-centred one.

### **Regional Ministerial Forum**

Once a year, the SPTF convenes a Regional Ministerial Forum inviting the SEE Government Ministers with primary responsibility for combating trafficking to participate. Each Forum has resulted in the agreement of the SEE countries to a critical element of regional cooperation to advance the fight against trafficking.

- At the 1<sup>st</sup> Regional Ministerial Forum, which was convened in Palermo on 13 December 2000 on the margins of the UN Conference on the signing of the *Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* and the *Protocol to Prevent, Protect and Suppress Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* SEE Governments signed the *Palermo Anti-Trafficking Declaration of South Eastern Europe*. Government Ministers and representatives committed their countries to implementing effective programmes of prevention, victim assistance and protection, legislative reform, law enforcement, and prosecution of traffickers.
- At the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Ministerial Forum, convened in Zagreb on 27 November 2001, SEE Ministers of the Interior agreed to further develop a *Regional Information*

*Exchange Mechanism*, similar in methodology to that of Europol for the EU Member States, by using the channels of the SECI Regional Centre in Bucharest and in co-ordination with Interpol.

- At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional Ministerial Forum in Tirana on 11 December 2002, Government Ministers and representatives signed the Statement of Commitments on the *Legalisation of the Status of Trafficked Persons* thereby agreeing to granting temporary residence to trafficking victims, essential for the recovery of trafficking victims, and enabling the possibility of prosecutions of traffickers with the help of the critical testimony of trafficking victims.

### **Anti-trafficking Policy Outline for 2003**

Within the necessarily broad range of anti-trafficking activities, the SPTF has set forth an outline of policy priorities for going forward in 2003, including two areas of special emphasis, child trafficking and victim/witness protection:

1. **Prevention of child trafficking** – Based on the preparatory work by the SPTF Expert Team members UNICEF, Save the Children, ILO/IPEC and the grassroots experience of Terre des hommes, the SPTF will focus on prevention of child trafficking, including education programmes in schools. This issue was the focus of discussion (along with victim/witness protection) at the 5<sup>th</sup> Task Force meeting in Portorož, Slovenia, on 28 March 2003.
2. **Victim/Witness Protection** – the enhancement of trafficking victim/witness protection will form a crucial part of the Task Force's activities in 2003. Protection is one of the main preconditions to victims' recovery as well as for possible testimony against the traffickers. The Task Force aims to tailor different approaches towards witness protection to the specific needs of trafficking victims who courageously agree to testify and to develop relevant projects and monitor their implementation.
3. **Temporary residence** – The SPTF will continue to promote the initiative to legalise the status of trafficked persons and grant temporary residence in the law and practices of all SEE countries. Victims of trafficking must be granted legal status, because the total lack of such status is taken advantage of by the traffickers. A central issue in this context is refraining from immediate deportation of victims of trafficking and instead granting the right to an extended stay in the country. Granting at least temporary residence to victims will eventually lead to the successful prosecution of organised criminals and to the dismantling of criminal networks.
4. **Root causes of trafficking** – The SPTF will elaborate further on strategies and policy elements to address the root causes of human trafficking, in particular feminisation of poverty, social and economic causes.
5. **Demand side** – the SPTF will, in co-operation with countries of destination, compile best practices and promote activities to effectively address the demand side of trafficking (zero tolerance) as one part of a comprehensive approach to combat human trafficking.

## **Current Regional Project Implementation**

### **Data and Research**

#### ▪ **Reports**

As basic tools for the activities against human trafficking in the region, the results of three research projects carried out under the SPTF have been made available to governments, IOs and NGOs and can be accessed through the SPTF homepage:

- Applied Research and Data Collection on Trafficking in Human Beings to, through and from the Balkan region (IOM)
- Reference Guide for Anti-Trafficking Legislative Review (ODIHR)
- Up-dated Report/Inventory on Trafficking in Human Beings in SEE and responses to human trafficking (UNICEF, UNHCHR, ODIHR).

#### ▪ **Regional Clearing Point** (implementing agency: IOM, in collaboration with ICMC)

The Regional Clearing Point will ensure standardised regional data on the effectiveness and continuity of victim assistance and protection (shelters, national referral mechanisms, return and reintegration programmes).

### **Victims' Assistance and Protection**

- #### ▪ **National Referral Mechanisms** (implementing agencies: ODIHR, IOs, local NGOs)
- National referral mechanisms are under development for better identification of trafficking victims and proper referral to assist in their recovery and protection. They enhance the protection and assistance of trafficked persons by ensuring co-operation between national actors in identifying, receiving and assisting trafficked persons.

#### **Network of Shelters** (implementing agencies: IOs, local NGOs, Governments)

Work continues to expand the number and capacity of high quality shelters for long-term stay of trafficking victims who will be granted extended stay / temporary residence permit and be provided needed shelter even if they have been trafficked domestically or have concerns for whatever reasons, such as personal security, about returning to their home country.

### **Return and Reintegration**

#### ▪ **Return and Reintegration Programmes** (implementing agencies: IOM, NGOs)

These shelters offer short-term stay for trafficked persons agreeing to return to their home country. How these programs relate to comprehensive assistance and protection objectives where recovery is assisted (potentially long-term) without reference to their "reintegration status" is being reviewed.

### **Legislative Reform**

#### ▪ **Criminal Law Reform "Lara Project"** (implementing agency: Council of Europe, in co-operation with UNODC/UNCICP, ODIHR)

To confront the transnational nature of human trafficking, national laws need to be harmonised regionally. SEE Governments are at various stages of legislative reform. The SPTF, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, offered a Regional Training on Criminal Law Reform, and is currently compiling anti-trafficking legislations (which has been published on the Council of Europe's website) for peer review by international

and national experts. "Flying consultancies" will thereupon assist each country of the region individually in developing adequate legislation.

### **Training and Capacity Building**

- **Comprehensive Programme for Training and Capacity Building** (implementing agency: ICMPD, in co-operation with IMP, SECI, IOM, Austrian Ministry of the Interior)

The principal purpose of the programme is to establish a comprehensive, standardized structured and enduring process for training, exchange and co-operation activities in the region in order to strengthen institutional capacity of SEE governments and relevant actors. The police training programme is already being pilot-tested and is in an advanced stage of development; pilot evaluations of the training programme for the judiciary and prosecutors will begin in April 2003.

### **Prevention**

- **Prevention of Trafficking** (implementing agencies: UNHCHR, UNICEF, OSCE)  
This work involves three pilot projects focussing on high-risk groups, social causes and economic factors contributing to trafficking.

- **Employment and Vocational Training Opportunities to Prevent and Reduce Trafficking in Women in Albania, Moldova and Ukraine** (implementing agency: ILO)

This project's immediate objective is to co-operate with national authorities on targeted employment and vocational training for trafficked women or possible victims, thus reducing trafficking in young women for labour exploitation from Albania, Moldova and Ukraine to Western and Northern Europe. The objective is to strengthen national employment strategies and to contribute in a long-term sustainable way to the eradication of labour exploitation of young women.

- **Combating Trafficking of Children and Young Persons for Labour and Sexual Exploitation in Albania, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine** (implementing agency: ILO/IPEC)

This is a comprehensive programme to combat trafficking of children and young persons in the Balkan region and Ukraine particularly through prevention and reintegration measures. The programme aims at developing a sub-regional strategy to stop trafficking in children and young persons in four selected SEE countries.

### **Awareness Raising**

- **Awareness Raising Campaigns** (implementing agencies: IOM, local NGOs) **and Regional Assessment of the Awareness Raising Campaigns** (implementing agency: UNICEF) Awareness campaigns to increase the level of information among at-risk groups will be undertaken and then independently assessed to increase its effectiveness.

- **Focus on Young People and Children** (implementing agency: Save the Children)  
This is a regional awareness/prevention project with a special focus on children and young people. The objective is to increase the effectiveness of regional preventive and awareness strategies by increasing understanding of different approaches for children who are trafficked.

- **Young People’s Health, Development and Protection** (implementing agency: UNICEF)

Regional awareness raising campaigns focussing particularly on young people to ensure that they have access to necessary information and skills to protect themselves. The objective of these campaigns is to raise awareness of the dangers of sexual exploitation and trafficking among young people, including risks of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.

