

South-Eastern Europe steps up coordinated efforts to fight human trafficking

Senior law enforcement officials and anti-trafficking experts from thirteen South-East European (SEE) countries met at the UN Centre in Vienna, Austria, on 15-16 December, to adopt a Comprehensive Regional Law Enforcement Training Strategy.

The meeting was jointly convened by UNDP Romania and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), in cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Stability Pact for SEE Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings (SPTF). The Austrian Ministry of Interior, the Romanian Ministry of Administration and Interior and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provided in-kind and financial support. Other organizations present at the meeting included UNHCR, IOM, OSCE, SECI Regional Centre for Combating Trans-border Crime, the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP), and civil society. Special guests were HRH Margarita of Romania and HSH Radu, Prince of Hohenzollern-Veringen and Special Representative of the Romanian Government for Integration, Cooperation and Sustainable Development.



Opening of the Senior Officials' Meeting on the Comprehensive Law Enforcement Anti-trafficking Training Strategy in SEE. From left: Ms. Sumru Noyan, Head of UNODC Division for Operations, Mr. Jonas Widgren, ICMPD Director General, Mr. Burkhard Dammann, UNODC Anti-Human Trafficking Unit, Ms. Soknan Han Jung, UNDP Resident Representative in Romania, and Dr. Helga Konrad, Chair of the Stability Pact Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings.



Delegates at the conference represented Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, the FYR Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine and the UN Mission in Kosovo.

Over the past two years, UNDP Romania and ICMPD together with SEE countries have developed anti-trafficking law enforcement manuals for specialist investigators and general police, which together form the Comprehensive Regional Law Enforcement Anti-trafficking Training Strategy. The manuals have gone through regional testing, validation and pilot training, and are currently being mainstreamed into regular training curricula for law enforcement officers in SEE. They are based on the international definitions and norms as contained in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against

Transnational Organized Crime. Also complied with are the UN Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking.



UNDP Romania and ICMPD officially hand over the SEE anti-trafficking law enforcement training materials to UNODC, for adaptation and implementation in other parts of the world.



News conference at UN Centre in Vienna

Speaking before the delegates, Dr. Helga Konrad, SPTF Chair, praised SEE governments, UNDP Romania and ICMPD for their leadership in developing the regional standards for law enforcement anti-trafficking training, and pledged the Stability Pact's full support for coordinated follow-up in implementing the Comprehensive Training Strategy throughout the region. Mr. Jan Van Dijk, Officer in Charge of the Human Security Branch of UNODC, highlighted that with assistance from UNDP Romania and ICMPD, SEE countries have developed the most advanced worldwide anti-trafficking law enforcement training programme, which UNODC will adapt for implementation in other parts of the world. "Over these two days in Vienna, we have laid the basis for a

unique partnership among SEE states, international organizations and the donor community, which we hope will drive substantive follow-up to the excellent work done so far. I am proud that UNDP Romania is at the forefront of this unprecedented stakeholders' coordination and commitment", said Ms. Soknan Han Jung, UNDP Resident Representative in Romania. At a widely attended news conference, Mr. Paul Holmes, anti-trafficking expert and a key contributor to the training materials, noted that "the media has often been reporting on the scale of the human trafficking crime in South-East Europe, but this is an opportunity to also highlight the scale of the response that SEE countries, with support from international organizations, have put together".

Delegates at the conference pledged to implement the Comprehensive Training Strategy on a sustained basis, and called upon UNDP Romania, ICMPD and donor partners to continue supporting their efforts. UNDP Romania and ICMPD will shortly launch a joint initiative to further support SEE countries in their common fight against human trafficking.

For more information please contact UNDP Romania at governance@undp.ro