

CAAHT 2005 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

11 -12 October 2005

Sheraton Hotel, Tirana, Albania

Session III: Improving coordination of anti-trafficking services and programs

Panel Presentation

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I would like to congratulate the Albanian initiative of CAAHT Program, which has given a guiding support for the coordination of action in the area of efforts against human trafficking. The issue of trafficking of children—a recognized and acute problem—is in the focus of our Department daily activity, which has seriously committed to the eradication of this grave wound of the Albanian society.

At Elbasan Municipality a task force for the coordination of efforts against human trafficking has been established. We are aware that human trafficking is organized well, with links that form a chain of trafficking human beings and exploiting them for several purposes: begging, drug-pushing, prostitution, etc. Analyses have shown that trafficked people come from households with acute social and economic problems. They are children that may be enrolled in schools, but do not attend education, and who are exploited for forced labor, girls with social problems, etc.

Our participation in this event is an integral part of the tasks we have assigned to ourselves for the eradication of this dangerous phenomenon that is present in the Albanian society. We are at the stage of identifying the phenomenon on a case-by-case basis, with the joint working groups, for the implementation of the platform that has been developed by the technical round tables. The outcomes are tangible; the round tables discuss the phenomenon, and what responsibilities will be taken on by each actor, according to their roles and legal responsibilities. In the meetings we follow up the tasks assigned by the previous meetings, with the goal of preventing trafficking cases.

The coordination group for efforts against trafficking includes a lot of actors: Elbasan Municipality, State Social Services, Terre des Hommes, Help the Children, Another Vision, House of Hope, Women's Forum, Employment Office, etc. It has enabled:

- raising public awareness of trafficking and its organization
- preventing trafficking of children, through awareness-raising campaigns at elementary schools, neighborhoods and community, based on the local and regional levels
- protecting trafficked children and children at high risk
- integrating children, enrolling them in school, and monitoring their progress in family and community.
- assisted voluntary return of children that are trafficked in the transit and destination countries, to their families
- integrating trafficked children into normal life at school, family and community.

The group convenes every other month. It reviews specific cases and gives solutions to them according to the responsibilities of each member of the group and the services they provide. We think that so far the coordination work has yielded effective outcomes. I also think that we should cooperate with foreign donors.