

CAAHT 2005 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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

Panel Presentation:

Remarks on the coordination of actors in CAAHT Annual Conference, for the improvement of efforts in the area of the prevention of human trafficking

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This year the prevention of, and combat against, human trafficking in the Region of Korça has been organized based on the Albanian Government National Strategy. This has not been conceived as a task of the police only: local government structures and non-governmental organizations, which work against human trafficking and for reintegration of victims, have given their contribution and support.

We think that the achievement of results has been positively affected by the fulfillment of the tasks that were assigned by the meeting of the Cooperation Group, in which each actor has given its contribution to the minimization of this negative phenomenon in the Albanian society. The Group has been in place in the framework of CAAHT program implementation. The participants in the CAAHT Regional Cluster Group in Korça include:

- The State Police and its structures, namely the Anti-Trafficking Unit
- Local Government bodies, communes, municipalities, education and employment departments, social departments, even top officials of the Region and Prefecture.
- Representatives from non-governmental organizations and foundations that operate in the Region of Korça, etc.

In its meetings the Cooperation Group has specified tasks for each actor, according to their specific activities. It has also insisted that the fight against trafficking is not only the task of the police but of all the participating actors.

We think that this year, as a result of better coordination, the State Police Anti-Trafficking Unit in the Region of Korça has achieved better results in punishing criminals that organize and perform human trafficking.

We think that the coordination with local government bodies at all levels has aimed at:

- Taking measures for giving a solution to social and economic problems, and for the exchange of information between the Police and the local government. In the second half of the year, communal and municipal councils have addressed the measures for the prevention of human trafficking in cooperation with police officers in their jurisdictions.
- Coordinating between the Police Unit and the non-governmental organizations that operate at national level, such as IOM, Terres des Hommes, Psycho-Social Center "Vatra" in Vlora and Linza, Tirana, in the framework of referring victims of trafficking and reintegrating them into the society.

I should also mention the coordination with non-governmental organizations whose agenda include the combating of human trafficking in the Region of Korça, such as Help for the Children, the Legal Clinic for the Protection of Children, the Korça Women Organization, “Me, the Woman” in Pogradeci, Amaro Drom in Korça, etc. The coordination with those organizations has consisted of the participation of the social workers from those organizations in police interviews with victims of trafficking, and the organization and development of comprehensive promotional efforts at elementary and secondary schools and “F. S. Noli” University, as well as in the rural area, where the issue of human trafficking has been more evident. The meetings focused on the risks and the approaches traffickers take to recruit and traffic human beings. Human trafficking affects both males and females.

Compared with the previous year, this year there has been a lot of progress due to CAAHT regional cooperation group. Both I and my colleagues from the anti-trafficking unit think that CAAHT program has had a positive impact on the prevention of human trafficking and has contributed to supporting all the actors that participate in the cooperation group.

We think that the program should continue in the future, with the aim of raising the community awareness of these issues and preventing human trafficking. In addition, training of the participants should also include the local governments from regional level to neighborhood level in villages. This cooperation among all structures should be not only in the framework of information exchange with the police but also in the framework of taking the necessary measures for improving the social conditions and better treatment of victims of trafficking, by also addressing the community’s humiliation of victims. We think that local government councils—which have decision-making competences—should also include the police of their areas and discuss with them human trafficking issues.

These are some of the issues we thought of discussing in this conference with the participation of anti human trafficking actors. We appreciate the CAAHT program, and its concrete actions. The conclusions of this conference will help us all: not only the anti-trafficking police but also the rest of the actors for the implementation of the tasks in the framework of the Albanian Government’s Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking.