



OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Conference

Warsaw, 24 September – 5 October 2012

Working session 8: Combating trafficking in human beings

Contribution of the Council of Europe

Overview of recent Council of Europe activities

1. During the past year the anti-trafficking work of the Council of Europe maintained its focus on monitoring the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, which is now in force in 37 Council of Europe member States.
2. The Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), set up under the Convention to evaluate its implementation by the Parties, continued with the evaluation of the second group 10 Parties to the Convention (Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Latvia, Malta, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Portugal and United Kingdom). Between October 2011 and June 2012, GRETA carried out visits to these 10 countries in order to supplement the information provided in the replies to the questionnaire sent out by GRETA. These visits were an occasion to meet ministers and senior officials involved in the national action against trafficking, national Ombudsmen, politicians, trade union representatives and members of civil society. During the visits, GRETA also visited shelters and other facilities providing assistance to victims of trafficking.
3. At its 12th meeting (6-9 December 2011), GRETA approved final evaluation reports in respect of Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Romania and transmitted them to the authorities concerned,. Following the reception of the authorities' comments, GRETA's final reports were made public in the beginning of 2012.
4. At its 13th meeting (19-23 March 2012) GRETA approved draft evaluation reports in respect of Armenia, Montenegro and the United Kingdom, and transmitted them to the authorities concerned. The authorities' preliminary comments were taken into account by GRETA when establishing its final reports, which were adopted at GRETA's 14th meeting (25-29 June 2012). These reports are now public and can be consulted on www.coe.int/trafficking. GRETA reports contain an analysis of the national legal and institutional framework in the field of action against trafficking in human beings. They also examine the effectiveness of the measures taken in each country to prevent trafficking, protect and promote the rights of victims of trafficking, and prosecute traffickers. In its reports, GRETA emphasises the obligations of States to respect, fulfil and protect human rights, including by ensuring compliance by non-State actors, in accordance with the duty of due diligence. Each report contains detailed proposals concerning the way in which the authorities may deal with the problems which have been identified.
5. Further, at its 14th meeting, GRETA approved draft reports concerning France, Latvia, Malta and Portugal and transmitted them to authorities for comments.
6. In February 2012, GRETA launched the evaluation of the implementation of the Convention by the third group of 10 Parties to the Convention (Azerbaijan, Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia") by sending them the questionnaire for the first evaluation round. After receiving the replies to the

questionnaire in June 2012, GRETA is preparing the carrying out of country visits to these Parties and will adopt reports in respect of them in the course of 2013.

7. At its 7th meeting (30 January 2012) the Committee of the Parties considered GRETA's reports on the implementation of the Convention by Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia and Denmark and adopted recommendations addressed to the Governments of these Parties. Further, at its 8th meeting (11 June 2012), the Committee adopted recommendations addressed to the Governments of the Republic of Moldova and Romania.

8. On 26 September 2012 GRETA will publish its Second General Report on activities, covering the period from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2012. The report provides information on the progress made by GRETA in evaluating Parties to the Convention and the development of its working methods. It also takes stock of the first 10 GRETA's reports which are already in the public domain and analyses emerging issues from these evaluations as regards the human rights-based approach to action against human trafficking:

9. On 31 December 2012 the terms of office of 13 of the 15 current members of GRETA will expire. The elections to fill the vacant 13 seats will be held at the 9th meeting of the Committee of the Parties to the Convention (12-13 November 2012). 34 Parties to the Convention have been invited to nominate candidates.

10. As of January 2012, the Secretariat of the Council of Europe Anti-Trafficking Convention has been assigned the task to develop and implement co-operation activities to assist Parties to the Convention in improving their anti-trafficking response, based on GRETA's evaluation reports. As a first step, the Secretariat has proposed the holding of round-tables in the first 10 Parties to the Convention to discuss possible co-operation projects.

11. Further, on 4-5 December 2012, the Council of Europe will organise an international expert conference in Sofia, Bulgaria on the issue of prevention of trafficking in human beings, with a particular focus on prevention in the Roma communities and on discouraging demand for services of victims of trafficking.

Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE

12. Following the adoption in 2005 of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings the Council of Europe and the OSCE agreed to join forces, where appropriate, to promote the widest possible signature and ratification of the Council of Europe Convention and to call for full implementation of the OSCE anti-trafficking commitments. The OSCE has observer status with the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Anti-Trafficking Convention and the two organisations are pursuing the good co-operation, making efforts to avoid unnecessary duplication and aiming for synergies.

13. Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE organisations in the field of action against trafficking in human beings remains relevant to the principles agreed during the meeting between the President and the First Vice-President of GRETA, the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and representatives of the ODIHR held in Paris on 22 June 2010. In particular, the two organisations continue to regularly exchange information enabling them to identify priorities and needs where co-operation programmes could facilitate implementation of anti-trafficking standards. They co-ordinate activities in the field of:

- awareness raising and advocacy (including, where relevant, the ratification of Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings);
- assistance to Member States, including to National structures (governmental or non-governmental) that are responsible for preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims, especially in the field of training for relevant officials;
- assessment and monitoring.

14. During its country visits, GRETA delegations consult the local offices of the OSCE (where they have an anti-trafficking component in their activity). Information about publication of final reports of GRETA is systematically communicated to the OSCE. These reports have a potential to become the basis for developing joint co-operation initiatives.

15. One recent example of co-operation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE is the round table on action against trafficking in human beings organised jointly with the Secretariat of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, on 18 April 2012. The round table brought together around a hundred participants, including parliamentarians, public officials from CIS member States, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, researchers and representatives of non-governmental and intergovernmental organisations.

16. Members of GRETA, as well as representatives of the Secretariat, regularly participate in conferences and other events organised by the OSCE/ODIHR. For instance, the President of GRETA participated as a speaker at the OSCE Human Dimension Seminar on the Rule of Law Framework for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, which took place in Warsaw on 14-16 May 2012. Further, representatives of the Secretariat regularly participate in the OSCE Alliance Expert Co-ordination Team meetings.