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**COMMITTEE OF THE PARTIES
COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON ACTION AGAINST
TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

18th meeting of the Committee of the Parties

(Strasbourg, 23 May 2016)

MEETING REPORT

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Agenda items 1 and 2: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (hereinafter referred to respectively as “the Committee” and “the Convention”) held its 18th meeting on 23 May 2016 in Strasbourg.
2. In the absence of Ambassador Ardiana HOBDAI (Albania), Chair of the Committee, the meeting was opened and chaired by Ambassador Markus BÖRLIN (Switzerland), Vice-Chair of the Committee. The agenda, as adopted by the Committee, is set out in Appendix I. The list of participants is set out in Appendix II.

Agenda item 3: Exchange of views with the President of GRETA

3. Mr Nicolas LE COZ, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Being (GRETA), indicated that GRETA had adopted six more final reports under the second evaluation round, two of which had already been published (concerning Bulgaria and Croatia), while the other four would be published shortly (concerning Albania, Denmark, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova). He underlined that while these reports showed that some progress had been made in each country since the first evaluation four years ago, they also highlighted a number of provisions of the Convention which were not fully complied with. First, GRETA had urged all six countries to improve the identification of and assistance to child victims of trafficking, in particular through clear procedures, the appointment of legal guardians without delay, and addressing the disappearance of unaccompanied children from reception facilities by providing safe accommodation. Second, Mr LE COZ indicated that GRETA had found that most countries needed to make progress in the application of the recovery and reflection period which should apply to all persons for whom there are reasonable grounds to believe they are victims of trafficking, including those to whom the Dublin Regulations II or III are applicable, regardless of whether they have co-operated with the authorities. Third, in five of the six countries concerned, GRETA had urged the authorities to take measures to facilitate and guarantee access to compensation for victims of trafficking, in particular through access to legal assistance, building the capacity of legal professionals to support them and by encouraging prosecutors and the judicial authorities to make full use of legislation on the freezing and forfeiture of criminal assets to secure compensation.
4. Mr LE COZ indicated that GRETA was planning to carry out 12 evaluation visits in 2016 to respond to the increasing number of Parties to the Convention. The visit to Belarus, the first non-member State to join the Convention, had taken place in April 2016. This evaluation had been made possible due to an increase in the Ordinary Budget for monitoring work under the Convention in 2016-2017. Mr LE COZ drew the Committee’s attention to the fact the Convention does not provide for a mechanism whereby non-member States can be required to make financial contributions to the monitoring mechanism of the Convention and stressed that this gap remains to be addressed by the Committee of Ministers.
5. GRETA’s President indicated that further to the report by Ambassador Tomáš Boček, the Secretary General Special Representative on migration and refugees, of the fact-finding mission he carried out in Greece and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” in March 2016, GRETA’s Bureau had decided to send a letter to the Greek authorities, using Rule 7 of GRETA’s Rules of procedure for evaluating implementation of the Convention by the Parties regarding urgent requests for information. The request for information will focus on the capacity of Greek officials to identify victims of trafficking among asylum seekers, the steps to protect unaccompanied children from falling victim to trafficking, including to prevent their disappearance, and the safeguards around the application of the *non-refoulement* principle. In March 2016, GRETA had decided to send a letter under above-mentioned Rule 7 to the Italian authorities concerning the identification of victims of trafficking among foreign nationals detained pending deportation. Mr LE COZ noted that short on-the-spot visits could follow the receipt of the requested information from the authorities concerned and that GRETA trusted that the authorities concerned would fully co-operate.

6. Referring to the forthcoming election of 13 GRETA members at the Committee's next meeting of 4 November 2016, Mr LE COZ stressed the importance of having a national selection procedure which leads to the nomination of the most qualified candidates. He added that for the proper functioning of the independent monitoring mechanism of the Convention, it was essential to have a multi-disciplinary group of experts who bring experience from different areas covered by the Convention, come from different professional backgrounds and different geographical regions, and have first-hand experience from anti-trafficking work, in particular victim identification, assistance and protection, border control, and the investigation and bringing to justice of perpetrators of trafficking offences. These experts have to be available to serve GRETA effectively and for the smooth work of GRETA, they have sufficiently good command of at least one of the official languages of the Council of Europe and at least passive command of the other official language.

7. GRETA's President welcomed the recent publication of the first report of the European Commission on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings, as required under Article 20 of Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. Referring to the report's affirmation that the migration crisis was being exploited by criminal networks involved in trafficking in human beings to target the most vulnerable, in particular women and children, Mr LE COZ drew the Committee's attention to GRETA's 5th General Report which focused on the identification of victims of trafficking among asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

8. The Chair thanked Mr LE COZ for his presentation and opened the floor for questions or comments concerning GRETA's work. Ambassador Rémi MORTIER (Monaco) asked GRETA's President whether Monaco, which ratified the Convention on 30 November 2015, would be assessed simultaneously on the first and the second evaluation rounds of the Convention. Mr LE COZ stated that up to now the practice had been for all Parties to the Convention to undergo the first evaluation round in the first place. He added that this issue could be discussed at a future meeting of GRETA.

Agenda item 4: Examination of GRETA's second round reports on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova and adoption of recommendations in respect of these Parties

9. The Chair recalled that GRETA had adopted final reports concerning the implementation of the Convention by Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova as part of the second evaluation round, and that draft recommendations concerning these six States Parties had been submitted to members of the Committee on 28 April 2016. Each recommendation focused on the issues for immediate action identified by GRETA in its second evaluation report, requesting the authorities to report back to the Committee on the measures taken in respect of these selected issues one year after the adoption of the recommendation. The recommendation also invited the authorities to keep GRETA regularly informed of the other measures taken in response to GRETA's conclusions.

4.1 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Albania

10. Ms Anila TRIMI, Director General for Anti-Trafficking and Asylum at the Ministry of the Interior of Albania, thanked GRETA on behalf of her authorities for the constructive way in which the second evaluation had taken place. She noted that the final report had been well received by the Albanian authorities and would be used for further improvements of their anti-trafficking action. She referred to a number of activities that had recently taken place in line with GRETA's conclusions, including training for labour inspectors across the country (in partnership with IOM), training for the setting-up of mobile units to detect child victims among at-risk children, in particular those living in street situation, and two national awareness campaigns on human trafficking. Ms TRIMI also referred to the recent adoption of several policy documents, such as a National Action Plan for Roma and Egyptian Communities Reintegration (2016-2020), an Action Plan for the Social and Economic Reintegration of Women and Girls Victims and Potential Victims of Trafficking (2015-2017) and the National Strategy for Social Protection (2015-2020), which includes a social reintegration scheme. Finally, Ms TRIMI indicated that work on the new National Action Plan against Human Trafficking had begun.

11. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Albania and decided to request the Government of Albania to inform it of the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 23 May 2017.

4.2 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Bulgaria

12. Ms Kamelia DIMITROVA, Acting Secretary General of the National Commission for Combatting Trafficking in Human Trafficking, noted the Bulgarian authorities' appreciation of GRETA's final report and indicated that it would be used to shape future anti-trafficking action. Some of GRETA's recommendations were already followed up on. For example, the two shelters for victims of trafficking had been reopened, a new shelter for long-term reintegration had recently been set up and another two would be opened in 2017. Ms DIMITROVA underlined that the Council of Ministers was expected to adopt a resolution which would give the National Referral Mechanism a legal standing. In the light of the conclusions of GRETA's report, the National Commission for Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings had taken steps together with relevant stakeholders, in particular the State Agency for Refugees and the Migration Directorate, to improve the identification of victims of human trafficking among asylum seekers and irregular migrants. For this purpose, an interagency forum on combating human trafficking in mixed migration flows would take place on 27-28 June 2016, with the support of the OSCE. Further, Ms DIMITROVA indicated that the local anti-trafficking commissions were undertaking activities to prevent trafficking in Roma communities and that a national campaign on preventing trafficking for labour exploitation was in the process of preparation by the National Commission. The full text of Ms DIMITROVA's statement is set out in Appendix III.

13. Mr Harry DE WIT, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Netherlands, welcomed the improvements highlighted in GRETA's report on Bulgaria but, at the same time, noted that according to the report, no victim of trafficking had been identified among asylum seekers and irregular migrants. Ms DIMITROVA pointed out that the afore-mentioned interagency forum aimed to improve identification among these groups, with the assistance of other stakeholders, such as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and FRONTEX, and taking into account good practices from other countries, such as the Netherlands and Norway. The aim was to research the particular vulnerabilities of third country nationals, asylum seekers and irregular migrants and to develop indicators for identification and appropriate training.

14. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Bulgaria and decided to request the Government of Bulgaria to inform it of the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 23 May 2017.

4.3 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Croatia

15. Ms Ankica VRKLJAN SUČIĆ, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Croatia, expressed the gratitude of the Croatian authorities for the constructive dialogue established with GRETA during the evaluation process. She underlined that the proposals for action made in GRETA's report would be followed up in future anti-trafficking measures and policies. The text of Ms VRKLJAN SUČIĆ's statement is set out in Appendix IV.

16. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Croatia and decided to request the Government of Croatia to inform it of the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 23 May 2017.

4.4 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Denmark

17. Ms Malene DALGAARD, from the Criminal Law Division of the Ministry of Justice of Denmark, expressed the appreciation of the Danish authorities for the good co-operation with GRETA during the second evaluation and noted that all conclusions contained in GRETA's report had been given careful consideration.

18. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Denmark and decided to request the Danish Government to inform it of the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 23 May 2017.

4.5 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Georgia

19. Mr Mikheil SULABERIDZE, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Georgia, indicated that the Georgian authorities were grateful for the constructive way in which the second evaluation had taken place. He noted that GRETA's report recognised that progress had been made in combating human trafficking in Georgia, in particular through the work of the Inter-Agency Council, as well as the good co-operation with civil society and the establishment of a labour inspectorate. Further, he stated that the Georgian authorities would appreciate the effort of GRETA to gain access to the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and to reflect the broader human rights situation on the ground in the next evaluation round visit to Georgia, as underlined in the decision of the Committee of Ministers taken at the 1227th meeting of 12-13 May 2015. The full text of Mr SULABERIDZE's statement is set out in Appendix V.

20. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Georgia and decided to request the Georgian Government to inform it of the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 23 May 2017.

4.6 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of the Republic of Moldova

21. Ambassador Corina CĂLUGĂRU, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova, expressed her government's gratitude for the support provided by the Council of Europe to the Republic of Moldova in countering human trafficking. She welcomed GRETA's second evaluation report and noted that since its adoption, a number of actions had been taken. The draft law on the rehabilitation of victims of crime had been sent to Parliament for examination, and the Council of Europe had provided an expert opinion on the draft. Training for law enforcement agencies had been organised in April 2016, with the support of IOM Moldova, focusing on financial investigations in cases of human trafficking. On 6 May 2016, the National Committee for Combatting Trafficking in Human Beings had approved the regulation for the selection of candidates eligible to serve as members of GRETA. Ambassador CĂLUGĂRU indicated that the new policy document that would be prepared to replace the National Plan for Prevention and Combatting Human Trafficking and the National Referral System Strategy, both of which expire at the end of 2016, would be based on GRETA's conclusions, relevant international standards and national reports. Ambassador CĂLUGĂRU's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix VI.

22. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of the Republic of Moldova and decided to request the Moldovan Government to inform it of the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 23 May 2017.

Agenda item 5: Government replies to Committee of Parties recommendations

23. The Chair indicated that the Governments of Luxembourg, Serbia and Slovenia had submitted their replies to the Committee of the Parties recommendations adopted on 7 February 2014, requesting them to inform the Committee of measures taken to comply with the recommendations within a two-year period.

5.1. Luxembourg

24. Ms Pascale MILLIM, Senior Government Advisor at the Ministry of Justice of Luxembourg, indicated that her authorities had welcomed the relevant and constructive conclusions in GRETA's report, which had prompted an increase in anti-trafficking efforts in Luxembourg. She indicated that a national action plan was to be adopted in June 2016 and that the protection of victims would be reinforced through the passing of new legislation. Ms MILLIM stated that Luxembourg had made of human trafficking one of the priorities of its current presidency of Benelux, which would culminate in a conference on this topic to be held in October 2016. The full text of Ms MILLIM's statement is set out in Appendix VII.

5.2. Serbia

25. Mr Darko NINKOV, Deputy to the Permanent Representative, underlined Serbia's efforts to implement GRETA's conclusions, including by improving the legal framework. He thanked GRETA for the fruitful co-operation during the evaluation. The text of Mr NINKOV's statement is set out in Appendix VIII.

5.3. Slovenia

26. Mr Sandi ČURIN, Secretary of the European Affairs and International Co-operation Office, Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia, stated that GRETA's conclusions had been reflected in the National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, approved by the Slovenian Government in January 2015. He welcomed the round-table meeting organised by the Council of Europe in April 2015, in co-operation with the Slovenian authorities, which had provided an additional impetus by highlighting what different stakeholders needed to do in order to make the fight against human trafficking more effective. He indicated that most of GRETA's conclusions had already been implemented, referring to amendments to the Criminal Code (e.g. on the criminalisation of the use of services of trafficked victim, with the knowledge that the person is a victim, forging travel or identity documents to enable human trafficking, and trafficking for the purpose of forced marriages). Mr ČURIN indicated that a public tender process had been organised to select service providers for a crisis shelter and a long-term safe house. He also mentioned the adoption in December 2015 of a manual on assistance to victims of human trafficking, describing the role of all actors and containing a chapter on child trafficking and indicators for identification. Mr ČURIN noted some areas where improvements were still needed, such as investigations into cases of human trafficking for labour exploitation, cross-border co-operation, accommodation for child victims, and additional resources to improve national co-ordination. Finally, he underlined that GRETA's conclusions had had a positive impact to achieve the standards of the Convention and thanked GRETA and its Secretariat for their co-operation. Mr ČURIN's statement is reproduced in full in Appendix IX.

27. The Chair drew the Committee's attention to a letter received from the Slovenian NGO "Society Kljuc – Centre for Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings", concerning the organisation of the provision of assistance to victims of trafficking, including children, in Slovenia, which had been circulated before the meeting.

Agenda item 6: Follow up to be given to government reports submitted in reply to Committee of the Parties recommendations

28. The Committee thanked the authorities of Luxembourg, Serbia and Slovenia for the information provided on measures to implement the Committee's recommendations and decided to forward their reports to GRETA for consideration in the framework of the second evaluation round. The Committee also decided to make the reports public on the Council of Europe's anti-trafficking website.

Agenda item 7: Co-operation activities aimed at strengthening the implementation of GRETA's conclusions and the Committee of the Parties' recommendations

29. The Executive Secretary of the Convention informed the Committee of the organisation of round-table meetings as a follow-up to GRETA's reports and the Committee of the Parties' recommendations in Ukraine (12 May) and Iceland (19 May), as well as the forthcoming round-table meetings in Finland (2 June). In the second half of the year, such meetings will be held in Andorra, Italy and San Marino. She also noted that preparations were being made for the organisation of a meeting of national anti-trafficking co-ordinators on strengthening national co-ordination and international co-operation in the fight against trafficking in human beings (21-22 June, Strasbourg). The first day of that meeting would examine different approaches to national co-ordination and their implications for policy development. The second day, organised in partnership with ICMPD, would focus on improving international co-operation, including through the setting up of efficient transnational referral mechanisms. Participants will discuss the proposed project on transnational co-operation in the identification and referral to assistance of victims of trafficking in human beings, included in the Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2016-2017. Its objectives are to facilitate the identification, referral, safe return, re-integration and long-term support of trafficked persons, in particular among vulnerable groups. The meeting will be an occasion to present the proposal and get feedback from interested countries on shared priority areas, discuss current challenges and new priorities, and identify ways to increase co-operation and possible financial contributions.

30. Further, the Executive Secretary referred to the development of an e-learning training material as part of the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) run by the Council of Europe, which should be ready in the autumn. There were ongoing discussions on the organisation of a meeting in the autumn with a view to setting up a network of legal professionals dealing with human trafficking cases, which could be an occasion to launch the new e-learning tool. She also mentioned the recent agreement between the Council of Europe and the European Commission for Horizontal Facility Tri-Annual Plans of Action (2016-2018), which would cover anti-trafficking activities in Serbia and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". The Executive Secretary referred to activities taking place under the Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova, such as an expert opinion on the draft law on the rehabilitation of victims of crimes and forthcoming training for law enforcement officials.

Agenda item 8: Information on the anti-trafficking activities of other international organisations of interest to the Committee of the Parties

31. The Chair invited the Executive Secretary of the Convention to provide information on relevant activities of other international organisations. Referring to the recent report of the European Commission on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings, she mentioned that it will be followed by two other reports before the end of the year and that the European Commission had invited international organisations to provide written contributions to the discussion on the post 2016 EU Strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings (2012-2016). Further, the European Parliament had released a report on trafficking in human beings from a gender perspective in April 2016. On 11-12 April 2016, the OSCE had held the 16th High-Level Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, focusing on combatting trafficking in human beings for the purpose of forced criminality. During this conference, the Council of Europe had co-organised with the OSCE a side-event on "Ending the criminalisation and detention on victims of human trafficking". The Executive Secretary also indicated that the OSCE planned to organise a conference on the prevention of human trafficking for labour exploitation in supply chains in September 2016 in Berlin.

Agenda item 9: State of signatures and ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

32. The Chair informed the Committee that Lichtenstein had ratified the Convention on 27 January 2016 and that Turkey had ratified it on 2 May 2016. As a result, the number of Parties to the Convention had reached 46. Furthermore, the Czech Republic had signed the Convention on 2 May 2016. The Russian Federation remained the one Member State which had not yet signed/ratified the Convention.

Agenda item 10: Dates of future meeting

33. The Chair recalled that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on 4 November 2016 and that it was expected to last a full working day. One of the main purposes of that meeting would be to hold elections of GRETA members. On 18 April 2016, the Secretariat of the Convention had sent letters to 43 Parties to the Convention which had the right to nominate candidates for GRETA membership, inviting them to propose candidates. Subsequently, such a letter had also been sent to Turkey, following the ratification of the Convention by this country. Each Party had to ensure that the national selection procedure leading to the nomination of candidates for GRETA was in accordance with published national guidelines or otherwise transparent and designed to lead to the nomination of the most qualified candidates. The names and CVs of candidates should reach the Secretariat by 4 September 2016, i.e. no later than two months before the date of the elections.

Agenda item 11: Other business

34. No other business was discussed at the meeting.

Agenda item 12: Adoption of the list of decisions taken

35. The Committee approved the decisions taken at the meeting.

Appendix I Agenda

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the draft agenda**
- 3. Exchange of views with the President of GRETA**
- 4. Examination of GRETA's second round reports on the implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark Georgia and the Republic of Moldova and adoption of recommendations in respect of these Parties**
- 5. Government reports submitted in reply to Committee of the Parties recommendations**
- 6. Follow up to be given to government reports submitted in reply to Committee of the Parties recommendations**
- 7. Co-operation activities aimed at strengthening the implementation of GRETA's conclusions and the Committee of the Parties' recommendations**
- 8. Information on the anti-trafficking activities of other international organisations and non-governmental organisations**
- 9. State of signatures and ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings**
- 10. Dates of future meetings**
- 11. Other business**
- 12. Adoption of the list of decisions taken**

Appendix II

List of participants / Liste de participants

Members of the Committee of the Parties / Membres du Comité des Parties

ALBANIA / ALBANIE

Ms Alma KASA
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

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Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire
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ARMENIA / ARMÉNIE

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AUSTRIA / AUTRICHE

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Intern

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to the Council of Europe

Participants of the Committee of the Parties / Participants du Comité des Parties

Ratifying States / États ayant ratifié la Convention (CETS N° 197 enters into force on 01/09/2016)

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Ms Muzaffer Uyav GÜLTEKİN
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COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS / COMITÉ DES MINISTRES

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Président du GRETA

Secretariat / Secrétariat

**Directorate General of Democracy /
Direction générale de la Démocratie**

**Secretariat of the Council of Europe Convention
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Mme Claudia LAM
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Appendix III

Statement made by Ms Kamelia DIMITROVA, Acting Secretary General of the National Commission for Combatting Trafficking in Human Trafficking

The Bulgarian Government welcomes the second Evaluation Report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and specifically the **draft recommendations** on the implementation of the Convention.

The National Commission, as a coordinating body on THB, and a GRETA contact point, has acquainted all stakeholders with the conclusions and recommendations of the report.

The recommendations will serve to guide the development of the national anti-trafficking policy. Draft recommendations have been incorporated in the 2016 National Programme to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and Assist Victims of Trafficking and will be reflected in the national anti-trafficking strategy 2017-2021.

Recommendations have been transformed to actions and actions have already delivered results.

Reflecting on the draft recommendations and conclusions of the report the government has reopened the **two state shelters** for victims of trafficking.

We have opened a **third additional facility for long term reintegration** of victims of trafficking, which provides safe accommodations and opportunity for empowerment of victims, for vocational training and labor market inclusion.

Two additional shelters will be opened in 2017 under Swiss-Bulgarian Cooperation on Identification and Long Term Assistance of Children and Adults Victims of Trafficking.

Echoing the report's recommendations, we have conducted an evaluation of the specific needs of male victims of trafficking. The National Commission will identify this year the most effective option to provide consultation services to male victims of trafficking, possibly in the facilities to be established under Swiss-Bulgarian cooperation programme.

Echoing recommendations for more effective implementation of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) the Commission will submit the National Referral Mechanism to the Council of Ministers to be passed with an official resolution of the by Council. The resolution for adoption of the NRM by the Council of Ministers will raise the legal status of the mechanism and ensure the obligatory nature of its implementation.

Last but not least considering the new migration realities and reflecting on the draft recommendations, the National Commission for Combating Traffic in Human Beings has set to build capacity national stakeholders, including of State Agency for Refugees and the Migration Directorate at Ministry of Interior, to identify victims of trafficking among asylum seekers and irregular migrants.

An important step in this direction is the interagency forum on combating traffic in human beings in mixed migration flows to be held in Sofia June 27, 2016. The event is supported by the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings Ambassador Madina Jarbussynova.

The forum will provide a platform to exchange knowledge on improving identification and assistance of victims of trafficking - third country nationals. The forum will benefit from knowledge and guidelines developed by agencies such as EASO and FRONTEX. The practical discussions will provide an opportunity to present best practices from countries with significant experience in managing migration flows and identifying vulnerable groups of migrants, including victims of trafficking. A particular focus will be on developing indicators for the identification of victims of trafficking in the mixed migration flows. Training for staff from the State Agency for Refugees and other migration authorities will take place after the event.

In the field of prevention, and reflecting on draft recommendations, a national campaign to prevent trafficking for labour exploitation is currently implemented by the National Commission.

All these actions and further subsequent measures taken to improve implementation of Convention will be provided in our report due on 23 May 2017.

Finally, I would like to once again thank the Council of Europe Convention monitoring body, GRETA, and its Secretariat for giving the Bulgarian government impetus and guidance in our efforts to combat trafficking in human beings and assist victims.

Appendix IV

Statement made by Ms Ankica VRKLJAN SUČIĆ, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Croatia

Croatia attaches great importance to action against trafficking in human beings and highly appreciates activities of GRETA in this respect.

The Croatian authorities express their gratitude for the comprehensive work and efforts made by GRETA and its Secretariat in preparing the second report on the implementation of the CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Croatia.

We thank GRETA for constructive dialogue and cooperation during the evaluation process and we are looking forward to continuous cooperation with GRETA.

We have no additional comments concerning the Draft Recommendation and would like to affirm that the conclusions contained in the report will be duly taken into consideration by the Croatian authorities in their anti-trafficking activities.

Croatia would also like to affirm its readiness to continue strengthening the comprehensive approach and cooperation in the fight against all forms of trafficking in human beings.

Appendix V

Statement made by Mr Mikheil SULABERIDZE, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Georgia

Mr Chairman,

First of all I would like to thank GRETA experts for their visit to Georgia and valuable recommendations expressed in the report.

Combating Trafficking in Human Beings is one of the key priorities of the Government of Georgia. Under the policy of the "4Ps" the Government is committed to take efficient measures to enhance Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership.

In June last year Georgian authorities were privileged to meet the GRETA experts during their official visit to Georgia. The meetings with all branches of Government and civil society organisations were very fruitful and we received the helpful feedback from the experts.

The current report of GRETA fairly notes that after first evaluation report of GRETA, Georgia has made significant progress in fight against trafficking.

Special attention is paid to the anti-trafficking activities carried out the Interagency Council set up in 2006. The Council remains indispensable in adopting serious and sustainable measures on combating Trafficking in Human Beings, promotes cooperation and involvement of NGOs in policy-making process which demonstrates a high level of trust between the public bodies and NGOs.

The Georgian authorities welcome the positive assessment of further refinement of the national legislation and establishment of Labour Inspectorate and special units under the Ministry of Interior aiming at promotion of proactive identification of Trafficking in Human Beings victims.

The Government of Georgia appreciates the evaluation of the reforms implemented in terms of fight against human trafficking and recommendations given by the GRETA. The assessment of the experts of GRETA is highly worthwhile and beneficial for further developing Georgian counter-trafficking policy.

Georgian authorities would highly appreciate the effort of GRETA to gain access to the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and to reflect the broader human rights situation on the ground in the next evaluation round visits to Georgia, as underlined in the decision of 12 May 2015 of the Committee of Ministers.

To conclude, let me once again thank GRETA experts for their work done and express will of my authorities to continue fruitful cooperation with GRETA in the future.

Thank you.

Appendix VI

Statement made by Ambassador Corina CĂLUGĂRU, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova

Mr Chair,

- Allow me from the outset to extend our gratitude for the continuous support provided by the Council of Europe to the Republic of Moldova on implementing the anti-trafficking agenda.
- In this context, we highly value the work conducted in a professional manner by GRETA in drafting the final Report concerning the implementation by the Republic of Moldova of the Council of Europe Convention on Actions against Trafficking in Human Beings.
- The results achieved by the Moldovan Government in preventing and combating trafficking in human being are a conclusive proof of concentrated efforts and close coordination process between all relevant stakeholders.
- The national priorities in this specific domain are envisaging to enhance the legal framework and consolidate institutional capacities in order to identify, prevent and fight against THB and to sanction immediately the traffickers.

Mr Chair,

- Taking this opportunity I would like to highlight a number of updates in this area.
- By Government Decision of 24 March 2016 the Draft Law on Rehabilitation of Victims of crime was approved and sent for examination to the Parliament, along with the Council of Europe expertise. Therefore, I would like to thank once again GRETA for the provided assistance.
- Between 12-13 April 2016, a training for law enforcement institutions was organized with support of IOM Moldova, which focused on financial investigations in cases of human trafficking.
- On 16 May 2016 the meeting of National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings took place. Among others, the members discussed the final comments of the Government of the Republic of Moldova on the GRETA draft Report and approved the regulation on the organization of the national contest for selection of candidates eligible to serve as members of GRETA.
- This year, the National Plan for Preventing and Combating THB (2014-2016), as well as National Referral System Strategy come to an end. As a result, the anti-trafficking community shall undertake efforts in order to accede to a more strategic level of international standards enforcement. It is planned to develop a national strategic document that would join the mission of the Action Plan and the National Referral System Strategy.
- The document will be drafted based on the GRETA recommendations, GTiP, and other relevant international standards, as well as based on national reports and expertise, so as to meet the needs of the beneficiaries, specialists in preventing and combating THB, and the new trends emerging at the national and international level.
- Finally, I would like thank once again GRETA, for maintaining a fruitful cooperation, meaningful dialogue and substantial support the authorities of my country have always enjoyed.
- We remain open for similar constructive approach in the future, mainly in the implementation of the recommendation for the second evaluation round.

Thank you.

Appendix VII

Statement made by Ms Pascale MILLIM, Senior Government Advisor at the Ministry of Justice of Luxembourg

We wish to thank GRETA for this opportunity to express our views.

We feel it important to point out that GRETA's evaluation and the highly relevant and constructive recommendations resulting from it have enabled the Grand Duchy to improve its efforts to combat trafficking in human beings.

We can assure you that the measures set out in the report concerning us are actively followed up.

We place strong emphasis on protecting victims and already work with neighbouring States with a view to placements for victims and sensitive witnesses in trafficking cases. Given the small size of Luxembourg's territory, protection measures limited to national level are unlikely to be effective. Under Luxembourg's Presidency of Benelux, running from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016, the aspect of collaboration between the NGOs tasked with providing support and accommodation for THB victims will be explored at the level of Benelux.

Training days and a conference are planned for autumn 2016 and we are seeking, within the framework of the Benelux Presidency, to arrive at recommendations for stronger victim protection.

New legislative measures are also being drawn up.

We hope to be able to submit the results of all our measures and initiatives during the second evaluation round at the end of this year.

Thank you for your attention.

Appendix VIII

Statement made by Mr Darko NINKOV, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Serbia

The Serbian delegation regrets the delay in submitting the Report on measures and activities in 2014 and 2015 which occurred due to the inner procedures.

The Report presents a comprehensive overview of the activities in the field of fight against human trafficking in Serbia. As it shows, the authorities of the Republic of Serbia have undertaken significant efforts regarding the proposals of GRETA and we believe that the existing legal framework, as well as its implementation, has been further improved.

In that view, my government would like to thank GRETA for its valuable advice and good cooperation, attaching a great importance to continuing this dialogue, as well as to its general commitment to the fight against human trafficking.

We also consider very significant the cooperation that the relevant Serbian authorities had with international organisations and other states in this field. It was mainly conducted through exchange of expertise, joint police investigations and exchange of information, through financial or other support. Also, several agreements with states or international organisations, focusing on the fight against human trafficking or including references to it, were concluded in 2014 and 2015.

Thank you.

Appendix IX

Statement made by Mr Sandi ČURIN, Secretary of the European Affairs and International Co-operation Office, Ministry of the Interior of Slovenia

Dear Chairman, members of the Committee, ladies and gentlemen,

At its 13th meeting on 7 February 2014 in Strasbourg, the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention discussed the GRETA report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking in human beings in Slovenia and adopted **Recommendations CP(2014)7** for Slovenia. The Committee of the Parties also invited the Slovenian government to provide information on the measures adopted and the realisation of the recommendations by **7 February 2016**.

The Slovenian government took note of both the GRETA report and the recommendations. Altogether, 26 recommendations were made, divided among 14 chapters, and they were transposed into the Action plan for the fight against trafficking in human beings, approved by the Slovenian Government on 8 January 2015.

Therefore, Slovenia implemented the recommendations by directly transposing them into a binding implementing act. This by itself was not a guarantee of all recommendations being actually implemented in practice. At the expert level, every effort was invested into their implementation. In cooperation with the secretariat of the Convention, a round table was organised in Ljubljana on 17 April 2015, bringing together all representatives of the inter-ministerial working group for the fight against trafficking in human beings (IMWG). The key contribution of the round table was the attendance of GRETA representatives, and together we reviewed the implementation of the convention provisions and recommendations. The meeting was especially useful in that it highlighted what needs to be improved and upgraded by individual ministries to make the fight against the whole phenomenon of trafficking in human beings more effective. As the national coordinator, at the end of 2015 I prepared a report on the implementation of the recommendations, which was adopted by the IMWG and approved by the Government on 3 February 2016. The report on the implementation of the recommendations was thus submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention on time.

The majority of recommendations have been implemented and I would like to emphasize some that I see as being of key importance:

- in July 2015, the Criminal Code of the Republic of Slovenia was amended, and three new paragraphs were added in Article 113, which introduced sanctions for users of services provided by victims of trafficking in human beings if the users are aware of the fact that they are victims of trafficking, and criminalisation of forgery of documents intended for a criminal offence of trafficking in human beings. A new article 132.a was introduced, criminalising forced marriages.
- all the planned activities in the field of preventive action have been carried out as well as most of the training of practitioners in the area of action against trafficking in human beings.
- on the basis of a public tender process, the Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities were responsible for selecting providers of care for the victims of trafficking in human beings both as crisis accommodation in the duration of up to 30 days as well as long-term safe accommodation.
- in December 2015 the Inter-ministerial Working Group for the fight against trafficking in human beings adopted a manual for the identification, assistance and protection of victims of trafficking, which details the prescribed courses of action by all competent institutions in the field of trafficking in human beings. There is a special chapter on children victims. The attached indicators ensure identification procedure and will be of assistance to all practitioners who come in contacts with victims in the course of their work. The manual was approved by the government of the Republic of Slovenia on 5 May 2016.

There are still some areas pointed out in the recommendations that are still not fully aligned with the action plan currently in force, for example:

- the work of law enforcement authorities needs to be intensified as regards the identification and prosecution of the criminal offence of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation and forced labour. Forced prostitution as the prevailing purpose of trafficking in human beings is adequately prosecuted in Slovenia, which results in convictions. Additional efforts therefore need to be directed to other purposes of exploitation.
- law enforcement authorities need to take advantage of cross-border cooperation, especially by setting-up joint investigation teams. In this area, Slovenia has the knowhow and potential since for four years it led the European project of establishing the conditions for setting-up joint investigation teams in South-Eastern Europe and set up a good cooperation network.
- what needs to be stepped up is the cooperation of judges, prosecutors and social workers, especially by upgrading their knowledge on trafficking in human beings, which would enable better results.
- when it comes to the implementation of rights of victims of trafficking in human beings, the legislation on the compensation to victims needs to get amended so that all victims enjoy the right to compensation. Currently the Criminal Procedure Act is being amended to more effectively regulate this area.
- the systemic solution to the problem of accommodation of trafficked children who are foreign nationals is lacking. Thirty-day crisis accommodation is provided for, while subsequent accommodation is arranged on a case-by-case basis, bearing in mind that there are very few such cases.
- lastly, I would like to point out the lack of personnel support to the national coordinator. The Inter-ministerial working group led by the coordinator is merely a consultative body, which confers legitimacy to the adopted measures, while the entire area of coordination and reporting is left to the coordinator, who receives no professional or technical support.

Despite some gaps we believe that most recommendations and their implementation had a very positive impact on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings in Slovenia and on the attainment of the Convention's standards. This is also a result of good cooperation with GRETA experts as well as the entire Secretariat of the Convention. And for this I would like to thank you on behalf of the Slovenian delegation.