



Strasbourg, 8 April 2014

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

13th meeting of the Committee of the Parties

(Strasbourg, 7 February 2014)

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 13th meeting on 7 February 2014 in Strasbourg.

2. The meeting was opened by Ambassador Pekka HYVÖNEN (Finland), Chair of the Committee, who invited the members of the Committee to adopt the draft agenda of the meeting. 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 GRETA, made reference to the last three evaluation reports published by GRETA on Luxembourg, Serbia and Slovenia. He drew a number of parallels between the three reports. He noted that all three countries had put in place national co-ordination frameworks. However, GRETA has called on the Serbian and Slovenian authorities to provide them with adequate means so that they can fulfil effectively their role.

4. The President mentioned that the underreporting of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation had been highlighted in the three reports. GRETA had stressed the need to improve the identification of victims with better involvement of civil society and the labour inspection. In Luxembourg, for instance, co-operation among the different actors needed to be institutionalised. GRETA had welcomed the efforts made by the Serbian authorities to adopt a multidisciplinary approach to the identification of victims of trafficking through the setting up of the Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking.

5. As regards the recovery and reflection period, he noted that it was of 90 days in Luxembourg, higher than the minimum of 30 days required by the Convention, and that it was insufficiently defined in Serbian law. He further insisted on the need not to make it dependent on the victims' co-operation with the authorities and to improve information given to victims about it.

6. With regard to victim protection during investigations and proceedings, the President noted the GRETA had stressed the need to make full use of existing provisions in the law and/or to improve them in all three reports. In the report on Slovenia, GRETA had required from the authorities to use all available protection measures in THB cases. In the report on Luxembourg, GRETA had asked the authorities to strengthen legislation in this field. In the case of Serbia, GRETA had expressed concern concerning the practice of direct confrontations between victims and accused during court hearings.

7. Mr Le Coz further noted that GRETA had emphasised the importance of state compensation funds and victims' access to them. Compensation should not be linked to the victims' regular stay at the time of trafficking, and measures should be taken to allow compensation when victims have been repatriated. Finally, he reported recommendations in the three reports on the security of victims returned to their country of origin. In the case of victims repatriated to Slovenia, GRETA had underlined that they should be fully taken care of. GRETA had also asked Luxembourg to ensure the security of victims returned to their country of origin in order to avoid re-trafficking, in particular by carrying out risk assessments and co-operating with the authorities and other organisations of the country of origin.

8. The President also informed the Committee that the second evaluation round was under preparation and that for this purpose a study had been prepared by consultants in order to take stock of the main results of the evaluation reports already adopted by GRETA and identify areas to be further explored during the next evaluation round.

9. The Chair thanked Mr Le Coz for his presentation and opened the floor to members of the Committee.

10. Ms Nicole ZÜNDORF-HINTE (Germany) raised the question of what should be done with government replies to be prepared two years after the adoption of the Committee's recommendations, including in the context of the second round of evaluation, and suggested that this issue be put on the agenda of a forthcoming meeting of the Committee. Mr Le Coz indicated that, for its part, GRETA would use them as a source of information within the framework of the second round. Irrespective of how the Committee decided to deal with government replies to recommendations, he underlined the importance of keeping a uniform interpretation of the Convention. The Chair shared this view and supported the proposal to put the issue of the follow-up to be given to government replies on the agenda of the next meeting.

11. The Chair enquired about the exchange of views that took place between GRETA and the European Committee on Organ Transplantation (CD-P-TO) on 5 November 2013. Mr Le Coz indicated that GRETA's wish was to benefit from the expertise of this body to examine how the question of trafficking for the purpose of organ removal could be tackled in the second evaluation round.

Agenda item 4: Examination of GRETA's reports on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Luxembourg, Serbia and Slovenia

4.1 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Luxembourg

12. The Chair invited the representative of Luxembourg to take the floor concerning GRETA's final report on the implementation of the Convention by Luxembourg. Ambassador Michèle EISENBARTH expressed her authorities' satisfaction with the constructive dialogue with GRETA during the evaluation process. She informed the Committee about a draft law strengthening the rights of victims that was to be adopted in March 2014. She also indicated that the Committee for monitoring action against trafficking in human beings was about to be set up so as to formalise and improve co-ordination. While there was no fully fledged national action plan on trafficking, the fight against human trafficking formed an integral part of the government's platform for action. The system of assistance to victims of trafficking will be strengthened and so will co-operation with neighbouring countries where often victims come from for the day and go back to in the evening. Ambassador Eisenbarth underlined that Luxembourg would do its best to implement GRETA's proposals.

13. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Luxembourg and decided to request the Luxembourg Government to inform it of the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 7 February 2016.

4.2 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Serbia

14. The Chair invited the representative of Serbia to take the floor concerning GRETA's final report on the implementation of the Convention by Serbia. Mr Saša GOSIĆ, Independent Police Inspector at the Department for Combating Trans-border Crime and Criminal Intelligence Operations of the Ministry of Interior, thanked GRETA and the delegation that visited Serbia for their co-operation throughout the evaluation process.

15. Mr Gosić indicated that the evaluation report would help improving policies to combat trafficking in Serbia. He assured the Committee that all relevant actors including NGOs are involved in the fight against trafficking in Serbia. He indicated that the evaluation report had been translated into Serbian and that his authorities had agreed to the publication of their reply to the questionnaire. He indicated that GRETA's proposals had been sent to all relevant stakeholders for information and action within their respective mandates. The full text of Mr Gosić's statement can be found in Appendix III.

16. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Serbia and decided to request the Serbian Government to inform it of the measures taken to comply with this recommendation by 7 February 2016.

4.3 Draft recommendation to be adopted in respect of Slovenia

17. The Chair invited the representative of Slovenia to take the floor concerning GRETA's final report on the implementation of the Convention by Slovenia. Mr Sandi ČURIN, State Under-Secretary at the European Affairs and International Co-operation Office of the Ministry of the Interior, thanked GRETA and the Secretariat for their excellent co-operation during the evaluation process.

18. Mr Čurin indicated that all GRETA's proposals were fully taken into account and that the report gives an objective picture of the state of THB in Slovenia. He referred to Slovenia's participation in a two-year project funded by the EU for the training of prosecutors and the police in the Western Balkans on setting up Joint Investigation Teams and improving the fight against THB. He also mentioned the preparation of a manual to improve the identification and referral of victims. He stressed that Slovenia would do its utmost to put into practice the proposals made by GRETA. The full text of Mr Čurin's statement can be found in Appendix IV.

19. The Committee adopted the recommendation in respect of Slovenia and decided to request the Slovenian Government to inform it of the measures taken to comply with the recommendation by 7 February 2016.

Agenda item 5: Government replies to Committee of Parties recommendations

5.1. Albania

20. No representative of Albania was present to take the floor concerning the measures taken by the Albanian authorities to comply with the Committee's recommendation on the implementation of the Convention. The report on the measures taken by the Albanian authorities is available in document THB-CP(2014)4.

5.2. Bulgaria

21. The Chair invited the representative of Bulgaria to take the floor concerning the measures taken by the Bulgarian authorities to comply with the Committee's recommendation on the implementation of the Convention. Ms Detelina STAMBOLOVA-IVANOVA, Deputy to the Permanent Representative, thanked GRETA and its Secretariat for the excellent co-operation during the evaluation process. The full text of Ms Stambolova-Ivanova's statement is set out in Appendix V.

22. Ms Stambolova-Ivanova underlined that the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings had prepared the reply to the Committee's recommendation together with the nine local commissions, six other organisations, and 32 NGOs.

23. She indicated that as a result of amendments to the Criminal Code and the Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Act of 27 September 2013, begging as well as organ, tissue and fluid removal had been included to the list of exploitation purposes of THB. A new provision of the Criminal Code provides for the involvement of officials in a trafficking offence in the performance of their duties as an aggravating circumstance. The non-punishment of victims of trafficking for unlawful acts which they were compelled to commit had also been expressly included.

24. Ms Stambolova-Ivanova also mentioned that awareness-raising activities had been organised in orphanages, specialised institutions for children and persons with disabilities, schools and universities. There had also been partnerships with the private sector for the prevention of trafficking and re-trafficking. Some targeted training had been organised, for example for social workers, crisis centre staff, policemen, prosecutors, investigators, judges, diplomats, judges, etc. Finally, Ms Stambolova-Ivanova indicated that the Bulgarian authorities had continued international co-operation in THB cases (Slovenia, Austria, the Netherlands, Greece, France, etc.).

25. The Chair then gave the floor to Ambassador Jocelyne CABALLERO (France) who praised the co-operation between the Bulgarian and French authorities within the framework of anti-trafficking action. Ambassador Caballero proposed to place the issue of co-operation assistance on the Committee's agenda for a future meeting.

26. The Chair agreed with this proposal and gave the floor to the Executive Secretary of the Convention who stressed that a link must indeed be made between monitoring and co-operation. The Secretariat of the Convention was allocated a budget for co-operation aimed at supporting the implementation of GRETA's and the Committee of the Parties' recommendations, but only one administrator was added to the Anti-trafficking Division to deal with the organisation of such activities. Round table meetings had been organised in nine countries already evaluated by GRETA and more such meetings were being planned in 2014. In December 2013 a workshop for legal professionals in South-East Europe had also been organised in Belgrade. The Executive Secretary indicated that a stock-taking document with proposals for future activities could be prepared for a future meeting.

5.3. Croatia

27. The Chair invited the representative of Croatia to take the floor concerning the measures taken by the Croatian authorities to comply with the Committee's recommendation on the implementation of the Convention. Ambassador Miroslav PAPA thanked GRETA and its Secretariat for their co-operation. The full text of Ambassador Papa's statement is set out in Appendix VI.

28. Ambassador Papa underlined some key measures that had been taken by the Croatian authorities since the publication of GRETA's evaluation report. A new framework for data collection had been created in 2013, as well as an improved database of all criminal cases. A new awareness campaign had been launched. A national action plan for 2012-2015 had been adopted with a focus on strengthening the proactive identification of victims, especially children.

29. Ambassador Papa indicated that a new Criminal Code had entered into force in January 2013, with an amended definition of trafficking in human beings, which now includes a provision criminalising acts relating to travel or identity documents which aim at facilitating human trafficking. Finally, he underlined that the EU Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims had been transposed.

5.4. Denmark

30. The Chair invited the representative of Denmark to take the floor concerning the measures taken by the Danish authorities to comply with the Committee's recommendation on the implementation of the Convention. Ms Maken TZEGGAI, Deputy to the Permanent Representative, thanked GRETA and the Secretariat for their co-operation. The full text of Ms Tzeggai's statement is set out in Appendix VII.

31. Ms Tzeggai underlined that the fight against trafficking remained a priority for the Danish authorities which intend to further improve the protection of victims. The 3rd national action plan against human trafficking covering the period 2011-2014 is being implemented. It focuses on four areas: (i) improving identification and prosecution of traffickers; (ii) improving identification of and assistance to victims of trafficking; (iii) increasing public awareness with a view to reducing demand; (iv) improving international co-operation, in particular prevention in countries of origin. An external assessment of the implementation of the national action plan is already being carried out. Finally, Ms Tzeggai reiterated that the Danish authorities attach great importance to the proposals made by GRETA in its evaluation report whilst having some reserves on some of them.

Agenda item 6: State of signatures and ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

32. The Committee noted that since its 12th meeting (7 October 2013) Belarus had acceded to the Convention on 26 November 2013.

33. The Chair informed the Committee that together with the Executive Secretary he had held meetings with representatives of the Council of Europe member states that were not yet Parties to the Convention. These meetings had taken place in a constructive atmosphere. He also referred to a side-event triggered by this exercise which was organised by the Secretariat of the Convention and the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly to encourage support by parliamentarians for the ratification and implementation of the Convention. This side-event, entitled "Promoting the ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Anti-trafficking Convention – The role of parliamentarians in the fight against human trafficking", had taken place during the last session of the Parliamentary Assembly in January 2014.

34. The Chair gave the floor to the representative of Turkey, Ms Fatma Berin OKUR, Deputy to the Permanent Representative. She indicated that many legal and administrative changes had been made in Turkey to bring the situation in line with the Convention. Ms Okur added that efforts were being made to improve co-ordination and the knowledge of the Convention in the different ministries as well as members of parliament.

35. The representative of Estonia, Ms Kärt JUHASOO-LAWRENCE, Deputy to the Permanent Representative, informed the Committee that preparations for ratifying the Convention were well under way and that a bill for ratification should be before Parliament in the spring of 2014.

Agenda item 7: Information on Council of Europe activities of interest to the Committee of the Parties

36. The Executive Secretary of the Convention informed the Committee about the joint Council of Europe-OSCE Conference "Not For Sale – Joining Forces Against Trafficking In Human Beings", on the occasion of Austria's Chairmanship of the Council of Europe and the Swiss Chairmanship of the OSCE, which will take place on 17-18 February 2014 in Vienna. The aim of the conference is to take stock of the progress made so far and discuss the challenges in the implementation of the Convention and the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings. She indicated that there would be a high-level political opening followed by thematic discussions.

37. The Executive Secretary also mentioned a side-event co-organised by the Council of Europe and the Austrian authorities ("Trafficking in human beings – a severe form of violence against women and girls and a flagrant violation of human rights: the Council of Europe response") at the 58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, in New York, on 10 March 2014. Ambassador Caballero indicated that another related side-event of this session would be co-organised by the Council of Europe and the French authorities concerning the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, in the presence of the French Minister for Women's Rights, Ms Najat VALLAUD-BELKACEM.

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

38. Ambassador Luisella PAVAN-WOOLFE, representative of the European Union (EU), informed the Committee of recent developments in the EU as regards action against trafficking in human beings. She noted that 20 EU Member States had so far notified full transposition of Directive 2011/36/EU (the transposition deadline was 6 April 2013). She indicated that the European Commission had launched infringement procedures against member states which have not notified transposition yet.

39. Ambassador Pavan-Woolfe informed the Committee about several activities implemented within the framework of the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings. The EU Civil Society Platform against trafficking in human beings had held its second meeting on 9-10 December 2013 in Brussels. Four studies had been launched on the following issues: case-law on THB for the purpose of labour exploitation; the gender dimension of THB; high-risk groups; and possible preventative initiatives. Further, the European Commission had launched a new data collection exercise on human trafficking and Eurostat's second report on human trafficking data would be published in June 2014. Moreover, the European Business Coalition was expected to be launched later in the year. To mark the European Day against Human Trafficking, the Lithuanian Presidency of the EU had organised an international conference on the internet and links with THB on 18 October 2013 in Vilnius.

40. In reply to the question of possible accession of the EU to the Convention raised by Ms Zündorf-Hinte (Germany), Ambassador Pavan-Woolfe underlined that the EU was first encouraging all EU member states to ratify the Convention and once this is the case it would examine the opportunity of acceding to the Convention.

41. The representative of the Republic of Moldova, Ms Lilia ILIEȘ, Deputy to the Permanent Representative, made reference to a regional conference co-organised by UNODC and the Republic of Moldova entitled "Strengthening the Criminal Justice Responses to Trafficking in Persons in South Eastern Europe – Combating Abuse of the Internet and Strengthening Cross-border Intelligence Sharing" and which had been held in Chisinau on 5-6 December 2013. The President of GRETA had made a presentation at this conference.

42. The Executive Secretary of the Convention informed the Committee of current discussions within the ILO about supplementing Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour with a protocol dealing specifically with THB.

Agenda item 9: Dates of future meetings

43. The Committee decided to hold its 13th meeting on 7 July 2014 and its 14th meeting on 5 December 2014.

Agenda item 10: Other business

44. The Chair informed the Committee that the terms of office of two GRETA members (from Austria and the Netherlands) would expire in December 2014.

45. The Executive Secretary of the Convention indicated that the Secretariat would send a letter to state parties eligible to send candidates, i.e. any state party which does not have a national already member of GRETA, as well as Austria and the Netherlands, the nationals of which will have their first term of office as GRETA members ending this year. The deadline for submitting names will be two months ahead of the election which will take place at the 15th meeting of the Committee.

Agenda item 11: Adoption of the list of decisions taken

46. 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 reports on the implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Luxembourg, Serbia and Slovenia and adoption of recommendations in respect of these Parties**
 - 4.1 Draft recommendation in respect of Luxembourg
 - 4.2 Draft recommendation in respect of Serbia
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- 5. Government replies to Committee of the Parties recommendations**
 - 5.1. Albania
 - 5.2. Bulgaria
 - 5.2. Croatia
 - 5.3. Denmark
- 6. State of signatures and ratifications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings**
- 7. Information on Council of Europe activities of interest to the Committee of the Parties**
- 8. Information on the activities of other international organisations of interest to the Committee of the Parties**
- 9. Dates of future meetings**
- 10. Other business**
- 11. 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

M. Dastid KORESHI (*apologised/excusé*)
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
 Représentant Permanent Adjoint
 auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

ANDORRA / ANDORRE

M. Josep DALLERÈS
 Ambassadeur Extraordinaire
 et Plénipotentiaire
 Représentant Permanent
 auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

ARMENIA / ARMÉNIE

Ms Elen HARUTYUNYAN
 Deputy to the Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

AUSTRIA / AUTRICHE

Mr Gilbert SCHENKENBACH
 Deputy to the Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

AZERBAIJAN / AZERBAÏDJAN

Mr Emin ASLANOV
 Deputy to the Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

BELGIUM / BELGIQUE

M. Dirk VAN EECKHOUT (*apologised/excusé*)
 Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire
 Représentant Permanent
 auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE-HERZÉGOVINE

Mr Branko BABIC
 Deputy to the Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

BULGARIA / BULGARIE

Ms Detelina STAMBOLOVA-IVANOVA
 Deputy to the Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

CROATIA / CROATIE

Mr Miroslav PAPA
 Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
 Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

Mr Ivan MINTAS
 Deputy to the Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

CYPRUS / CHYPRE

Mr Stavros HATZIYIANNIS
 Deputy Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

DENMARK / DANEMARK

Ms Maken TZEGGAI
 Deputy to the Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

FINLAND / FINLANDE

Mr Pekka HYVÖNEN
 Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
 Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

Ms Tiina SORSIMO
 Deputy to the Permanent Representative
 to the Council of Europe

FRANCE

Mme Jocelyne CABALLERO
Ambassadeur
Représentante Permanente
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

Mme Catherine BOBKO
Adjointe au Représentant Permanent
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

GEORGIA / GÉORGIE

Mr Konstantin KORKELIA (*apologised/excusé*)
Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

GERMANY / ALLEMAGNE

Ms Nicole ZÜNDORF-HINTE
Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren
Frauen und Jugend

HUNGARY / HONGRIE

Mr Ferenc ROBÁK (*apologised/excusé*)
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

ICELAND / ISLANDE

Ms Berglind ÁSGEIRSDÓTTIR (*apologised/excusée*)
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe

IRELAND / IRLANDE

Mr Martin SWITZER
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

ITALY / ITALIE

M. Giuseppe CAVAGNA
Représentant Permanent Adjoint
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

LATVIA / LETTONIE

Mr Mārtiņš KLĪVE
Deputy Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

LITHUANIA / LITUANIE

Ms Ugnė MATULEVIČIENĖ (*apologised/excusé*)
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

LUXEMBOURG

Mme Michèle EISENBARTH
Ambassadeur extraordinaire et plénipotentiaire
Représentante Permanente
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

MALTA / MALTE

Mr Joseph FILLETTI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

**REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA /
REPUBLICQUE DE MOLDOVA**

Ms Lilia ILIEȘ
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

MONTENEGRO / MONTÉNÉGRO

Ms Ana VUKADINOVIĆ (*apologised/excusée*)
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

NETHERLANDS / PAYS BAS

Ms Kanta ADHIN
Deputy Permanent Representative
Permanent Representation
to the Council of Europe

Mr Merlin FERATOVIĆ
Intern
Permanent Representation
to the Council of Europe

NORWAY / NORVÈGE

Ms Astrid Emilie HELLE
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

Ms Ingrid Thorbnes
Intern
Permanent Representation
to the Council of Europe

POLAND / POLOGNE

Ms Marta KACZMARSKA
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

PORTUGAL

M. Paulo NEVES POCINHO
Représentant Permanent Adjoint
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

ROMANIA / ROUMANIE

Mr George BULIGA
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

SAN MARINO / SAINT-MARIN

Mme Michela BOVI
Représentante Permanente Adjointe
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

SERBIA / SERBIE

Mr Zoran POPOVIĆ
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

Ms Vanja RADONJIĆ-RAKIĆ
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

Mr Saša GOSIĆ
Independent Police Inspector
Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia
Department for Combating Trans-border Crime and
Criminal Intelligence Operations

SLOVAK REPUBLIC / RÉPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE

Mr Drahoslav ŠTEFÁNEK
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

Mr Marcel BABICZ
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

Mr. Vladimír KOMAN
MBA, Information center for fight against Trafficking with
Human Beings and Crime prevention
Ministry of Interior
Bratislava

Ms. Jana MITOŠINKOVÁ
Crime Prevention Department
Ministry of Interior
Bratislava

SLOVENIA / SLOVÉNIE

Mr Damjan BERGANT
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

Mr Sandi ČURIN
National Anti-trafficking Coordinator
Ministry of the Interior

SPAIN / ESPAGNE

Mr Luis TARIN MARTIN
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

SWEDEN / SUÈDE

Ms Sara FINNIGAN
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

SWITZERLAND / SUISSE

M. Benedict GUBLER
Représentant Permanent Adjoint
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

**"THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF
MACEDONIA" / « L'EX-REPUBLIQUE YOUGOSLAVE
DE MACEDOINE »**

Mr Zoran BARBUTOV
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

UKRAINE

Mr Oleksandr KULIKOVSKYI
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME UNI

Mr Mark GOREY
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

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

Signatory States / États signataires

BELARUS/ BÉLARUS

M. Dmitry YARMOLYUK (*apologised/excusé*)
Représentant du Bélarus
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

ESTONIA / ESTONIE

Ms Gea RENNEL (*apologised/excusé*)
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

GREECE / GRECE

M. Iraklis ASTERIADIS (*apologised/excusé*)
Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire
Représentant Permanent
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

TURKEY / TURQUIE

Ms Fatma Berin OKUR
Deputy to the Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES / ORGANES DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS / COMITÉ DES MINISTRES

Mr Drahoslav ŠTEFÁNEK
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
to the Council of Europe

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / ASSEMBLÉE PARLEMENTAIRE DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONGRÈS DES POUVOIRS LOCAUX ET RÉGIONAUX DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Mr Herwig VAN STAA (*apologised/excusé*)
President / Président

COUNCIL OF EUROPE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS / COMMISSAIRE AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Mr Nils MUIŽNIEKS (*apologised/excusé*)

CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONAL NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONFERENCE DES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES NON- GOUVERNEMENTALES DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Karin NORDMEYER
Zonta International Committee Chair
President UN Women NC Germany

International Intergovernmental Organisations / Organisations intergouvernementales internationales

EUROPEAN UNION / UNION EUROPÉENNE

Mme Luisella PAVAN-WOOLFE
Ambassadeur
Chef de la Délégation de l'Union Européenne
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

M. Giovanni Carlo BRUNO
Adjoint au Chef de la Délégation de l'Union
Européenne
auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

Others / Autres

GROUP OF EXPERTS ON ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS / GROUPE D'EXPERTS SUR LA LUTTE CONTRE LA TRAITE DES ETRES HUMAINS (GRETA)

Mr Nicolas LE COZ
President of GRETA

Secretariat / Secrétariat**Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law / Direction générale des Droits de l'homme et État de Droit****Secretariat of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA and the Committee of the Parties) / Secrétariat de la Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains (GRETA et Comité des Parties)**

E-mail: Trafficking@coe.int
 Fax: +33 388 41 27 05

Ms Petya NESTOROVA
 Executive Secretary

Mr David DOLIDZE
 Administrator

Mr Gerald DUNN
 Administrator

Ms Ita MIRIANASHVILI (*apologised/excusée*)
 Administrator

Mr Markus LEHNER
 Administrator

Ms Johanna NELLES
 Administrator

Ms Rona STERRICKS (*apologised/excusée*)
 Principal Administrative Assistant

Ms Melissa CHARBONNEL
 Administrative Assistant

Ms Giovanna MONTAGNA (*apologised/excusée*)
 Administrative Assistant

Ms Fabienne SCHAEFFER-LOPEZ
 Administrative Assistant

Parliamentary Assembly / Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly**Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe / Congrès des Pouvoirs Locaux et Régionaux du Conseil de l'Europe****Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights / Commissaire aux Droits de l'Homme du Conseil de l'Europe****Interpreters / Interprètes**

Mme Lucie DE BURLET

Mme Chloé CHENETIER

M. Jean-Jacques PEDUSSAUD

Appendix III

Statement made by Mr Saša GOSIĆ Section for Suppression of Illegal Migrations and Trafficking in Human Beings, Ministry of Interior, Serbia

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee of the Parties, respected Colleagues,

It is a great pleasure to address you on behalf of the Republic of Serbia with respect to GRETA Report and Draft Recommendations within the first monitoring round on the Implementation of the Convention.

We hereby wish to express our gratitude to GRETA delegation who visited Serbia in April 2013: Ms Katerina Levchenko, Mr Jan Van Dijk, Ms Petya Nestorova and Mr David Dolidze on their outstanding cooperation during the mission.

The Republic of Serbia has very gravely participated in this complex process of evaluation of the Convention implementation since receiving the Questionnaire in January 2012.

From the very beginning, the Republic of Serbia recognized evaluation by GRETA as an excellent opportunity to assess not only the level of the Convention implementation, but also current mechanism of identification, protection and assistance to the victims of trafficking in human beings and the criminal prosecution of the traffickers.

Our guiding motive was to identify the gaps in this system with a view of eliminating them and improving the existing solutions.

Numerous of joint activities taken so far, resulted in elaboration of GRETA Report and Proposals that will help improving existing National Referral Mechanism and achieve the full implementation of the Convention.

From its start, the process involved all relevant stakeholders at the national level, including specialized non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors, as well as partner international agencies that we are cooperating with in this domain.

Allow me now to inform you of some of the activities that Serbia has taken since the publication of GRETA Report on 16 January 2014:

- In support of GRETA initiatives, we translated the Report into Serbian with regard to the publication on the website of the Council of Europe;
- We have given our approval to publication of the response to 2012 GRETA Questionnaire to Serbia, as we consider this level of transparency as a key in researching of the phenomenon of THB and improving measures at the national level;
- GRETA Proposals for Serbia (30 in all) were forwarded to all partners for information and future activities within their respective mandates;
- Aiming to promote and implement these Proposals and Recommendations we will be organizing a "round table" at the State level. Our intention is to invite relevant national stakeholders as well as GRETA experts. This will be an opportunity to explain in detail the Report and the Recommendations, draft a "mini action plan" and agree on the activity timeframe. The event will also present an excellent opportunity to exchange best practices in implementation of those areas of the Convention that have been identified as those still needed improvement.

We believe that findings in GRETA Report and Recommendations of the Committee of the Parties are significant for further strengthening of the established system of identification and protection of THB victims in Serbia. We embrace it as important guidance for improvement of our anti-trafficking policies.

The Republic of Serbia is looking forward to continuous constructive cooperation with GRETA. We shall continue to inform the Secretariat on implementation of the Convention, as well as Committee of the Parties about implementation of Recommendations from this evaluation round.

I thank you for your attention.

Appendix IV

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

Dear Chairman, Distinguished Representatives of Contracting States, Your Excellencies,

First and foremost, I would like to thank you on my behalf and on the behalf of the Slovenian experts, the members of the National Anti-trafficking Working Group, for the exceptional cooperation with the GRETA members during the entire evaluation process. Special thanks go to the GRETA Secretariat for their outstanding professionalism and cooperation. I must point out that all of the comments on the Slovenian part were fully taken into account. The result of a great cooperation is the report that objectively reflects the situation in the field of THB in the Republic of Slovenia. Slovenian comments reflect merely acceptance and agreement with the report findings, which should serve to upgrade the existing measures against THB.

This is also the message of the Slovenian Government, which was formally informed with both the report and the proposals of GRETA. I hope and believe that the Slovenian side will grant enough political will and support to implement these proposals. The experts from the government agencies and from the civil society find their implementation necessary and they will present the specific activities with the goal of implementation of the recommendations in the next two-year Action Plan.

Nevertheless, I would like to respond with short comments to the proposals which I consider to be essential.

The first three proposals, which are addressing the integrated approach and coordination, are essential because the coordination and reporting are of crucial importance, both for an integrated approach and implementation of any further measures. They also serve as an indicator of how much attention and resources is the state devoting to the field of THB.

Furthermore, the proposals addressing the training of experts, data collection and research, international cooperation, measures to raise awareness, have already been identified in the two-year action plans and are regularly being carried out. In the past year, an important step was made with the introduction of regular trainings of judges on the issue of THB, as the last instance in the prosecution of such crimes. In trainings of law enforcement agents, Slovenia is also making the progress in the entire SEE region. With the second consecutive two-year project, which was approved and granted by the European Commission, workshops on trainings of prosecutors and police officers from the Western Balkans on the possibilities of setting up JITs for a more effective fight against THB are being conducted across the region. The experts from Europol and Eurojust are also collaborating in this project.

When speaking about the proposals addressing the identification of victims, the referral manual, which will fully cover the individual actions of various entities (which are already being executed in practise, but are not yet formally regulated), is in the process of preparation. Current form of assistance to victims, which is ensured by regular government funding, needs to be improved by introducing measures to upgrade existing systems of assistance to victims of trafficking. As suggested by the proposals, serious considerations in the direction of some legislative amendments, in particular of the Aliens Act and the Criminal Code, are also required.

Let me conclude by saying that I honestly hope that the Republic of Slovenia will do its best to comply with the proposals of GRETA and thereby improve the overall image of actions against THB.

Appendix V

Statement made by Ms Detelina STAMBOLOVA-IVANOVA, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria

The co-ordination and interaction not only among the institutions and with the civil sector as well in combating and preventing trafficking in human beings and protecting the victims are key to the multi-disciplinary and comprehensive implementation of the anti-trafficking policy and prevention among vulnerable groups.

In this regard, in its capacity of a co-ordinating body, the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (NCCTHB) coordinated the preparation of the current report with all 9 Local Commissions for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, 16 NCCTHB member institutions and others whose work is related to the problem; 32 international and non-governmental organisations working to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings.

Taking note of the areas where further action is required by the Committee of the Parties in order to improve the implementation of the Convention by Bulgaria, we would like to underline several of the measures undertaken:

1. The amendments of the Criminal Code and the Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Act of Sep 27, 2014, expand the definition of exploitation which now explicitly includes the following new forms *“removal of organs, tissues, cells or body fluids from victims,”* and *“begging”*.

An aggravating circumstance in the trafficking is added when the act has been committed *by an official* during or in relation to the performance of the person's duties.

A new article was added in the General Part of the Code (Article 16a) which provides explicitly for the “non-punishability of victims of trafficking in human beings.”

“Article 16a. (New – SG, issue 84 of 2013) An act shall not be considered culpably committed if performed by a person who is a victim of human trafficking and has been forced to perform the act in a direct relation to being such a victim.”

2. Regarding protection of the victims of human trafficking, children and adults, in Bulgaria function respectively specialized crisis centres for children and persons victims and shelters for adult victims both types financed by the state budget. Most of them are delegated by the state to be managed by non-governmental organizations.

There are 18 crisis centres and 2 shelters in Bulgaria. The unified expense standard per place in a Crisis Centre was increased as of Jan 01, 2014 and is currently EUR 4 182,89. All expenses of the shelters are borne by the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and for 2013 they equal 43,33% of the total Commission's budget for activities.

After receiving crisis intervention, medical and psychological assistance and services, assistance in the process of witnessing, victims can take up classes for hairdressing, cosmetics, manicure, etc. and many of them have temporary and/or permanent job during their stay in the shelters.

3. In awareness raising and prevention among risk groups, the National Commission, its local structures and traditional partners in the face of institutions, NGOs and representatives of the private sector deem it necessary to develop their work with representatives of the Roma community in Bulgaria who are vulnerable to various types of exploitation. In connection to that, targeted projects, research, trainings and direct work in the community have been executed (in Varna, Burgas, Sofia, Montana, Weliko Turnovo, Pazardjik, Plovdiv, Sliven).

4. Awareness-raising among the most vulnerable to human trafficking group – children and young people, was implemented in orphanages, specialised homes for children and persons with disabilities, correctional homes, schools and universities.

The current report presents thoroughly the campaigns organized by the National and Local Commissions, institutions and NGOs.

It is worth mentioning the stable partnership with the private sector in the prevention of trafficking and re-trafficking in the face of PostBank and Manpower Bulgaria.

5. In the targeted trainings for professions, in the reporting period in the crisis centre for children in Vienna, Austria were conducted trainings for social workers and the personnel of the crisis centres.

Number of multidisciplinary trainings for policemen, prosecutors, investigators, judges, Bulgarian and foreign diplomats, journalists, social worker and clergy representatives were organized.

As a result, higher awareness of the problems is reported, improved cooperation, increased knowledge of the institutional framework and higher number of referred cases between institutions, international and non-governmental organisations was reached.

6. The Government of Bulgaria continues its active cooperation in investigating cases, coordination and information with countries of final destination for exploitation of Bulgarian citizens.

In the reporting period, cooperation with Slovenia, Austria, the Netherlands, France, Greece, Germany, the countries from the Western Balkans and South Eastern Europe, United Kingdom, Portugal, Romania, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, others was developed.

Appendix VI

Statement made by Ambassador Miroslav PAPA, Permanent Representative of Croatia

- Croatia continuously strives to reinforce the comprehensive approach to the fight against all forms of Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) and to strengthen coordination at the national and international level.
- Regarding the significant changes in the data collection and management, a new Protocol on Data Collection and Exchange was developed in 2013. This Protocol covers all of the relevant stakeholders. The purpose of the Protocol on Data Collection and Exchange in the field of fighting trafficking in human beings is to provide relevant data and information to the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities, in order to increase the quantity and quality of the relevant data and the efficiency of the victim identification system, and to provide a solid ground for future trafficking assessments, policy development and resources allocation.
- In addition, State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia has enhanced its data base. The data base contains the number and the type of the State Attorney's decision regarding each individual criminal report, regardless the possible change in legal qualification in further proceedings, thus creating a good "track record".
- As to the recommendation on awareness raising is concerned, the Office for human rights and rights of national minorities started with the implementation of a new public campaign targeted at potential users of services provided by victims of THB, under the motto: "If you are a real man, you will not buy a woman". The campaign mentioned will be implemented throughout one year.
- National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2012-2015 dedicates great attention to strengthening the proactive approach by the police in identifying victims of THB, particularly in relation to minor victims of THB, thus complying with the recommendations given in the chapter "Identification of victims of trafficking in human beings".
- New Criminal Code has entered into force on January 1st 2013. The previous Article 175 CC/97 (trafficking in human beings and slavery) was divided into two articles – "Slavery", which is now covered by Article 105, and "Trafficking in Human Beings", which is covered by Article 106. It is important to specify that paragraph 5 of the Article 106, prescribes that whoever withholds, takes away, conceals, damages or destroys a travel or identity document of another person with the aim of enabling the perpetration of the criminal offense of human trafficking (described in paragraphs 1, 2, and 3) shall be punished. This way we have fully implemented the recommendation to establish withholding, taking away, concealing, damaging or destroying a travel or identity document as a criminal offense when the act was committed intentionally, with the aim of enabling human trafficking.
- The Criminal Procedure Act (Act on Amendments and Supplements to the Criminal Procedure Act, Official Gazette, No.56/13) has transposed the Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and Council of 5 April 2011 on the preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protection of victims of human trafficking into the Croatian legal system.

Appendix VII

Statement made by Ms Maken TZEGGAI, Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Denmark

The continued fight against human trafficking is indeed a priority for the Danish Government.

Thus in the Government Programme it is clearly stated, that the Government intends to further improve the support and protection offered to victims of human trafficking.

Furthermore the Danish authorities have since 2011 implemented the third National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking for the years 2011-2014. The Action Plan is backed by a broad consensus in the Danish Parliament and introduces a number of new activities to further strengthen the efforts to combat human trafficking.

The overall objectives of the Action Plan are to combat human trafficking and reduce the number of individuals trafficked to Denmark for prostitution or other purposes.

The Action Plan also offers a nationwide coordinated effort in offering support to victims of human trafficking.

The Action Plan primarily focuses on four areas:

- To promote effective implementation of existing legislation and law enforcement, to ensure the identification and prosecution of traffickers.
- To identify and support victims of human trafficking, by extending the outreach work and improving the social assistance and support available to victims of human trafficking in Denmark.
- To increase public awareness, so as to prevent human trafficking by limiting the demand.
- To prevent human trafficking by improving the international cooperation, including developing preventative efforts in home countries.

The current national action plan finishes by the end of 2014 and an external evaluation is currently carried out. Based on the findings of the evaluation, on the experiences gained so far and on international developments the future efforts on how to combat trafficking and help victims will be planned.

The Danish Government recognizes the extensive and important work done by GRETA, and has of course taken the recommendations from GRETA into very careful consideration.

However as the comments submitted to GRETA by the Danish Government in connection with GRETA's report and the newly submitted report from the Danish Government show we do not agree with all the remarks in the report.