United Strings of Europe for Victims of Trafficking

The IOM London fundraising concert for victims of trafficking was a great success! The outstanding concert, held at St. John’s, Smith Square Church was held on March 15th 2012 in London.

The United Strings of Europe (USE), the brainchild of violin virtuoso Mateja Marinkovic, is a new ensemble bringing together exceptionally talented young musicians from across Europe to promote musical and cultural cooperation at the highest level. This was the ensemble’s first concert in the UK after an exciting run in Southern France earlier in the year. The USE Orchestra performed pieces by Mozart, Paganini and Shostakovich.

Thanks to the United Strings of Europe Orchestra, IOM London was able to raise more funds for the return and reintegration fund for European victims of trafficking.

Photographs by Dionysis Kouris
The IOM Chief of Mission, Clarissa Azkoul, presented an award at the final ‘Migration – Stories of a Journey’ Photographic Award 2011, an event organized by Accademia Apulia UK, which was endorsed by IOM.

The event announced the winner of the competition which is Paolo Patrizi from Rome. He was presented with the €1000 cash prize by the Lord Mayor of Westminster Susie Burbridge at a glittering ceremony at the Royal Horseguards in London’s Whitehall on Friday, 10 February 2012.

Also in attendance at the Royal Horseguards were the Mayors respectively of Wandsworth, Hounslow, Camden, Brent, Ealing, Lambeth, Merton, Redbridge, Richmond, and Southwark. In addition, the prize-giving ceremony was attended by the former Secretary of State for immigration, Barbara Roche, now Chair of the Migration Museum Project, the Consul General of Italy Uberto Vanni d’Archirafi and Naomi Gryn, writer and filmmaker.

A selection of stunning photographs from amongst the works of thirty outstanding finalists were displayed at the Royal Horseguards, in this instance singled out for highlighting the difficulties experienced by migrants’ worldwide as they go on to seek out a better life in their adopted countries.

Paolo Patrizi’s social reportage sets out to illustrate the squalid and often dangerous world of Nigerian women, often deceived into working in the sex trade. An industry where each year traffickers go on to trick young girls into following them away from the safety of their homes and into a lifetime of servitude in unfamiliar countries across the globe.

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These striking images are part of a larger collection, one of which is currently on display at the National Portrait Gallery.

The two principal runners-up are Erhan Uçar from Turkey and Alexandra Polina from Uzbekistan. Already an award-winning photographer, Uçar’s submission documents the last of the Sarıkçeçiler nomadic tribes of Anatolia, whose lifestyle is now under threat as a result of central government pressure to settle down into fixed communities. In an altogether different approach as part of a submission titled ‘my house inside-out’, Alexandra Polina uses photographs of her own family and their belongings laid out on the street to illustrate how the inner and outer worlds of migrants are often in conflict.

For more information on the competition and to see the pictures in full, please visit: www.accademiapulia.org

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**Russian Delegation Visit**

Between **February 14 to 17 2012**, IOM UK welcomed the **Russian Federation Inter-agency Departmental Delegation** and an IOM Moscow representative in order to hold a series of meetings with their UK counterparts to discuss counter-trafficking issues.

During the 4-day visit, the delegation met with the UK Human Trafficking Centre, the Home Office Trafficking Policy team, the Crown Prosecution Service, and the Metropolitan Police SCD 9 Unit.

The delegation was also able to meet with Peter Bone MP, current chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Trafficking and Anthony Steen, Founder of the Human Trafficking Foundation in Parliament.

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**FIIT Project begins**

IOM UK is taking part in the EC funded project “Foster and Improve the Integration of Trafficked persons” with IOM France, IOM Italy, IOM Belgium and IOM Hungary. The overall objective of the project is to enhance the long term integration of victims of trafficking through the identification, sharing and transfer of good practices.

This will take into account the legal, economic, psychosocial dimensions of integration, in particular through strengthening professional links among national and European practitioners working with victims of trafficking.

The project will build new links between practitioners and enhance existing mechanisms of information sharing.

The first coordination meeting took place in Paris, France on March 14-15 2012.
On March 19th 2012, IOM UK staff escorted a group of Ethiopian Refugees to Manchester, where they are being resettled as part of the Gateway Resettlement Programme.

The group of Ethiopians had been living in the Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya and will now receive support with the assistance of NGOs to start new lives in the UK.

On March 26th 2012, IOM UK staff assisted another group under the Gateway Resettlement Programme. This group, predominantly from Somalia, had been living in the Dadaab Refugee Camp in Kenya for over 20 years.

IOM UK was able to take part in the Pre-departure and Cultural Orientation class before the two groups departed Nairobi, Kenya. These classes are held in the IOM Nairobi Transit Centre where refugees being resettled to the UK, USA, Canada and Australia await their departure.