



International Organization for Migration (IOM)



International Labour Organization

EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project

支持中欧人员往来和移民领域对话项目

Facilitation of exchanges and establishment of networks between Chinese and European anti-trafficking Criminal Investigation Experts

Beijing, 18 November, 2016

Summary Report



The networking meeting on 18 November 2016 themed “*Facilitation of exchanges and establishment of networks between Chinese and European anti-trafficking Criminal Investigation Experts*” is under the framework of the Partnership Instrument funded programme “*EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project*”. It brought together 19 Chinese and European experts to have an informative exchange as a means to improve bilateral and international cooperation to curb human trafficking and smuggling. More specifically, the meeting discussed opportunities for networking and information sharing cooperation mechanism between authorities on both sides.

The Chinese participation was led by Director CHEN Jianfeng, Office to Combat Trafficking of the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) and included 4 participants from provincial public security bureaus namely Liaoning, Heilongjiang, Zhejiang and Guangxi provinces. The EU side was represented by the European Union (EU) Delegation and (police) liaison officers from EU Embassies namely Germany, Italy, Spain, UK, France, Netherlands and Denmark/Nordic Police Liaison Office. Also present was IOM staff from the Liaison office in China.



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Two national experts on trafficking in human beings from Spain and Cyprus: Inspectors Cristina Hermoso Belmonte and Rita Theodorou Superman respectively, who made presentations on their country experiences and gave insights into two investigative cases to stimulate discussions on the need for timely and effective international cooperation.

Key points:

- The EU Delegation reiterated its engagement and support to combatting all forms of trafficking as a priority and noted that China remains one of the priority countries for cooperation. The EU has put in place a number of measures including setting up the Office for EU anti-trafficking coordinator in 2011 and putting in place the Anti-human trafficking Directive in 2016. Mr. Marcin Grabiec (EU Delegation) added that information exchange and cooperation was an important element to prevent the upward trend of trafficking of victims evident from data available in recent reports on the subject.
- Director CHEN alluded to the fact that transnational human trafficking involves a combination of domestic and international criminals and that the use of modern technology facilitates the networks. For China, South East Asian countries are the main source countries of foreign women and children trafficked for sexual exploitation and fake marriages. Outward, Chinese women are recorded to be trafficked to Africa, UK, Europe and South America. China is making efforts to curb the surge and practice of trafficking of human beings by ratifying the Protocol to Suppress Prevent and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; adopting best practices in victim identification; signing bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries (Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia) and MoU with countries in the Mekong region; deploying liaison offices (8) in border areas and setting up working groups and undertaking joint investigations to eradicate criminal networks into countries such as Angola, Spain, Cyprus, Sweden, Croatia, Austria and The Netherlands.
- Director CHEN also added that information on victims are extremely important and that judicial processes require the timely submission of this information. He also gave some clear recommendations on:
 - o Setting up a long term working mechanism with EU and international community for information sharing on regular basis;
 - o Setting up referral mechanism for clues and;
 - o Setting up diplomatic channels particularly on human trafficking.
- IOM pointed out that with regard counter trafficking efforts, the level of cooperation could be improved to be at par with vibrant cooperation in other migration management aspects such as skilled migration. Mr. Pär Liljert (IOM Liaison office) added that given the high importance, there is value in sharing information, provided appropriate channels and trust mechanisms are well established. He also noted that as this meeting was the first initiative under the project in bringing together key actors from the Chinese and EU side. As such, IOM hoped that this brainstorming and exchange session leads to closer police to police cooperation.



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- The presentations highlighted that there are potential challenges in obtaining information from victims (cultural and social ties play a role) and at the same time, the differences between the legal systems can hinder information flows required for investigations. The meeting participants emphasized that the ultimate result was to rescue victims while convicting the suspects and eliminating the organized crime in their transnational locations. Both presentations showed that the investigations involved cooperation with EUROPOL, INTERPOL and other police authorities in the respective countries through meetings and video conferences. The experts suggested the involvement of other national and international agencies so that all information is quickly collected and shared through mechanisms such as EUROPOL where (all EU) countries are kept informed throughout the investigation. This is important to limit the resurgence of such organized crime.
- The meeting also considered the role of local or provincial level authorities willing to share information and cooperation with the national authorities on EU side. The Provincial authorities added that cracking down on illegal activities of Chinese businesses operating on the deception of international business remains a key priority in curbing trafficking. They also expressed challenges in handling these cases given the disguise within some legal business structures and the confidential considerations by embassies with regard to providing information of the intermediaries that are approved by most embassies.
- Director CHEN added that the Chinese side welcomed the possibility of sharing information as regards suspects of criminal behavior and always willing to work with representatives in Beijing as well as sending teams to countries where potential Chinese trafficking victims have been identified, to assist in the identification and investigation process.

Recommendations for way forward:

- Acknowledging the operational parameters covered by bilateral agreements, the meeting called for **strategic collaboration between various Chinese national authorities and EU authorities and institutions** (including cooperation between EU member states) in the area of trafficking.
- The **role of police/immigration liaison officers should be further strengthened**. The EU Member States that have a police/immigration liaison officer in China benefit from a stronger relationship and presence on the ground, same as MPS benefits from stronger coordination through its network of liaison officers in some European capitals. Innovative solutions, such as the Nordic Police Liaison Office in Beijing where there is a joint effort by 4 countries seem to make a difference and should be further explored.
- **Continued collaboration with the EU funded EMPACT** project focusing on Trafficking of Human Beings remains relevant to synergize between the competencies of the European law



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enforcement agencies that make up the EMPACT consortium and the on-the ground presence in China by IOM. China has become an important source country of trafficked human beings into the EU.

- More concretely, participants agreed on **creating a platform/network to discuss trafficking issues, share best practices and information** but not on a clear operational level. Further, they agreed on using the opportunity of bringing participants together around a fitting agenda as a practical and pragmatic way given the common interest in information and cases to be shared. The framework of such a platform/network would take into account the how to complement bilateral cooperation agreements; wider but essential stakeholders (engagement of legal experts to guide on legal systems considerations); the kind of issues to be addressed (strategic information, techniques, simulated cases as models for interaction with Chinese counterparts); frequency of meetings and engagement of other EU countries with no police liaison officers in China.
- The EU called upon **IOM project to accommodate some of recommendations within the *EU China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project*** and arrange follow-up meeting in coming months.