

**International Dialogue on Migration
Intersessional Workshop on
Trafficking in Persons and Exploitation of Migrants: Ensuring
Protection of Human Rights**

**Session IV: Fighting Trafficking in Persons and Migrant Exploitation
along the Migration Cycle: The Role of Partnerships**

**Prefect Giuseppe Forlani, Directorate for Immigration and Asylum
Services, Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration, Ministry of
Interior, Italy**

The importance of collaboration between countries of origin, of transit and of destination is closely linked to the global recognition of human rights of victims of trafficking and exploitation and to the fight against the dangerous criminal organisations responsible.

It is therefore essential the involvement of all those concerned with facing the problem: national and local authorities, police forces, the judiciary, international organisations, non-governmental organisations and all those persons directly involved or at risk of being involved.

The system implemented at Lampedusa and along the Sicilian coastline with the **Presidium project**, which involves joint action between the Ministry of Interior with UNHCR, the Red Cross, IOM and Save the Children has shown how such cooperation between institutions may prove effective, not least in the early identification and taking into care of exploited persons or those at risk of becoming victims of exploitation.

Speaking of which, as far back as 1998 Italy approved legislation (**art. 18 of Legislative Decree 25 July 1998, no. 286: Consolidation Act on Immigration**) offering protection to persons suffering serious exploitation or violence and who in order to escape the control of criminal organisations face reprisals and threats to their personal safety.

The Italian legislation is based on two essential elements. On one hand the possibility of social integration for the migrant: with inclusion in the assistance programme and consequent issue of a stay permit for reasons of work or study, every link with the past is broken and – especially in the case of exploited women – the dignity of which they have been robbed by the traffickers may be regained. On the other hand by offering the migrant the possibility of turning first to the social services or non-governmental bodies and organisations a climate of trust may be established and can become an incentive for future cooperation with judicial authorities.

Currently the DLCI is participating in the implementation of the project: **“Italy, Albania and Greece against trafficking of women and minors”**, cofinanced by the European Commission within the framework of the Aeneas Programme.

The project includes training and education programmes as well as information and awareness-raising campaigns.

If results are to be consolidated in the medium- and long-term, transnational cooperation for the prevention of trafficking must also focus

on strengthening measures aimed at the social reinsertion of vulnerable groups most at risk of trafficking.

Nor is there any doubt that technical assistance between the countries involved is needed to improve their ability to implement integrated operations and initiatives (the creation of low-threshold services, removal from socio-economic hardship; the development of a referral system for the care of the most vulnerable and a more flexible and integrated response to the need for services...)

Drawing attention to what has been done so far, it is worthwhile looking at the *“Programme for assistance and reintegration in the country of origin of victims of trafficking and other humanitarian cases”*, which was carried out in cooperation with the IOM, and through which the DLICI has overseen the repatriation of 425 victims of trafficking.

It should be emphasised that a key element is the safeguarding of personal safety for the victims of trafficking in their country of origin.

Within the framework of the **Aeneas 2004 Programme** the Italian government was in the forefront of efforts to face irregular migratory flows transiting the Mediterranean basin, implementing a bilateral capacity building agreement with Libya on illegal immigration and border controls, and fostering competence development and the transfer of responsibilities through specialised multilateral agencies. (IOM)

Valuable experience was gained in evaluating the feasibility and levels of preparation for voluntary assisted return programmes.

Moreover, the activities of the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration are aimed at the prevention of trafficking by means of initiatives seeking to combat the crime right from the traffickers’ first contact with victims.

To this end, the **Trafficking Prevention Project**, aimed at promoting and implementing targeted activities in victims’ countries of origin, was particularly important.

The Project seeks to develop collaboration between countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

This year the Department for Civil Liberties and Immigration has also launched, as part of the “Operation Pentameter G6 Awareness Raising Campaign” an information campaign entitled **“Cut out Trafficking”**. The

aim is to foster cultural change, bringing to bear on established habits and patterns of behaviour and raising public awareness about the complexity and seriousness of the situation, as well as promoting use of the Anti-trafficking freephone service.

Below are listed some of the **international projects set up by the Italian government** which not only provide an example of cooperation between institutions at national and international level, but also demonstrate the practical potential of cooperation in developing standardised data collation and referral systems which may thus be shared and used at a transnational level, as well as the implementation of operational capacity building in order to be able to respond to requests for collaboration at both national and international level.

“Transnational and inter-sector action to combat trafficking for labour exploitation. Identification and assistance of victims – FREED”

The principal aims of this project are the raising of awareness of trafficking and exploitation among business leaders; the improvement of monitoring and inspection systems for employment sectors where use of trafficked persons is most likely; the development of mechanisms for transnational cooperation between labour inspectorates and police forces in the countries of origin and destination of victims of trafficking.

“ Development of a Transnational Referral Mechanism for victims of trafficking between countries of origin and destination – TRM-EU”

Research is underway to establish a comprehensive overview of victims' needs, so that future guidelines will first of all take into account their specific needs concerning measures for their support and social integration, relationships with law enforcement agencies and the judicial system, their possible return to their country of origin and reintegration into their native community.

In order to set ever higher targets, it is essential that there be greater focus on creating a systematic response: that is to say, building up a network of solidarity between public institutions and civil associations in each individual country (whether it be country of destination, transit or origin) to help establish on the ground genuine integration, ie. social integration - and a network of solidarity between countries.

However, I cannot but remark that every praiseworthy effort made at national or bilateral level must find a more generalised forum, so that

procedures, experiences and practices may acquire a shared status. The impetus provided by the Palermo Convention in the fight against trafficking and exploitation was possible precisely because of the global context offered by the official support of the United Nations. Although the timeframe was necessarily not the most brief, it has meant that many countries around the world have now adopted several key shared principles as their own.

It would not be just to indicate one specific organisation or one specific approach to facing this issue. Each one, from the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Union and OSCE, to all the regional organisations across the world, must be used to maintain attention at the highest possible level and to involve the highest possible number of people.

With this in mind, the involvement of international organisations is equally essential. It is they who can make a significant contribution: not only in identifying and defining issues, but above all in bringing their ability and experience to the implementation of effective and practical projects. Efforts must above all be focussed on coordinating activities so that valuable human and financial resources are not squandered through repetition of measures and activities of limited effectiveness.