



Advocacy Report- UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime - Eighth Session

17-21 October 2016, Vienna International Centre

Subject of Meeting: - Elisabeth Francis participated in two of the official Side Events of the Eighth Session:

1. Preventing Trafficking, Trade and Exploitation of Women and Children: A victim-centered approach organized by FAWCO with SI and SIW

2. The Many Aspects of Trafficking: organized by Zonta International with Soroptimist International (SI), Sweden and Belarus

Trafficking in human beings is the slavery of our times, and is a key global issue for women. Victims are often recruited, sold, transported or kept by force, coercion, or fraud in exploitative conditions, including sexual exploitation, forced marriage, forced labor, begging, criminal activities, or for the removal of organs. Trafficking in human beings takes many different forms and evolves with changing security environments and socioeconomic circumstances. For instance, unprecedented numbers of asylum seekers and refugees bring ever increasing trafficking risks for these vulnerable people.

These two Side Events focused on the aspects of trafficking involving women. Women and girls are an overwhelming majority (80%) of the victims. Statements were issued by the organizers, calling for continued commitment to eradicating trafficking in human beings, a transnational threat requiring a transnational response. They called for a more gender sensitive approach, given that the victims are mainly women and girls. The statements also applauded efforts to pass legislation against child brides, femicide and trafficking in organs.

At the side events, the following presentations were made:

a) Pierrette Pape of EWL argued that a victim-centered approach to trafficking and the sex trade requires to bring a feminist perspective to a very gendered phenomenon, in order to better support women and girls victims.

b) Pat Black of the Soroptimists presented the Karma Nirvana 'Spoon Project', raising awareness of the issues of international trafficking of women and girls for forced marriages. This project shows how a small object such as a metal spoon (which girls at risk can hide on themselves to show up on airport x-rays when they are being forcibly transported) can be used to help prevent so much harm being done.

<http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/>

c) Astrid Winkler of ECPAT Austria presented on the Tourism Child Protection Code ('The Code of Conduct for the protection of Children from sexual exploitation in Travel and Tourism'). More than 1000 travel companies from 42 countries have now signed up to the Code to help the tourism industry prevent the sexual exploitation of children.

<http://www.thecode.org/>

d) Laurie Richardson from FAWCO presented insights into the needs of victims of sex and labor trafficking, mentioning the work and report of Tina Frundt, a survivor of sex-trafficking, and research by Intervict. She gave a brief introduction to the work of anti-trafficking NGOs - CoMensha, Fair Work, Free the Girls, Not for Sale and STOP THE TRAFFIK - as well as suggestions on how individuals can contribute to prevention and rescue by educating themselves and others, becoming aware of the signs of human trafficking in our daily lives and taking action. For instance, 'Please Disturb' is a 15 min video that gives examples.

http://www.roelsimons.nl/pleasedisturb/PLEASE_DISTURB.html

e) Helga Konrad, Head of the Regional Implementation Initiative on preventing and combating all Forms of Trafficking in Human Beings at the Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe, spoke about the health risks for victims and the barriers they face in seeking help, including the cost and complications of reimbursement, and the fear of being discovered if reported to the police. Over 80% of doctors claim they have never had contact with a victim, and are unaware of what to look for. She advocated setting up national health focal points for people who can help the victims of trafficking. Ms Konrad has been working on anti-trafficking for more than 20 years. In her capacity as Austrian Federal Government Minister for Women, she had hosted the 1st EU Conference on Trafficking in Women for Sexual Exploitation in 1995.

f) Vadim Pisarevich (Belarus) explained the different kinds of trafficking in humans for the purpose of the removal of organs, a very lucrative business which accounts for 10% of all trafficking.

g) Ms. Y. Simpson and Ms. U. Werner (Soroptimist International) presented their projects in Nepal relating to the prevention of trafficking and rehabilitation, with emphasis on education and training.

Refers to SDG No

The statements from the organizers noted that the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents an opportunity to review national and international efforts in combating human trafficking in all its forms. Three targets of the 2030 Agenda explicitly address these issues:

5.2. to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation,

8.7. to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labor, end modern slavery, end human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor.

16.2. to end child abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence and torture against children.

Relevant treaties/conventions/resolutions:

In September 2016, the General Assembly unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, containing a series of commitments to prevent and combat trafficking in persons in line with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

What needs to be done:

Members should be aware of the scale of the problem of trafficking and its importance for women and girls, be aware of the different forms in which it can take place, and be alert in their daily lives / have eyes open to signs that it may be occurring.

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