

PRESS RELEASE OF 16th February 2005

Durable solutions for trafficked persons, priorities for inter-agency cooperation

Workshops of Christian anti-trafficking network develops further common standards

Some 60 representatives of the churches, governments, police, the judiciary and NGOs from 14 European countries met for international conferences and workshops in Prague from February 10th to 15th, 2005 to discuss how to strengthen and further develop common standards for a better assistance to trafficked persons. The conferences and workshops were a part of activities of the European network “Christian Action and Networking against Trafficking in Women” (CAT).

In his address to the opening conference on February 11th, Jiri Vacek, Czech Deputy Minister of Interior, underlined the benefits of working together with Christian organisations and NGOs. In the conference which was hosted by the Czech Ministry of Interior, the Czech model of a national referral mechanism was presented. This model is based on the collaboration between the government and NGOs such as La Strada and Caritas.

Representatives from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation and the EU experts' group on trafficking in Human Beings presented European framework recommendations for holistic and human-rights centred solutions in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

During the three-day workshops following the opening conference, participants developed further common standards. Particular attention was given to the fields: assistance for trafficked persons, security measures, and the issue of how to deal with trauma in return situations. The partners from different agencies not only formulated recommendations, but also outlined examples of their commitments to the agreed standards. A summary of these reflections will be published in March 2005. The summary will include general recommendations with very practical hints for the works against trafficking.

In the spirit of reviewing and developing the quality of the network, CAT members also undertook an evaluation of the work in the project over the last 14 months.

The public debate around trafficking in recent years has clearly identified the need for long-term solutions. “It is more and more obvious that simply ‘doing something’ is not good enough”, explained Torsten Moritz, coordinator of the CAT project. “Our workshops brought together actors with different backgrounds. We started to shift recommendations into practical steps and commitments”, he added.

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The views expressed and information provided by the project and the partners involved do not necessarily reflect the point of view of the European Commission or the World Council of Churches and do in no way fall under the responsibility of the European Commission or the World Council of Churches.



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