



PC.DEL/662/02  
5 September 2002

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS  
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE  
VIENNA

ENGLISH only

CYPRUS SITUATION REPORT ON THE TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Trafficking in human beings and the sexual exploitation of adults as well as children is not a new phenomenon. The trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation has been rightfully denounced for subjecting its victims to perhaps the most degrading and destructive form of servitude. With the advancement of technology and new forms of organized crime, extra pressure is being exercised on the international community as well as the European Union for radical action.

The Government of Cyprus is fully aware of the several actions and initiatives taking place at the international and regional level and supports fully the co-operation measures taken for the prevention and combating of trafficking in women and children.

The situation in Cyprus regarding the combating of trafficking in women and children is the following:

According to official figures given by the Ministry of Justice and Public Order from 1994 till the year 2000, there were only 51 cases for sexual exploitation out of which 32 individuals were convicted, 54 cases for living on earnings of prostitution out of which 18 individuals were convicted. We also had 3 convictions for trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and another 4 are pending.

A high-risk group of persons with regard to sexual exploitation is young women, mostly migrants from central and eastern European countries, employed in cabarets and nightclubs. There are currently approximately 1200 women working in these establishments, and the Government is undertaking special measures for their protection.

Despite the fact that the Republic of Cyprus does not face serious problems of sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, a great number of legislative as well as administrative measures have been taken since the early 60's to prevent and combat trafficking and sexual exploitation of adults and children.

In the light of future membership in the EU, Cyprus recently enacted a new legislation, the Law to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Exploitation of Children, which is in line with the corresponding Joint Action of 24 January 1997 adopted by the Council on the basis of Articles K3 of the Treaty on European Union concerning action to combat trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation of children.

This law criminalizes such activities, provides for severe punishments as well as for the protection, compensation and rehabilitation of victims and extends the jurisdiction of Cyprus courts. Offences under this law, including the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children, the use of children for pornography and the production, display, showing or transmission of such productions could be extraditable and could also be predicate offences for the purposes of confiscation of the illicit proceeds.

Another very important element of this law is the appointment of the Director of the Department of Social Welfare as the Guardian of Victims of Sexual Exploitation, who will be responsible for the provision of humanitarian support and assistance to the victims as well as for the channeling of complaints to the competent authorities for investigation.



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Furthermore, the House of Representatives enacted in June of last year new legislation for the protection of witnesses. This legislation provides equal measures with EU Resolutions of 23 November 1995 on the protection of witnesses in the fight against international organized crime and of 20 December 1996 on individuals who co-operate in the fight against organized crime.

Alignment with the acquis and international law is an ongoing process. For this reason the existing legal framework regarding combating trafficking and sexual exploitation is undergoing amendments in order to implement the provisions of the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and both its Protocols.

On the operational level the institutions responsible for the implementation of the laws and policies are:

- The Office of the Attorney General of the Republic (Unit for Combating Money Laundering)
- Ministry of Justice and Public Order
- Ministry of Interior (Department of Civil Registry and Migration)
- Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (Welfare Services)
- Ministry of Finance (Department of Customs and Excise)
- Cyprus Police and more specific the following departments:
  - Criminal Investigation Department
  - Crime Intelligence Unit
  - Crime Statistics Unit
  - Aliens and Immigration Department
  - Crime Prevention Office

The above institutions are in close co-operation with two NGO's, the Cyprus Family Planning Association and the Association for the Prevention of and Dealing with Domestic Violence.

Moreover, the Police are in close co-operation with the United Nations, Interpol and the FBI.

In particular, the following operational measures are taken:

- i Strict enforcement of the existing legislation
- i Passport and operation control
  
- i Frequent visits by Police Officers to entertainment establishments in order to ensure application and observation of provisions of the contract employment.
- i Females wishing to work in places that are considered to be of high risk with regard to sexual exploitation are given informative leaflets of their rights as employees and the telephone numbers of Alien and Immigration officers in case they need any support or assistance.
- i The police take crime-preventing measures in close co-operation with all involved authorities.

As part of the preventive measures, border controls in steadily strengthened.

The initiatives developed to make the border control more efficient are as follows:

- Upgrading and geographical expansion of the existing Police Computer Network.



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- Establishment of forgery detection equipment as described by Council Recommendation 398Y0617 (01), dated 28.5.1998.
- Purchase of new equipment for the Port and Martine Police and the Police Air wing.
- During 2001, the procedure for the establishment of N.S.I.S. (National Schengen Information System) has begun according to SCH-com-ex (94) decl.14 rev. Ø 22.12.94 Ø ÖS.I.S.Ö). To this effect, Cyprus has already adopted an action plan and has prepared a timetable for the implementation of the first phase of the project.
- Training of police officers on border control issues.
- Furnishing Cyprus Diplomatic Missions Abroad with Stop-List Date.

The following actions are in the pipeline and will be effected in the near future:

- Purchase of a Coastal Radar System.
- Establishment and operation of the N.S.I.S. (Second and Third phases).
- Connection of the Police Computer Network and other governmental services dealing with external border control with N.S.I.S.
- Purchase of two additional patrol boats.
- Purchase of three additional helicopters.
- Establishment of the European Image Archiving System (FADO).

Moreover, there is continuing training and specialization of police officers on the operation of the new technological equipment.

Regarding international co-operation Cyprus has signed a number of bilateral agreements with other countries, especially the neighbouring countries, for regional and international Police co-operation concerning organized crime, exchange of information, border control etc.

In addition, Cyprus has established at the Police Headquarters a liaison office with the CIREFI OFFICE (exchange of information concerning illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings). To this framework, an Early Warning System (E.W.S.) has also been established at Cyprus Police Headquarters for direct exchange of information with other member states and candidate countries.

Furthermore, at the Cyprus Police Headquarters the Statistical Data Office is responsible for collecting, analyzing, evaluating and exchanging information regarding border control.

Finally, having regarded the utmost importance of the issue of co-operation between the member states of the EU and the candidate countries to combat this phenomenon, the Cyprus government plans to establish monitoring unit for combating trafficking and sexual exploitation of human beings. This unit will be composed of representatives from the following institutions:

- The Office of the Attorney General of the Republic.
- Ministry of Justice and Public Order



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- Ministry of Interior (Department of Civil Registry and Migration)
- Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance (Welfare Services)
- Ministry of Finance (Department of Customs and Excise)
- Cyprus Police

The primary purpose of the Unit will be the monitoring of the several actions taken in this field on the operational, legislative and preventative level as well as the co-operation with the NGO's and identical units of the member states and the candidate countries.

4 September 2002