

FRANCE & THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

THE « PALERMO PROTOCOL »

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000, known as the “Palermo Convention”, and its Protocol to “Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children”, is the only binding universal legal instrument against trafficking in human beings. It is the first international convention to set out a broad definition of the different forms of trafficking in human beings. It focuses on prevention, the protection of victims and also the importance of international cooperation as regards prosecution and law enforcement.



Each year, about 2.5 million victims, mainly women and children, are recruited and exploited throughout the world. Multiple types of exploitation come under human trafficking: sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic slavery, forced begging, etc.

According to the United Nations and the Council of Europe, human trafficking is the world's third largest form of trafficking after drug and weapons trafficking and is worth €32 billion per year.



Strong commitment from French diplomacy

Human trafficking

■ For many years, France has been committed to fighting organized crime. In 2002, it ratified the so-called “**Palermo Convention as well as its Protocol relating to trafficking**”. This defines trafficking as the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion” for the purpose of exploitation. There are different trafficking routes, which are constantly changing, but it appears, however, that proximity, both geographical and linguistic, plays a key role between countries of origin and destination of trafficking victims.

France's active contribution

■ France is an active participant in the **Working Group on Trafficking in Persons set up by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** which aims to promote the effective application of the Palermo Protocol. Since its launch in 2007, France has supported the **United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UNGIFT)**, which brings together the relevant international organizations and whose aim is to ensure the coordination and complementarity of the implemented actions. It supports the **United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons**, which was launched in 2010 and which created a trust fund within the UNODC to assist victims. It is also Party to the various **International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions**, on forced labour as well as to the **International Convention on the Rights of the Child**, of which one of the Optional Protocols deals with trafficking in children. At European level, **directive 2011/36/EU on combating trafficking in human beings was adopted**, replacing the 2002 framework decision.

■ Finally, at national level, in December 2008 France put in place a **national multidisciplinary working group**, assembling the main ministries concerned as well as civil society. This group drew up a draft national action plan in this area.

THE WARSAW CONVENTION

The 2005 Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, which was ratified by France in 2008, places the victim at the heart of the system. In addition to the establishment of an early identification mechanism for victims, the development of training for professionals (justice, police), the strengthening of prevention methods (raising public awareness), States are also required to put in place a national coordination mechanism in order to define, guide, and coordinate government policy on trafficking. The Council of Europe created a treaty body, the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), whose mission is to ensure that this legal instrument is correctly implemented.

Targeted cooperation actions

For a partnership between all actors

■ France's support and technical assistance measures are aimed at all areas of trafficking, from prevention to law enforcement with respect to traffickers, and from raising awareness among vulnerable populations to protecting victims. France intends to promote a **multidisciplinary approach (justice, police, social services and civil society)** to encourage all actors to play a part. A comprehensive approach and the coordination of professionals in this area are key elements in State and civil society capacity-building in order to efficiently and sustainably fight this scourge, and in particular to **care for and protect the victims** of trafficking whose evidence in criminal proceedings are of the utmost importance in dismantling the networks.

International cooperation

■ The efficiency and impact of the cooperation actions in this area are also based on a **regional approach**, concentrating on the "trafficking routes" in order to offer specific responses to the different regions which are adapted to the type of exploitation.

■ The essential role played by the magistrate who, under continental law, manages and monitors the investigations carried out by the police, confirms the importance of implementing **capacity building actions for legal actors and actions to promote the prosecution of human trafficking cases in non-partner countries**.

■ **Various cooperation** tools are implemented: regional workshops for exchanging experiences, training for professionals (police, justice, social services, NGOs, etc.), study visits and exchanges, grants to NGOs (via the Solidarity Development Fund of certain Embassies), etc.

THE EUROPEAN PROJECT WITH NIGERIA

Along with several other Member States, France is participating in and co-financing a European project led by the UNODC and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) aiming to strengthen multi-actor cooperation (police-justice-civil society) in combating human trafficking in countries of origin and destination, mainly for sexual exploitation, and in particular with Nigeria.



↓ This girl from a nearby slum sells garlands outside the Hilton Hotel in Dhaka (Bangladesh). Her economic status makes her particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

THE PROJECT TO PROTECT MINORS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

France is financing a project to prevent the risks of trafficking linked to the migration of minors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, specifically in the region of Tuzla which is particularly affected by the problem. This project is implemented by the associations Hors la Rue (France) and Zemlja Djece (Bosnia and Herzegovina), to help minors who are victims or potential victims, through preventative actions aimed at parents (awareness) and children (education, professional training, etc.) as well as by providing the means to care for minors who are victims of trafficking.

THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL ADVISER IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE

In Vienna, a French regional technical adviser, dedicated to "combating human trafficking" monitors these issues within the international organizations based in the Austrian capital (UNODC and OSCE) and implements cooperation actions in 16 South Eastern European countries with regard to institutional capacity-building and support for civil society, all the while promoting a multidisciplinary approach.

THE OSCE GOVERNANCE FUND

In the multilateral framework, since 2003 France has contributed €1.4 million to the «Governance Fund» of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). This fund enables the financing of projects to assist victims of trafficking (in the Balkans, Caucasus, Eastern Europe and Central Asia).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking

UNICEF

www.unicef.org/protection/57929_58005.html

International Labour Organization (ILO)

www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/lang-en/index.htm

Council of Europe

www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/trafficking/default_en.asp