



REGERINGSKANSLIET

Ministry of Justice



Final Report of the Task Force Against Trafficking in Human Beings in the Barents Euro- Arctic Region

- to the CSO meeting in Kajaani, Finland 1 – 2 June 2006

Background

In connection with the ten-year anniversary of the Barents Euro-Arctic Council, a meeting of Prime Ministers was held in Kirkenes, Norway, on 11 January 2003. In the declaration published after the meeting, the Prime Ministers committed themselves to a joint effort to stop trafficking in human beings (THB) in the region: “We will make a concerted effort to stop trafficking in human beings in the Barents Region.” In order to follow up on that commitment, a Task Force was formed with participants from Finland, Norway, Russia, and Sweden.

The *first meeting* of the Task Force was held in Stockholm on 9-10 September 2003. The purpose of the first meeting was to discuss and shape the Task Force’s efforts in the region in light of the Prime Ministers’ agreement and the mandate given to the Task Force. One of the main issues was to discuss the future role of the Task Force. It was agreed that a situation report should be prepared to be used as the basis for an Action Plan with guidelines for continued efforts.

During the *second meeting*, which was held in Tromsø, Norway, 2-4 February 2004, the Task Force drafted an Action Plan.

The Action Plan was adopted at the *third meeting* held in Vantaa, Finland 24-25 January 2005.

The *fourth meeting* was held in Murmansk 27 – 28 September 2005.

The *fifth and final meeting* in Stockholm, Sweden 19-20 April 2006 ended the BEAC mandate after having achieved the goals of the mandate and the Action Plan.

A common definition of trafficking has been established; The UN Convention – “Palermo protocol”.

Fulfilling the mandate of the Task Force and finalising the Task Force

The objective of the Mandate was to identify and implement measures required to fulfil the goal “to make concerted effort to stop trafficking in human beings in the Barents Region”, as directed by the Prime Ministers in the Declaration adopted at the Barents Euro-Arctic 10 Year Anniversary Summit Meeting in Kirkenes on 11 January, 2003, has been met.

The geographical scope that have been addressed are the counties of Lapland, Kainu and Oulu Region in Finland, Finnmark, Nordland and Troms in Norway, Murmansk, Arkhangelsk and Karelia in Russia, and Norrbotten and Västerbotten in Sweden.

In regards to the methods of work, the Mandate has been broad and given possibilities for each country to decide for themselves what methods to use.

The composition of the Task Force of BEAC included representatives both on a central and a regional level, the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice and Federal Security Service.

The Action Plan 2005-2006 was adopted in Helsinki in 2005;

1. Each country shall establish contact-points both at ministerial level and at regional and central level of the law enforcement agencies and also include the liaisons officers in the network.

Result:

Contact-points have been established in each country, both at ministerial level and regional and central level. Liaisons officers have also been included in the network and participated in the BEAC conference concerning Trafficking in human beings in Murmansk, Russia, 27-28 September 2005 and at the BEAC Intelligence conference at Pite Havsbad, Piteå, 21-23 February 2006.

2. The law enforcement agencies of the participating countries shall exchange relevant operational information concerning trafficking in the region without delay.

Result:

An increasing number of contacts between the law enforcement agencies of the participating countries have been established, even if it is plenty of room for development. The conferences in Murmansk 2005 and in Piteå 2006 have established a good framework for an exchange of relevant operational information.

3. The participating countries shall exchange national reports concerning the situation of trafficking in the region yearly to the Chair of the BEAC Task Force. The reports shall be exchanged by the end of March yearly. Starting at the 31 of March 2005 the participating countries shall present the report of 2004.

Result:

The national reports from 2005 are to be received in English hard copy before the end of June 2006.

4. The Task Force shall initiate the encouraging and developing of methods and cross-border cooperation at the regional level.

Result:

The conferences in Murmansk 2005 and Piteå have both encouraging and developing the methods and cross-border cooperation on the operational level in the region. Also a lot of personnel contacts have been established which will promote an increasing cooperation.

It is preferably to have direct contacts between the authorities at the local/regional level with respect to cooperation agreements between Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. It is also important to involve the Nordic Liaison Officers in Murmansk in the cooperation and information exchange.

All member states have reported on their work since the conference in Piteå and we have examples of good cooperation, but it is important to stress that this cooperation must continue, especially the mapping of relevant information.

All participants have reached consensus on how to use the network and how to exchange information between the countries involved. The development of the network has been positive so far and the

network could be used in other types of crimes and in other regions, although trafficking being the main purpose.

5. Each state shall contact their national part of the Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime/Operational Committee (OPC) to establish a good cooperation. The chair of the BEAC Task Force against trafficking in human beings shall establish a contact with the secretariat of the Baltic Sea Task Force on Organised Crime.

Result:

The Chair of BEAC TF has been in contact with the OPC to inform them of the BEAC TF. The Chair has participated at OPC meeting and representatives from OPC has been represented at BEAC Task Force meetings and conferences.

6. All activities of the BEAC Task Force against trafficking in human beings shall be coordinated with the Baltic Sea Task Force on organised crime to avoid duplication of efforts and promote joint operations.

Result:

Good contacts between the BEAC Task Force against trafficking in human beings and the Baltic Sea Task Force on organised crime have been established and the objective has been fulfilled.

7. The Task Force arranged a seminar for representatives of the law enforcement agencies in the Murmansk in September 2005.

Result:

The seminar took place in September 2005 in Murmansk and was successful.

Conclusions

The Task Force has fulfilled the objectives of the Action plan by supporting the development of the cooperation between the countries involved both on a central and regional level. Especially during the conferences in Murmansk and Piteå, exchange of operational experiences has increased and the delegations from the Barents region have developed their relations. This is a good platform for future close cooperation between the law enforcement agencies in the Barents region.

It is important to stress, although the work of the TF is now ending its mandate, the cooperation between the countries in the Baltic region will not stop. The day-to-day operational work continues with a good platform of new contacts and better possibilities for future cooperation and information exchange in the Baltic region.

The TF will also send recommendations to the Baltic Sea Task Force/OPC, urging them to report on further cooperation in the Barents region and put additional focus on minors under the age of 18. The work will be handed over to the Expert Group on Trafficking in Women and Children of the OPC. The work of the TF recommends that the Task Force issues would be under the umbrella of the Baltic Task Force/OPC and its mandate would probably be prolonged until 2008.

Recommendation from the Task Force against trafficking in human beings in the Barents region to the CSO of BEAC

It is time to finalizing the BEAC Task Force and to end its mandate after having achieved the goals of the mandate; “identify and implement measures required to fulfil the goal to make concerted effort to stop trafficking in human beings in the Barents Region”. The BEAC Task Force has achieved its objectives and created a structured framework for cooperation on information exchange between the countries in the Barents region and this will give possibilities to make concerted effort to stop

trafficking in human beings in the Barents region. The day-to-day operational work will, of course, continue even without the umbrella of the TF.

The CSO has to decide of the finalizing of the Task Force.