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LABOUR MIGRATION IN CENTRAL ASIA AND RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Currently IOM Moscow is implementing the Project on Labour Migration in Central Asia and Russian Federation. This Project is aimed to provide support to the Government of the Russian Federation in developing the necessary policy and legislation, creating administrative and operational systems along with the framework for developing the capacity of the administrative resources necessary for solution of the problems in the field of labour migration. Successful labour migration management is subject for joint effective collaboration on the interstate level in the region of Central Asia and the Russian Federation. The Project is intended to provide support in the development of transparent and well-coordinated approaches and mechanisms of labour migration management to be applied to all states sharing a common migration space.

The key activities in the Russian Federation are as follows: improvement of labour migration legislation of the Russian Federation; strengthening the labour migration management system in Central Asian (CA) countries and the Russian Federation (RF); assistance to labour migrants through information campaigns and capacity building of non-governmental organizations providing services to labour migrants.

Legislation Improvement

The aim of the International Conference “New Immigration Legislation of the Russian Federation: Law-Enforcement Practice” that took place on 17 – 18 December 2007 was to assist developing the legal basis of labour migration management. The Conference was organized at the support of the Federal Migration Service of Russia and OSCE (ODIHR). Representatives of governmental and non-governmental structures of Russian Federation and CA countries took part in the Conference.
The results of the research on labour migration problems and law-enforcement practice of the new RF immigration legislation conducted by IOM-FMS in May-September 2007 were presented at the Conference. The initial results of the implementation of the new migration legislation showed the substantive decrease in the numbers of irregular migrants, including labour migrants, on the territory of the Russian Federation. The newly introduced registration procedure of foreign citizens allowed increasing the number of legally arriving migrants to the RF from 54% to 85%. The simplified procedure of granting labour permits led to severe reduction of the illegal labour migrants. Previously the number of labour permits did not exceed 15 – 25%; in 2007 it reached 76%. The fact that 38% of migrants and 59% of employers support the new RF migration legislation testifies in its favour. In addition the participants of the Conference revealed a number of legal and organizational gaps and highlighted some prospective directions on organized attraction and employment of foreign labour forces and that would accelerate the development of the mechanisms of migration flows management.

The participants of the Conference emphasized the importance of promotion of the interstate dialogue in the area of regulation of migration flows from CA countries and RF. IOM develops successful cooperation with FMS and Russian Federal Labour Service (Rostrud) in order to promote and advance the legal forms of labour migration from the Central Asian countries and combat illegal labour migration. In this regard special attention is paid to the development of legislation and mechanisms regulating flows of labour migration and intermediary services on the labour market. The Project is focused on the development of the capacity of the interested organizations willing to attract and use foreign labour force in different sectors of economy in a form that would meet the interests of both employers and labour migrants in the countries of origin and destination. In the project framework and for the purpose of development of effective model of protection of the rights of labour migrants and assistance with their integration, special attention is paid to supporting private employment agencies and other intermediary organizations dealing with migrants as well as governmental structures in the regions of Russia and CA countries.

On the 19th of February in Moscow ILO together with IOM conducted a Seminar on the role and activities of Private Employment Agencies (PEA). The Seminar touched upon the issues of legislation development in the RF and CIS countries and elaboration of the mechanisms ensuring state regulation of PEA services. Governmental structures representatives, social partners, international and national experts, representatives of trade unions and business and of more than 40 PEAs took part in the Seminar.

The following topical issues were considered by the participants:
- The role of PEAs and services provided by them in the Russian Federation in advertising and employing the labour force from CIS countries;
- Streamlining of the legislation in the area of state regulation and control of the activities of PEAs. Approaches of the state and private sector to the problem of intermediaries on the labour market;
- International standards, implication and principals of ILO Convention 181.

The majority of the participants of the Seminar noted positive and useful role of PEAs on the labour market. Governmental systems are still unable to operationally satisfy the requirements of the branches of economy in labour force. Only market mechanisms like PEAs and other structures, including private-governmental ones, can ensure the balance between demand and offer with the respect to the labour force and can eventually bring together employers and employees.

Though the latest Russian legislation promotes legal employment, it still requires serious pipelining. An FMS representative highlighted the necessity to work out an infrastructure model of organized recruitment as well as to improve the legal frameworks of the activities of intermediaries. The above infrastructures will find their...
niches on the labour markets. They will cooperate with governmental and non-governmental agencies on all the aspects of employment. The trade unions underlined the necessity to protect the rights of labour migrants both in the Russian and in the CIS countries labour markets. In this regard they bitterly criticized leasing of labour force. The participants to the Seminar agreed that it was necessary to analyze and scrutinize the labour relations, arising in the process of leasing, namely the relations between intermediary agencies – employers - employees/labour migrants.

**Information campaign and cooperation with non-governmental organizations.**

FMS of Russia considers information for migrants and citizens as one of the important elements of efficient migration policy. For the purpose of elaboration and support of effective model of assistance to migrants in the regions of the Russian Federation special attention in the framework of the Project is paid to capacity building of non-governmental organizations and development of their network.

For this purpose in November 2007 IOM arranged trips to the pilot regions of RF to identify the non-governmental organizations and establish partnership with them in the framework of the Project on labour migration. The coordinator of the Project Pawel Szalus, representatives of IOM Moscow and IOM Almaty visited Ekaterinburg and Novosibirsk, Kazan and Astrakhan. The contacts with some non-governmental organizations were established: in Moscow – “Tajikistan Foundation” (the head – Gavkhar Djuraeva), Sverdlovsk Regional Migraton Center (the head – Sergey Kranov), International Information Center (director – Nurzida Berzgier), Center of Migration Support (the chair – Leonid Grishin), Cultural Center “Avicenna” (the director – Izrail Sharipov), Center of Migration Support “Cooperation” (director – Sergey Dudin), Republican Center of Employment and Legal Support of Immigrants of the Republic of Tatarstan, Astrakhan IOM Information-Consultative Center.

While conducting monitoring of non-governmental organizations, the IOM staff met with the representatives of Administrations, Migration Services and regional representatives on human rights. At the meetings the issues of participation in IOM Project of the regional partners for the purpose of establishment of cooperation between the relevant governmental structures and NGOs were considered. The Project is aimed at advancing effective cooperation of all the participants to the processes of labour migration: employers, governmental, commercial, public organizations providing legal assistance to labour migrants in the pilot regions of the Project.

**Capacity building of non-governmental organizations in the filed of provision of legal assistance to labour migrants**

The IOM experience in Europe proves that the most efficient legal and integration assistance to the migrants is granted by non-governmental organizations. In this respect IOM is planning and negotiating with the Government of the Republic of Tatarstan (RT) the possibility to conduct a seminar-training for the Russian NGOs on the basis of the Regional Center of Employment and Legal Support to the Immigrants of the RT.
It is foreseen that representatives from non-governmental sector from CA countries will participate in the Seminar. It is planned to pay special attention to the issues of NGOs capacity building and establishment of direct contacts in order to promote development of NGOs network on the regional level (RF and CA countries). NGOs will share their practices of provision of consultative assistance and other services regarding registration and employment of migrants. In the course of the Seminar IOM is planning to present the experience of the EU countries with regard to the standard practical procedures of provision of effective assistance to the migrants and to the issues of cooperation between NGOs and governments. This event will become a starting point in establishing the network of NGO-partners that are providing services and protection to migrants.

**DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE MECHANISMS FOR READMISSION PROCEDURES IMPLEMENTATION IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON THE BASIS OF PRACTICAL COOPERATION AND FLEXIBLE APPROACH: Results of Year 1 of programme implementation**

Attempts to establish effective systems of migrants’ forced return while ensuring their rights and dignity through bilateral and multilateral efforts of stakeholder countries have led to the emergence of a new notion in migration management - readmission.

“Readmission’ is the transfer by the relevant authorities of one Party’s government and reception by the relevant authorities of another Party’s government, subject to the procedure, conditions and purposes as specified by the […] Agreement, of people who entered or are present on the Parties’ territory in violation of the legislation on the entry, exit and presence of foreign citizens and stateless persons» (Agreement of the RF with the Ukraine).

Although IOM recognizes voluntary return as the most preferable option both for the migrant and the government, assistance to governments in building their capacities in the area of forced return management is among IOM’s activities too.

With the funding of the European Commission and the EC member states and in close cooperation with governments, IOM is implementing several readmission programmes at the same time, namely in Albania, Sri Lanka, and the Russian Federation.

The Programme “Assistance to the Government of the Russian Federation in Establishing Legal and Administrative Framework for the Implementation and Development of Readmission Agreements” has been implemented by the IOM Mission in Moscow and the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation (FMS of Russia) since February 1, 2007. The Action is funded by the Aeneas programme of the European Commission with additional co-funding provided by the German and Finnish governments. Alongside IOM’s main partner, FMS of Russia, the Programme is strongly supported by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Sheremetyevo Airport Administration, the Border Guards, and educational institutions of the Ministry of the Interior. The Programme’s international partners include the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Danish Immigration Service.

The Programme is primarily aimed at providing practical and technical assistance for the implementation of specific aspects of the EC - RF Readmission Agreement (RA), which has been effective since June 1, 2007. It also provides a platform for mutual expertise interchange in the area of readmission and migrant return management, among experts of both the EC countries and Russia.

The main advantage of the joint IOM-FMS programme is exactly its ability to organize subject-specific events, responding promptly to emerging challenges which call for quick solution, and drawing on the expertise of those European Union experts who are the most knowledgeable in specific issues of the return and readmission process.

Programme activities are grouped around the following three components:

- **Legislative component:** Expert assistance is being provided in the area of national legislative framework development, as well as the development of additional institutes of international migration law needed for an efficient implementation of the EU-RF RA (amendments to Federal laws and by-laws, implementation protocols drafts, bilateral agreements of the RF with countries of origin).

- **Administrative-resource component:** Assistance is being provided in the area of institutional framework development, as well as the creation of necessary infrastructure (expert and informational support to RF governmental structures involved in, the readmission procedure implementation, the creation of a whole system of reception facilities in Russia for hosting third country nationals to be returned via Russia within the EC-RF RA and further agreements with third countries).

- **Regional component:** Support is being provided to the regional dialogue and practical experience exchange among RF, EU and third countries to ensure ‘cluster approach’ to readmission of migrants in irregular situation.

The first year of the programme implementation has achieved certain results and indicated the most urgent tasks awaiting the Russian Government in its way to creating a favourable environment for the implementation of the EC-RF RA.

**DEVELOPMENT OF LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK**

Support to the Russian Government developing its administrative and legislative framework to enable successful implementation of the RA with the EU is rendered in several areas at the same time. An expert group has been set up to cover law and legislation, including representatives of IOM Moscow, the International Migration Law Department of the IOM Headquarters in Geneva, a national expert and EU experts. This group has provided assistance in drafting the Russian federal Law on Amending the Federal Law on the legal status of foreign citizens and the Federal Law on the procedure of
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exit from and entry into the Russian Federation. The draft is aimed at fully settling the readmission institute in the Russian legislation, defining the conditions, procedure and the limit of potential restrictions to the rights and freedoms of readmitted persons, and stipulating the authority of government bodies.

Also, the expert group has prepared and shared with its FMS partners an overview and analysis of the existing generally acceptable practices and international standards concerning the accommodation and reception of third-country nationals with an irregular legal status who are transferred to the RF under a readmission procedure and have to be further returned to their country of origin. This issue is constantly included into the IOM event agenda (technical trainings in the Pskov Readmission Centre in September 2007 and March 2008, study trips to EU countries, a round table discussion with Polish experts in March 2008). The collected experience of managing irregular migrant accommodation centres will be taken into account while drafting a Russian Government resolution on conditions for temporary accommodation and reception of readmitted migrants, as well as model documents specifying the management of relevant institutions (typical rules, procedures for admission, accommodation, and maintenance).

The implementation of the Programme brings to the forefront the issue of necessary harmonization of different forms of forced return from the territory of the RF (readmission, administrative expulsion, deportation), as well as the establishment and promotion of alternative forms of return to the country of origin, primarily voluntary return, which is considered a preferred form of return, both for the migrant and the state (minimal negative consequences and cost-efficiency).

The RF Parliament was drawn attention to the issue of a possible differentiated approach towards establishing re-entry ban in Russia for foreigners and stateless persons who have gone through a procedure of administrative expulsion, deportation or readmission.

In the area of international legal framework creation, some suggestions were provided on the draft implementation protocol initatively developed by the FMS of Russia and coordinated with relevant governmental structures, aimed at stipulating a detailed mechanism of implementing the EC-RF RA.

Assistance is being provided in the development of RF own readmission agreements with third countries (Sri-Lanka, Vietnam, Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic). At the Central Asian Technical Consultations, Common Approaches to organizing the activity in the sphere of the development, conclusion and implementation of readmission agreements were coordinated and accepted by the participants (Issyk-kul, November 2007).

BUILDING AN ADMINISTRATIVE PLATFORM AND RELEVANT INFRASTRUCTURE

Practical work of the Programme in the field of building an administrative platform and infrastructure started with an expert trip to the FMS Centre for Readmitted migrants.

The first readmission centre in Pskov, May 2007

Experienced officials from the Danish Immigration Service reviewed the situation in the Centre and its readiness to accommodate third-country nationals. The result of the trip was a report and a number of recommendations to improve the migrant accommodation infrastructure in the RF, which were shared with the FMS of Russia.

According to the Danish officials, the Pskov Centre is fully functional. This conclusion enabled a joint IOM and FMS decision, agreed with the European Commission, to channel the programme funds intended for technical assistance to the Pskov Centre towards further development of reception facilities in Russia needed within the readmission framework, namely for the refurbishment of the Temporary Accommodation Centre in the Rostov Oblast – “Don” - for readmission purposes.

On February 21, 2008, the IOM Mission in Moscow took part in a coordination meeting with the Logistical Department and Readmission Department of the FMS of Russia. The key issue on the agenda was the development of a strategy and a practical plan of action for refurbishing the Don Centre for readmission purposes. IOM confirmed its readiness to participate in the Don Centre refurbishment in accordance with the needs of the FMS of Russia and the internal procedures and rules of IOM and the EU.

In March 2008, there was a joint trip of an expert group including representatives of the IOM in Moscow, the Logistical and Readmission Departments of the FMS of Russia, to the Rostov Oblast with the purpose of on-site design and cost estimation assessment. This was carried out in coordination with the Rostov Oblast division of the Federal Migration Service, the Ministry of Interior, and the Don Centre management.

The development of the reception centre system in Russia, however, requires knowledge of potential future flows of third-country nationals to be returned via Russia, in order to estimate the capacity of reception facilities to be created, as well as an estimate of the available capacity. To facilitate the FMS effort in this regard, the project participants analysed the statistics on the number of irregular
migrants provided by EU countries. The results of the analysis were shared with the FMS of Russia. Cooperation between IOM and FMS officials is not confined to issues of building an infrastructure for migrant reception and accommodation within the readmission framework. IOM took an active part in meetings of an ad hoc Readmission Working Group of the FMS, which operated since the spring of 2007, and supported the establishment, since January 1, 2008, of a dedicated FMS department covering this whole field, the Readmission Department. The cooperation with the newly established Department takes place at a very practical level. Organizational assistance and guidance is provided, training activities are jointly developed and held, records and reference materials and overviews of international best practice are specifically developed and discussed.

The professional development of the officials directly involved in the development and implementation of readmission agreements is a key task of the Programme. From this perspective, several major events were held in Programme Year 1:

**Inter-agency working meeting and Technical Seminar in the Pskov Readmission Centre**

On October 24-27, 2007, representatives of the Russian governmental agencies met in Moscow with EU experts to discuss Practical Implementation of Readmission Agreements: EU Experience and the Russian Context. An immediate follow-up to the meeting was a technical seminar in Pskov aimed at learning EU experience in the area of reception and accommodation of third-country nationals to be returned via Russia within the EU-RF RA.

Those events were informative and, according to the participants, gave them the knowledge which they needed for further work. As a follow-up to the seminar, it was decided to summarize all the presentations made and the most interesting questions and answers and have them published as a report in the near future. The report would provide an exhaustive review and study of the whole range of legal relations arising from the implementation of international readmission agreements, starting from the issue of the identification and documentation of irregular migrants, their reception and accommodation in specialized institutions, and ending with organization of the return procedure to their country of origin.

What migration officials will surely find interesting is the parts covering the issues of cooperation among relevant governmental agencies and collaboration with consular offices, documenting of foreign citizens, organization of transit transportation, activities of special institutions, conditions of and limitations on the use of force and special tools. Each of those issues is described in detail by experts with skills and expertise from many years of experience, making the information particularly valuable.

**Study visits to Germany**

The participants of a study visit to Germany organized by the International Organization for Migration on October 22-26, 2007, consisted of 10 Russian officials coming from various ministries and agencies directly covering migration issues, such as the FMS of Russia, the Pskov Readmission Centre, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, educational institutions of the Ministry of Interior, namely the Ministry of Interior’s All-Russian Institute of Advanced Training and the Moscow University of the Ministry of Interior.

The agenda of the study tour was specifically designed by IOM and the FMS to include visits to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) in Nuremberg, reception facilities in Zirndorf, Fuert, Munich Airport. During the visit, the Russian delegation also met with the Bavarian representation of BAMF, as well as with the Nuremberg Office of IOM.

The tour helped to look at the international practices of return and readmission as an important component of migration management. The tour emphasized the need for joint international work on the improvement of a mechanism for foreign citizens’ return, integrated border management, which, consequently, will help to ensure streamlined, rational and humane return for migrants.

One immediate result of the IOM Programme tour was a German invitation for FMS of Russia to take part in a coordination meeting of representatives from the German Federal States directly involved in the implementation of the EU-RF Readmission Agreement. In
addition to the participation in the meeting in Bielefeld in February 2008, the FMS of Russia and IOM delegation also visited the Bueren centre for people under return obligation to their countries of or origin (citizenship or permanent (principal) residence) (http://www.jva-bueren.nrw.de/).

Regional trainings in international migration law (Yekaterinburg, December 2007, Pskov, March 2008)

Under the Readmission Programme, the IOM Office in Moscow, the International Migration Law Department in Geneva and the Ministry of Interior’s All-Russian Institute of Advanced Training have launched a series of training seminars to enhance skills and knowledge of government migration officials in the area of international migration law with the focus on readmission and the process of return to and from the Russian Federation.

Upon coordination with the FMS of Russia, two seminars have been organized to date, in Yekaterinburg on December 19-20, 2007, and in Pskov on March 26-28, 2008. The Yekaterinburg seminar was attended by the FMS representatives in the Sverdlovsk Oblast, who were also co-organizers of the event, and migration officials from the Tyumen, Chelyabinsk and Kurgan oblasts. The participants confirmed that they received the knowledge which could be used in their everyday practical operations and that such training events fully met the current needs of the FMS.

The second training session took place in Pskov with the logistical support of the Pskov Readmission centre. Along with the FMS of Russia Moscow office, the participants included officials from regional FMS divisions in the Western and Central Federal Districts and experts from Finland and Poland.

Technical Expert Meeting on Readmission Legal Framework: the Polish experience

In order to further support the implementation of readmission agreements in Russia, the International Migration Law Department of IOM in Geneva and the Moscow Office of IOM held a technical expert meeting in Moscow on March 13-14 which brought together the FMS of Russia representatives and EU experts.

The two experts from the Polish Border Guards invited to the meeting are directly involved in carrying out return and readmission procedures and are well-informed in the field of their national legislation and administrative framework.

The meeting looked at the issue of incorporating the readmission institute into the national legislative system, practices of implementation protocol drafting, procedures for irregular migrant documentation, coordination with other relevant governmental structures and partners in other countries. A lot of attention was paid to the readmission of third-country nationals and their accommodation in special centres.

System of temporary accommodation centres for irregular migrants in Poland, discussed during the technical expert meeting in Moscow in March 2008

MAINTAINING A DIALOGUE WITH EUROPEAN AND THIRD COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF RETURN AND READMISSION

The Programme is gaining momentum, and the IOM Office in Moscow is working on further initiatives. On November 20-21, 2007, Central Asian Technical Consultations, Readmission and Return Migration Management, took place at the Lake Issyk-Kul. The event was attended by representatives from the FMS of Russia, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and interested agencies of Central Asian (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan) and South-East Asian countries (Vietnam, Sri Lanka).

Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan officers during the Regional Technical Consultations at Issyk-Kul in November 2007
In early 2008, the Programme is expected to launch a pilot project of voluntary return of migrants with an irregular legal status. The project will facilitate voluntary return of 100 persons to their country of origin and create a necessary framework for introducing voluntary return in Russia as an alternative to forced return. Some cases, including the return of minors, are being discussed.

DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO THE VoTs IN THE FRAMEWORK OF COUNTER-TRAFFICKING PROJECT OF IOM MOSCOW.

For the period from November 2007 to February 2008 IOM Moscow Counter-Trafficking Unit has provided full range of assistance to 56 victim of human trafficking (VoTs). Out of total number 32 were women and 24 - men.

For the latest period of time the number of victims identified and referred by Russian Law Enforcement structures to IOM Moscow for assistance has significantly increased.

Informational exchange between IOM and Law Enforcement structures, secured and comfortable accommodation of the victims at IOM Rehabilitation Centre, provision of qualified medical and social assistance plays crucial role in facilitation of successful investigation of criminal cases as well as prosecution of the criminals by Russian Law Enforcement structures.

The Law Enforcement structures are interested in development of effective cooperation with IOM Moscow.

During police operation all of them were released and 13 men agreed to provide evidences against their traffickers. Upon termination of investigation procedures 13 persons were referred to IOM Rehabilitation Centre for assistance and repatriation to Uzbekistan. In the frame of IOM Project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF” all the victims benefited from full range of medical, social and psychological assistance, including support in the issue of travel documents at the Consulate of Uzbekistan.

The information on the victim's repatriation was passed to IOM Mission in Uzbekistan which will ensure their further rehabilitation and reintegration.

SOCIAL POSTER CONTEST. AWARD CEREMONY AND OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION.

The award ceremony for the winners of the social poster contest "Human Trafficking. Century XXI" was held in Moscow House of Nationalities on the 13th of February, 2008. The social poster exhibition of the best works, selected by the jury of the contest, was opened on the same day.

The event was organized together with the Committee on Interregional Relations and National Policy of the Moscow city Government.

The award ceremony was opened by Mr. Aleksandr Nazarov, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Interregional Relations and National Policy of the Moscow city Government, who thanked the participants for their efforts in fighting against such evil phenomenon as human trafficking with the help of strong visual images.

Mr. Enrico Ponziani, IOM Moscow Chief-of-Mission, made a short welcome speech and explained the purposes and the results of the contest.
This contest was declared in three regions of the project: Moscow/Moscow region, Astrakhan and the Republic of Karelia as well as within all of Russia.

The main purpose of this contest was to raise public awareness of existing forms of human trafficking in the Russian Federation, and especially in order to inform the youth of its dangers and to attract more attention to these existing problems. To fight against this evil phenomenon with the help of strong visual images and to make people aware about the risks of illegal migration and illegal employment in a foreign countries, and especially about the risks for the more vulnerable who face the ever existing potential of falling into the hands of criminals and become victims of human trafficking and then undergo all the various humiliations and violence once fallen in this terrible trap.

The contest was open for the students of art schools; art and design faculties of Universities in the three pilot regions mentioned and covered also the rest of Russia. More than 130 posters from the project regions, all Russia and abroad (for example Ukraine, Lithuania, Bulgaria) were received by the project. There was a first round of selection for the three regions, the Moscow Region, the Republic of Karelia and Astrakhan. Then the three best from each one of these regions participated in the final all-Russia round of contest.

In Moscow the final jury, headed by Mr. Georgiy Timofeev, deputy Head of the Committee of Social Relations of the Moscow city Government, selected three best works from more then 130 posters. Mr. Ponziani gave the floor to Mr. Piet Blonde, Project Officer, Institutional Reforms, EU-Russia Cooperation Programme. Mr. Blonde emphasized the necessity of information dissemination about the existence of the problem of human trafficking in the Russian Federation.

Short speech was delivered by Ms. Irina Govorukhina, Representative of the Department on Family and Youth Affairs of the Moscow city Government. For many years the Department is organizing in Moscow the well known art contest of students' talents "Festos". Ms. Irina invited all interested participants to take part in this contest, and expressed the willingness to include the theme of Countering the Human Trafficking into the nomination under the title "Social Advertising".

Ms. Guzella Nikolayshvili, Director of the Agency and member of the contest jury spoke very emotionally during the ceremony, saying that "...the word "trafficking" came to the Russian language just recently. And 20 years ago it was impossible to imagine that such problem as human trafficking would exist. The society has to know about such horrible crimes, and in particular social posters with acute, strong social images, which show that the problem exist not somewhere far away but near us, may stop someone from making the fatal flaw'.

The second part of the ceremony was leaded by Mr. Georgiy Timofeev, Deputy Head of the Committee of Social Relations of the Moscow city Government and the head of the jury of social poster contest.

Six winners: 3 of all-Russia round of contest and 3 of Moscow regional round were awarded memorable medals, IOM diplomas and certificates for monetary prizes. The first prize (RUR50,000) was collected by two young talented designers from Rostov-on-Don - Yulia Lukianchenko and Elena Kostyrina for their poster "Check".

The second place went to designer from Moscow region Aleksey Andreev for the poster "Woman. XXI Century?"

And the third all-Russia winner was Olga Tsaregorodtseva, art University student from Rostov-on-Don for the poster "Human Commodity". Olga was also awarded special prize from the Laboratory of Social Advertising – diploma and a book.
The winners of the Contest

All winners also collected diplomas and memorable books from the Moscow Government and small gifts from the Moscow contest “Festos”.

More then 40 best posters will be exhibited in the Moscow House of Nationalities till the end of February.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW

On February 12, 2008 an international conference on the interim results of the project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation” was jointly organized in Moscow by IOM, the National Anticriminal and Antiterrorist Foundation (NAAF) and OSCE/ODIHR. The event took place at the Holiday Inn Sushevsky.

The purpose of the conference was to inform IOM’s partners and beneficiaries among the governmental institutions, NGOs and Donor agencies on the progress achieved in the key activity areas of the project. The conference involved representatives of the State Duma of the RF, federal governmental agencies, regional authorities of the Republic of Karelia and Astrakhan oblast, the Moscow City Government, as well as international and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and Donor governments.

The conference presidium included Enrico PONZIANI, IOM Moscow Chief of Mission; Alberto ANDREANI, Project Coordinator; Piet BLONDE, Project Officer of EU-Russia Cooperation Programme, Delegation of the EC to the RF; Terry KINNEY, Resident Legal Adviser, US Embassy in Russia; Peter MIKULA, Country Director of Swedish Agency for Cooperation and Development for Russia; Anatoly KULIKOV, Chairman of the Board of WAAF; Marina MUKABENOVA, State Duma Deputy; Georgiy TIMOFEEV, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Public Relations of Moscow City Government; Pino ARLACCHI, Sociology Professor, International Organized Crime Expert, University of Sassari, Italy; Vera GRACHEVA, Senior Adviser, Anti-Trafficking Assistance Unit, OSCE Secretariat; Tatiana KHOLSHEVNIKOVA, Expert on Russian legislation; Elena TURUKANOVA, Senior Researcher, Institute for Social and Economic Problems of Population, Academy of Science of RF; Michaëlle de COCK, Consultant, Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour, International Labour Office (ILO); and Zhanna ZAIONCHKOVSKAYA, Director of Centre for Migration Research.

The key reports of the conference, delivered by IOM-appointed experts from Russia and the European Union, presented the findings of a baseline study of the trafficking phenomenon in the three pilot regions and a comparative analysis of the counter-trafficking provisions in the legislation of Russia and selected countries of destination. Representatives of OSCE/ODIHR delivered a presentation on the results of a recently conducted “Assessment of Structures Providing Support to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in RF”.

During the conference IOM representatives discussed the Project activities in the following components: (1) Policy Advice; (2) Prevention and Capacity-Building; (3) Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Victims of Human Trafficking. The specific reports emphasized the Project achievements, and pointed out problem areas requiring sustained support by the governmental authorities or extended donor funding.

The conference was attended by over 80 participants.

Mr. Enrico Ponziani and Mr. Igor Aleshin at the signing ceremony

Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Karelia, Mr. Alyoshin Igor Viktorovich; Director of the IOM Bureau in the Russian Federation, Mr. Enrico Ponziani and Coordinator of the EC-IOM project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation”, Mr. Alberto Andreani took part in the signing ceremony.

The Agreement provides for the cooperation and joint actions in the area of prevention and combating of trafficking in human beings and related phenomena.

Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Karelia, Mr. Alyoshin, has stressed the importance of joint actions in countering trafficking in persons which is one of the largest international business where organized crime is involved. Trafficking in human beings is considered by the international community as the absolute violation of human rights. Governments, law-enforcement bodies, public organizations of many world countries unite their efforts in order to eliminate this shameful phenomenon.

The project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Russian Federation” financed by the EC and co-financed by the governments of the USA and Switzerland was launched in March 2006. The project has been officially supported by the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Federation. However, since the substantial part of the activities planned within the project frameworks is to be implemented on the regional level realization of some project components can become possible only with close cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Karelia.

IOM Moscow attaches great importance to the capacity building, namely organization of theoretical and practical seminars on raising the skills of the specialists from governmental bodies. Those seminars were conducted in Russia and in particular, in the Republic of Karelia. Along with the federal and republican MoI representatives, representatives of other structures – Federal Migration Service, Border Service, Ministry of Justice and General Prosecutor Office as well as foreign experts and NGOs took part in the seminars.

Every activity has to have a solid material and technical basis; sharing this understanding, IOM Moscow has provided a substantial support to offices of the republican Ministry of the Interior that deal with investigation and criminalization of crimes related to trafficking in human beings. In line with the goals of the EC-IOM project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF”, in the summer of 2007 IOM Moscow has provided the MoI of Karelia with specialized equipment. On the 5th of July a press-conference and the ceremony of assignation by IOM Moscow of specialized equipment to the amount of EURO 35000 (134 units) was organized by the Department of the Public Relations and specialized unit on countering the organized crime (RUBOP) of the republican MoI in Petrozavodsk.

In order to counteract effectively the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings that is in fact the modern slavery it is necessary to pool the efforts on the international level. Signing of the Agreement on Mutual Understanding is an important step on this way.

JOINT PUBLICATION OF THE IOM AND STATE ENTERPRISE OF THE CITY OF MOSCOW “INTERROGATIONAL INFORMATION AND BUSINESS CENTER” UNDER THE COMMITTEE ON INTERROGATIONAL TIES AND NATIONAL POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF MOSCOW

As many research studies show the informal channels of labour migration are prevailing in Russia (over 70% of migrant find the job using the established informal migrant nets). Unfortunately information received through informal channels is sometimes incomplete and unreliable that might result in violation of the migration legislation and increase of a number of migrants who are staying or working illegally in the RF. This situation is used by shadow mediators as well that creates a threat of spreading criminal practices including trafficking in human beings. The research study conducted by IOM Moscow in 2006-2007 within the frameworks of the EC-Iom project “Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF” showed that only one third part of interviewed migrants in Moscow knew about existence of any official structures offering services on the job search and employment to migrants.
Thus absence of a reliable information about legal aspects of stay and employment as well as about existing infrastructure in the area of labour migration is a serious problem that should be targeted through specialized information campaigns and mass dissemination of informational materials.

Interregional Information and Business Center under the Committee on Interregional Ties and National Policy of the government of Moscow realizing the importance of the informational work with migrants and necessity to pool efforts of governmental bodies and international organizations in this area has approached IOM Moscow with the proposal to develop and issue jointly the publication (5,000 copies) which would allow labour migrants (both to Russia and from Russia abroad) getting up-to-date and reliable information in the area of labour migration and THB prevention.

In December 2007 the “Guide for Labour Migrants to Russia and Russian Citizens Leaving Abroad” was published. The Guide contains detailed legal information on the issues of stay and employment of foreign citizens in the Russian Federation taking into account the changes in the RF migration legislation currently in force since 15 January 2007. Additional useful information – list and addresses of medical, banking, educational institutions, Russian language courses, Diaspora NGOs as well as state organizations providing consultative, methodological and other kind of assistance to foreign citizens – is also included into the Guide.

The Guide also covers the issues of employment and stay of Russian citizens abroad, in particular legal aspects, recommendations for those leaving for abroad with the purpose of work, study, tourism, etc. Issues related to trafficking in human beings – what the phenomenon is, what are the main forms of exploitation and THB as well as recommendations how to avoid becoming a victim of trafficking are stated in details. The Guide also gives contact information of structures abroad providing assistance to victims of trafficking, and other useful links.

This publication is addressed both to foreign migrants in Russia and Russians planning to leave abroad. The Guide could also be interesting for governmental and non-governmental organizations working in the area of labour migration and human rights protection.

It is important to mention that the initiative of the Committee on Interregional Ties and National Policy of the Government of Moscow is a very timely one and makes an important contribution to the prevention of irregular migration to/from Russia and trafficking in human beings.

The Guide (hard copy) is available in IOM Moscow office free of charge. Since April 08 it will be also available at the website: www.no2slavery.ru

POPULAR RUSSIAN SINGER VALERIA SUPPORTED MOSCOW COUNTER-TRAFFICKING PROJECTS INITIATIVES AND TOOK PART IN VIENNA FORUM IN THE FRAMEWORK OF UN COUNTER TRAFFICKING GLOBAL INITIATIVE (UN.GIFT)

On 13 - 15 February 2008 in Vienna United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) organized forum about the existence of the problem of human trafficking. UN.GIFT was launched in March 2007 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) together with the International Labour Organization (ILO); the International Organization for Migration (IOM); the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The Vienna Forum brought together 1,400 delegates from 116 countries to share knowledge and develop a coordinated strategy to combat human trafficking.

In order to raise awareness in Russia IOM Moscow has selected a Russian popular pop singer Valeria as a partner of the International Organization for Migration, Mission in Moscow in supporting and promoting counter-trafficking initiatives. Valeria’s participation in the forum was funded by SIDA in the framework of the Project “Combating trafficking in human beings in the Russian Federation”. Thus Valeria attended the human trafficking forum. During her stay in Vienna Valeria conducted several meetings with delegates and representatives of different organizations.
IOM Medical Health Service is the largest provider of immigration medical services all over the world. IOM Moscow Medical Unit performs medical examination of migrants from the countries of former USSR as of 1990 and is the centre of education for IOM medical units on the territory of CIS. IOM Moscow medical services are requested far beyond Moscow and Russia. Migration process takes place all over the world, while IOM health service offices are not presented so far.

In order to cover the areas in need of migration medical services Moscow Health Practitioners make regular trips per request of the Embassies of migrant receiving countries to areas where there is a need for assessment but no IOM presence, or where IOM has no medical department. In 2007 and the beginning of 2008 IOM MHS medical staff made two trips to Tajikistan (Dushanbe), three trips to Uzbekistan (Tashkent), Turkmenistan (Ashgabat), two in St Petersburg and Krasnodar for group medical assessments. IOM Moscow pediatricians make regular trips to remote areas to examine children from Russian orphanages adopted by foreign parents. The geography of these trips includes Omsk, Nizhny Novgorod, Volgograd and other places.

IOM often arranges transportation of migrants abroad. Medical escorts are provided for migrants who need assistance and care en route. MHP identifies such people during medical examination and during pre-embarkation check. 27 escorts to USA were performed during the last year.

Apart from routine medical examination programs, IOM MHS in Moscow has the function of training and supervision of IOM medical departments in the former CIS. The routine circuit ride with external quality assessment of laboratory services of the IOM Kiev Medical Department (MD) was performed 11-15.02.2008 by Dr. Olga Irtouganova, the Regional Laboratory Specialist.

Moscow MHP currently assists to IOM programs in other countries. Dr. Klyzhenko from IOM Moscow performed screening of USRP migrants in Nepal and Thailand.

For over ten years IOM Moscow has been partnering with UNHCR, the Department for Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and Canadian Embassy in Moscow in refugee resettlement programme. During this period more that 3000 government-assisted and privately-sponsored refugees have been resettled to various Canadian provinces. The yearly number of accepted refugees varies depending on the Government quota. In 2007 the number of resettled refugees was the top one reaching 454 individuals.

IOM Moscow participation in the programme includes assistance with refugee applications’ form-filling, health assessment, travel and visa arrangements. These activities are supplemented by cultural orientation seminars.

At the beginning of this year the embassy decided to start processing the group of 45 Afghan refugees currently residing in St. Petersburg. In order to save all these people the need to come to Moscow for form-filling interviews two IOM Moscow staff went to St. Petersburg and processed all applicants at the ICRC location.

Those candidates whose applications were approved at the interview conducted by the embassy immigration officer went through medical screening also organized in St. Petersburg. There are 2 designated medical practitioners in St. Petersburg authorized by CIC to conduct medical examinations for visa applicants.

Once the visa procedures are finalized the embassy informs IOM Moscow that travel arrangements which include air tickets’ reservation and exit visa processing can be started. Tickets are booked, the receiving side in Canada and IOM mission providing transit assistance is notified, exit visas applications are prepared and submitted to OVIR, the Federal Migration Service Department in charge.

Meanwhile IOM organizes cultural orientation seminars intended to facilitate the settlement, adaptation and integration of future immigrants by providing them with an idea of what life in Canada is like. The two-day sessions are presented in a simple, straightforward manner, and emphasize the importance of arriving in Canada with realistic expectations. Topics include introduction to Canada, the settling-in period, employment, rights and responsibilities, climate, finding a place to live, living in a multicultural society, cost of living, family life, education, communications and adaptation to Canada. In most cases, the sessions are delivered in the language of the participants.

IOM staff is present at the airport at the departure day assisting migrants with airline registration and customs formalities.

This was the overview of the Canadian Refugee Resettlement Programme.

On the photo IOM staff is distributing certificates to Canadian Orientation Abroad Seminar participants.

Certificates distribution ceremony

IOM MOSCOW CULTURAL ORIENTATION

Due to the fact that no refugees were interviewed by the Canadian Embassy from August 2007 to January this year, only two COA sessions have been held by IOM Moscow since October 2007. The participants came to the seminars rather eagerly as the date of their
departure had already been fixed, and they had a lot of questions regarding their move to Canada.

Among the majority of Afghan participants there was a family of two Somalis. The participants had the opportunity to spend some time in a “multicultural society” which was undoubtedly very useful for those going to live in Canada. It was very interesting to observe the Afghans translating or explaining some facts or information to the family from Somalia; the only language they could speak to each other was Russian, and they could easily imagine how they would study English (or French) in multicultural groups in Canada. It also happened that the Somalis were being resettled to the same Canadian town as one Afghan family, and both families were happy to get to know that and were going to continue their good relationship in Canada.

A small group of Afghans going to the US from Krasnodar (South of Russia) was also invited to a Cultural Orientation seminar in January, 2008. For the last time our trainer had an opportunity to deliver the session in the building where IOM used to facilitate the Meskhetian Turk program.

IOM Moscow CO team also delivered one-day seminars for US bound refugees in Chisinau (Moldova) in December 2007. Due to the fact that these refugees all had relatives in the US, their questions were more specific as they got a lot of information from their US family (though sometimes very contradictory to the American reality). The trainer’s task with these groups was to create a certain attitude in the refugees towards resettlement and towards the importance of having an active approach to life in the US, which is the only key to successful adaptation. All of that has to be done within a short time of one-day session.

At the end of the sessions the participants assured they felt more comfortable and interested in their new life in Canada and US. All of them were delighted to receive the hand books on these countries and the certificate of participation confirming their readiness for future travel and resettlement.

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**MOSCOW MIGRANT PROCESSING AND MOVEMENT**

“IOM Moscow continues its work with the Russian government, the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and various UNHCR offices and U.S. Embassies across Europe and the ex-USSR to implement its program of voluntary resettlement to the United States for migrants and refugees.

Comprehensive statistics for January through December 2007 are as follows:

- Applications received and processed: 14,860 individuals
- Presented to DHS for status determination: 9,644 individuals
- Departures to the U.S.: 5,240 individuals

The biggest groups are religious minorities from the former Soviet Union who are joining immediate relatives already in the United States. The next biggest groups are third-country nationals referred by the United Nations: Afghan refugees in Uzbekistan, Afghan and African refugees in Russia, African boat people stranded in Malta, and others.

In total, IOM staff traveled to process cases, interview applicants, prepare files for interviews, and assist U.S. government officials in: Almaty (Kazakhstan), Ashgabad (Turkmenistan), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), Chisinau (Moldova), Kyiv (Ukraine), Krasnodar (Russia), Malta, St. Petersburg (Russia), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Vilnius (Lithuania), Yerevan (Armenia), and Zurich (Switzerland).

Also, IOM staff assisted similar resettlement programs in other countries. Several experienced staff were sent to Amman (Jordan), Cairo (Egypt), Damascus (Syria), Kathmandu (Nepal) and Damak (Nepal) to identify, hire, and train new staff for the programs, which will accept several thousand refugees in the upcoming year.”

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**IOM Moscow staff in Tashkent**