



International Organization for
Migration



Ministry of Internal Affairs of the
Republic of Belarus



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the Kingdom of Denmark



Programme La Strada Belarus

**Report on the
International conference
“Development of National Referral Mechanism for
Protection and Assistance of Victims of Human
Trafficking”**

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Acknowledgments

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IOM also thanks foreign donors such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, the European Union, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, who enabled holding this conference and also implemented numerous previous and related activities in the field of combating trafficking in human beings and providing assistance to victims of trafficking.

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IOM cordially thanks civil society organizations of Belarus taking up the most difficult task – providing timely assistance and support to victims of trafficking. Due to their professionalism and dedication a lot of women, men and children affected by various forms of exploitation were able to return to a stable and dignified life.

Foreword

Combating human trafficking has been and remains one of the priorities of the Republic of Belarus.

Today, the Republic of Belarus is predominantly a country of origin of the "live commodity". In rare cases it is the country of destination and/or transit. For the purposes of exploitation people are mainly transported to the regions of the Russian Federation, the European Union and the Middle East.

Today the modes and conditions of exploitation have changed, challenging the counter-measures and the organizations involved in the process of combating trafficking in human beings (CT). There is an increasing number of cases of labor exploitation and the involvement of minors in the porn industry.

Since the early 2000s the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been supporting the Government of the Republic of Belarus and actively combating human trafficking, both in Belarus and in other countries in the region. During these years IOM, in close cooperation with government and public agencies and other international organizations, has implemented a number of national and regional programs aimed at raising awareness about the problem of trafficking in human beings (THB), at providing protection and rendering assistance to victims of trafficking; strengthening the capacity of partners from the public sector and civil society.

Comprehensive approach to the problem of human trafficking is reflected in the legislation of the Republic of Belarus. In January 2012 the state adopted the "Law on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings", which came into force on 25 July 2012. The law defines the organizational and legal framework for combating trafficking in human beings and establishes a system of measures for the protection and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking.

State program to combat human trafficking, illegal migration and related illicit activities for 2011-2013 provides a set social, legal, medical and organizational measures designed to combine the efforts of relevant government bodies and increase their effectiveness in the fight against human trafficking.

Significant progress achieved by the Republic of Belarus is marked by organization of coordination meetings, which serve as a platform for consolidation of cooperation efforts of all partners. Organized biannually, the coordination meetings within the framework of international technical assistance (ITA) are chaired by the National Coordinator and enable dialogue and close cooperation with all the participants for the purpose of creation and development of the National Mechanism of Referral of victims of human trafficking for protection and rehabilitation.

National Referral Mechanism (NRM) - it is a social and legal framework for protection of human rights and legal interests of the victims of human trafficking. NRM is a structure for cooperation, in which state actors fulfill their obligations to observe and promote human rights, coordinating their efforts within strategic partnership with civil society and international organizations, in accordance with national law and international standards.

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The main objectives of NRM are to guarantee observance of human rights of the victims of human trafficking and to provide the best referral to appropriate and necessary services.

Creating an effective NRM require a high level of cooperation between government and civil society enabling identification and timely provision of assistance to victims of human trafficking via referral to the appropriate agency/organization.

The momentum gained in the country preconditioned the talks of creation and improvement of the NRM. Regional multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) serve an example and an element of the current NRM in Belarus. They were formed in five regions of the country jointly by the Ministry of the Interior, Belarusian Red Cross and IOM. Each team includes representatives of the agencies and organizations responsible for rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking under the State program to combat human trafficking for 2011 - 2013 as part of measures aimed at reintegration and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking (VoTs).

MDTs are designed for competent and timely consideration of issues of providing timely assistance to the VoTs, proper informing about corresponding delivery mechanisms and types of assistance available, as well as activities of service providers.

Special attention is paid to minimizing the formal approach to work in these groups, to the possibility for prompt decision-making and working closely with government agencies and international non-governmental organizations in this field.

For the purpose of enabling regional MDG work at full capacity, Memoranda of cooperation were concluded and signed between all members of the group at the level of the regional executive committee. Experience accumulated over the past period and practice of implementation of legislation in the field of CT determined the need for exchange of experience and for holding an international conference.

About the Conference

International conference "Development of NRM for the protection and assistance of victims of human trafficking" was held on December 12 – 13, 2012 as a logical follow-up on the activities envisaged under the third phase of the Danish program to combat human trafficking in Eastern Europe for 2012 - 2013, including national and regional components. Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine are the participants of the program. Thus, the conference was a continuation of the discussion on the establishment and operation of the referral mechanism initiated previously in the Republic of Moldova at the 2011 International Conference on NRM.

Minsk International Conference was organized by IOM jointly with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in partnership with the "Gender Perspectives" NGO.

The conference was aimed at sharing experiences and best approaches on CT for the development and implementation of the referral mechanism and elaboration of recommendations for the development and improvement of the NRM in Central and Eastern Europe on the basis of available international experience.

The conference participants were challenged to analyze the different approaches in the field of preventing and combating human trafficking through the implementation of NPM, in particular the legal and institutional principles, methodology, and responsibilities of the parties; to compare and analyze the standard operating procedures and services for identification, repatriation, referral and assistance existing in the participating countries; to study and analyze the experience of the participating countries in setting standards of social services and cooperation of state and public organizations (social contracting) in providing assistance to victims; to learn the experience of monitoring under the NRM; explore innovative approaches to national and international cooperation in the fight against human trafficking; and, finally, to develop recommendations to improve the NRM in Central and Eastern Europe on the basis of available international experience.

Conference brought together more than 80 participants from the region (Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova) and Albania. Representatives of concerned government agencies, civil society and the international community (including UN agencies and diplomatic missions in the Republic of Belarus) had an opportunity to continue the dialogue and exchange experiences and best practices in the field of combating trafficking in human beings, which serve as a platform to strengthen and improve NRM in Eastern Europe.

The conference was divided into two parts. The first day of the conference opened with a welcoming address by the representatives of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the International Organization for Migration in the Republic of Belarus and the NGO "Gender Perspectives".

On behalf of the Ministry of Internal Affairs the welcoming address was delivered by the National Coordinator of the ITA project "Combating Trafficking in Human Beings: Republic of Belarus" - Head of Drug Enforcement and Counter-Trafficking Authority of the Criminal Police. In his opening remarks he warmly welcomed all the participants to the hospitable land of Belarus and thanked them for coming to this event. Special gratitude was expressed to the IOM

Mission in the Republic of Belarus, to international donors and partners for their financial support in organizing the event and assisting in its preparation.

On behalf of all present experts and practitioners the National Coordinator expressed hope that the conference would serve an additional opportunity for the exchange of experiences and best practices to combating one of the currently most violent forms of transnational organized crime, which is the THB.

The Head of Drug Enforcement and Counter-Trafficking Authority stressed that Belarus was hosting sixth international forum on combating human trafficking already, and each time the focus was on different aspects of CT activities (strengthening cooperation between countries of origin and destination of the "live commodity", identifying prospects for cooperation between law enforcement agencies of different countries, new challenges and threats related to the phenomenon of human trafficking, prevention of violence against children).

National Coordinator noted that initially the focus was on improving the efficiency of international cooperation in the field of combating THB and related crimes, as well as on consolidation of international efforts. In recent years the priorities have shifted towards strengthening the national capacity for social protection of victims of human trafficking, provision of rehabilitation and reintegration assistance, through the study and subsequent implementation of international best practices accrued by foreign states, intergovernmental and non-governmental international organizations. The event was designed to be a platform for the analysis of the different national approaches and procedures for identifying and referring VoTs.

It was particularly noted that the positive changes observed today in Belarus would not have been so obvious without productive and constructive cooperation with law enforcement agencies of foreign countries, international organizations and civil society.

Today Belarus is ready to share its experience, as well as to study and daily apply advanced forms and methods that exist in other countries.

In conclusion, the representative of the Ministry of the Interior expressed sincere gratitude to the participants for their willingness to cooperate, for understanding and striving to put joint efforts into safeguarding the rights of citizens and their safety, he also and wished everyone success and fruitful work.

Chief of the IOM Mission welcomed all the participants and expressed hope for active participation in plenary sessions and working groups, which would contribute to a productive and successful conference and will ensure its success. He also noted the contribution and support of the main partners of the project - the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Republic of Belarus, as well as the public and international organizations.

The Chief of the IOM Mission also expressed particular gratitude to the donor of the conference - Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark – who has been, for 7 years, sustainably funding activities supporting the public sector and civil society in the field

combating human trafficking in the Republic of Belarus, as well as providing protection and assistance to VoTs.

Chief of Mission expressed appreciation of other donors - the United States Agency for International Development, the European Union and the Swedish International Development and Cooperation - for long-term cooperation and funding of the various regional and national initiatives in the field of combating trafficking in human beings, which contributed to the creation of a reliable and strong partnership between the public sector, civil society and international organizations.

In her welcome address to the participants of the conference on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Counselor of the General Directorate for Multilateral Diplomacy summarized the country's contribution at the national and international levels. It was noted that the actions of the Republic of Belarus at the international level are aimed at continuously drawing attention of the United Nations (UN) to the problem of human trafficking and at dialogue with an emphasis on close partnership with NGOs and international organizations. Initiative of the Republic of Belarus to form a global partnership to fight human trafficking, voiced by the President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko in 2005 at the UN Summit, contained a call to unite and improve the quality of coordination of international efforts in the fight against human trafficking.

In this regard, the Republic of Belarus addressed the United Nations with the proposal to develop a global action plan to combat human trafficking, which would become the first universal instrument to unite all stakeholders in the fight against human trafficking. Efforts to promote the Global Action Plan facilitated adoption of the resolutions initiated by Belarus on improving the coordination of efforts in the fight against human trafficking. The resolutions were aimed at developing a global partnership of all involved parties and rendering support to States in strengthening their national capacities in the field of combating human trafficking. At the 64th Session of the UN General Assembly in 2010 the Global Plan was adopted and now serves a platform for new initiatives, such as the creation of the first Trust Fund for the Protection of VoTs.

Attention of participants was drawn to the work of the UN Group of Friends, united in the fight against human trafficking, coordinated by the Republic of Belarus. To date, 22 states representing all regions of the world are members of the Group.

Specifically emphasized was creation of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), which was approved by the UN in 2006 through the efforts of the Republic of Belarus and is successfully functioning today encompassing 17 agencies.

The official opening was concluded by the welcoming address of the Chairman of the Board of "Gender Perspectives" NGO. In her speech she emphasized the role of civil society in the referral system for the victims of human trafficking, noting that the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been pioneers in combating trafficking in persons in Belarus and are still playing key role in provision of rehabilitation and reintegration services.

In recognition of their role and expertise in combating human trafficking, NGOs are included in the law on combating human trafficking and are official partners of the state.

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In concluding her opening speech, the Chairman of the Board expressed the hope that as the Law enters into force, the debate on the NRM will continue within the legal framework and the results will be reflected in the legislation of the Republic of Belarus, ensuring sustainable implementation of the NRM at the national level.

After a brief press conference during which the press asked their questions about the new challenges in the field of human trafficking and illegal migration, as well as about the improvement of the NRM, the participants continued to work in plenary sessions. Representatives from each participating country introduced the national experiences of THB and operation of NRM, which was presented from different angles, as well as of the cooperation between government, NGOs and international organizations in Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine and Albania.

Group work. Conclusions.

The first day of the conference continued with the work in thematic groups. Conference participants suggested the following topics for discussion and development of recommendations to improve NRM in Central and Eastern Europe:

1. Legal aspect of NWO;
2. Coordination mechanism for NRM;
3. Monitoring of NRM.

Each group had a task to not only exchange views and share experience and expertise, but also to elaborate recommendations for the development and improvement of the NRM, covering the legal aspect, coordination mechanism and monitoring of NRM as a system to combat human trafficking.

For the purpose of objectivity in elaboration of recommendation, the moderators groups were selected from the public sector, civil society and international organizations with expertise in this area and the topic.

Working Group 1, moderator - Representative of the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Moldova.

In course of discussion the following issues were dwelled upon:

- coordination of referral mechanisms;
- transnational arrangements;
- package of social services for VoTs.

Group members shared information on existing legislation on the issue in the participating countries. Thus, in Moldova there is a Law on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, the National Program and the NRS. In Ukraine, the Law on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, which includes a comprehensive approach based on the principles and procedures for referral, and the National Program. Belarus adopted and entered into force the Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the state program against human trafficking.

Members of the group noted that the principles of the NRM at the regional level are identical for Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and the only difference is in coordination aspects (responsible entities) and approaches to implementation. One of the issues raised during the discussions at the working group was development of the by-laws framework and formalization of cooperation platforms.

Speaking of coordination of referral mechanisms, participants felt that the referral mechanism should be clearly enshrined in the legislation, as specification and formalization of cooperation is an important element, and include aspects of cooperation between the different state agencies, as well as civil society and international organizations. The leading role should be played by Interagency Commissions or the Government (through specialized structures). Also important are the issues of capacity building and training both in specialized areas and at the junction of the expertise of different departments.

Regarding transnational mechanisms, the members determined that the model of transnational cooperation is very difficult to implement. Described standards can only be realized through the two/three-way agreements between the countries.

When discussing the social services package for VoTs a conceptual agreement was reached on the need to introduce standardization of social services and to develop a mechanism for public contracting of the package of social services.

It was noted that the process for awarding the status of VoTs crucial. It is important to define the role of specific structures and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the nexus between the social services and the status of the victim.

As a result of the work in Group 1 the following **recommendations** have been developed and presented to the other participants on the second day of the conference:

- comprehensive approach should be reflected in the law on combating human trafficking. Consequently, it is necessary to develop by-laws, which would include provisions for the identification of victims, training, coordination, referral system, monitoring, interaction mechanism to refer foreign nationals, standardization of service packages for VoTs etc.;
- specific regulations are adopted by each country independently on the basis of the objectives and specifics of the state system and national context;
- all standard operating procedures should be detailed and legally approved. Informal cooperation is encouraged, but it should not be the main one.

Working Group 2, the moderator - representative of an international organization, Moldova.

The discussion covered the following issues:

- Coordination at national and international levels;
- Leadership and a focal point;
- Inter/intra ministerial coordination;
- Political/operational levels;
- Human resource management;
- Funding;
- The role of civil society.

Speaking of coordination, the members agreed that the National Coordinator should be set up by the law. In most countries the leading role in efforts to combat human trafficking is given to law enforcement. In rare cases, the line ministries are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice or the Ministry of Social Protection.

Most members of the group felt that the coordinator position is not the key issue here, but also agreed that a senior official has more capacity for policy making and steering coordinated efforts. The only problem that was identified by the panelists was high preoccupation of the officials of that rank and lack of commitment to addressing the problem of human trafficking. At the same time, lower-ranking officials may be familiar with the daily operational activities but not have authority to make policy decisions.

All members of the group agreed that the key policy documents, such as strategy, national program and/or action plan should reflect the planning, coordination and cooperation between different levels of government, be it political and/or working level, the central and regional/local one. These documents should identify common objectives in terms of cooperation for the protection of VoTs.

Interagency Steering Council/Committee or Group is the most common tool for coordination, planning, reporting and monitoring.

The group noted the importance of formal contacts as a means of accountability and official appointment of those responsible for combating human trafficking, including corresponding provisions in the terms of reference. This reflects the multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdiction and multi-faceted nature of combating human trafficking. Because of the complexity of the problem no ministry or group of ministries would be able to resolve it on their own.

In addition the panel noted that the informal communication that takes place through personal contacts and acquaintances could be very productive for interagency cooperation.

Among the tools and/or resources used by national coordinators the following were identified - international conventions in the field of combating human trafficking, bilateral and regional agreements between countries of origin and destination (historically these agreements were aimed at and focused on the persecution and criminalization of human trafficking), the CIS platform for national coordinators to combat human trafficking, etc. It was suggested that these agreements should include included aspects of the protection and assistance to (potential) VoTs in response to changing trends in human trafficking and the difficulty of detection.

Speaking about the political and operational levels of cooperation, the members stressed that the level of political cooperation is about establishing, strengthening and coordinating the overall legal, institutional and policy frameworks that are used to combat human trafficking. Its basic institutional structure is an interagency group/committee serving an advisory body.

The operational level provides for establishment or strengthening of professional capacities and effective assistance to VoTs or representatives of the criminal process, involved in the investigation of crimes and initiation of criminal cases. Interagency groups/teams at the regional/local level have proven to be an effective tool in the process of coordinating assistance and protection for VoTs rendered by decentralized government structures and civil society.

All members of the group agreed that NGOs should play an active role in the process. So far, the evidence shows that they have only observer status, but there is trend for their role to grow and them receiving proper status subject to capacity and expertise in combating human trafficking. Memorandum of Cooperation was proposed as one of the effective tools for strengthening cooperation.

The implementation of NRM was recognized by the participants to be the best approach to establishment of cooperation between governmental and non-state actors for the protection of and rendering assistance to VoTs.

The group also discussed social contracting as a form of partnership, particularly at the operational level. Positive results of such interaction were highlighted.

With regard to human resources management, the appointment of individuals responsible for human trafficking issues, reflection of duties in the terms of reference, and capacity-building can be organized by each of the responsible agency within the existing training system.

International Training Centre of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Belarus has been recommended as a center for professional capacity development for the region, it was emphasized that the center has experience in teaching not only law enforcement officials, but also members of other government departments.

The most difficult of all the issues discussed was the one of responsibility for the empowerment of multidisciplinary teams. The group unanimously agreed that under the leadership of the National Coordinator most countries still rely on international technical assistance.

Speaking about the funding of the program/project, all members of the group shared the view that currently the responsibility for public funding lies with the national coordinator for combating human trafficking. All agreed that there are two main priorities – prosecution and punishment, and protection and assistance.

The work also discussed another possible approach - a multi-disciplinary approach to the planning and allocation of public resources.

Also discussed was the social contracting as a very promising mechanism for NGO funding.

All panelists agreed that international technical assistance is still needed to ensure the gradual transfer of responsibilities and to make up for the shortfall due to the changing trends in combating human trafficking.

Resulting from the Group 2 work were the following ***recommendations***, developed and presented to the other participants on the second day of the conference:

- The role of national coordinator should be defined and enshrined in legislation. It is recommended that the national coordinator specialized in combating human trafficking, as well as had certain level of authority and knowledge necessary to perform the required tasks. The coordinator's governance should be supported by the Secretariat; the working group should include specialists with sufficient knowledge on combating human trafficking and on human rights.
- States should consider the appointment of the Ministry of Social Protection as a national focal point for the fight against human trafficking, which will ensure observance of human rights and pro-active approach to the prevention THB.
- Key policy documents - strategies, programs and plans - should be developed for a period of at least 3 - 4 years, for the timeframe sufficient for quality performance, monitoring, evaluation and planning for the next phase.
- States should consider fixing the main duties in the terms of reference as part of law enforcement in the fight against human trafficking.
- States should be required to develop and strengthen informal contacts between the main actors of state and non-state entities.
- States should consider revising existing bilateral and regional agreements between countries of origin and destination, which focus only on the prosecution and mutual legal assistance. They need to incorporate protection and assistance to VoTs and/or

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enter into new agreements containing provisions on the protection and assistance to (potential) VoTs in response to changing trends in human trafficking and the difficulty of identification in the countries of destination.

- States should provide opportunities for active participation of NGOs at the political level by the signing cooperation agreements and inclusion of specific NGOs with relevant expertise in the national strategy, national program and plan.
- Practical implementation of NPM ensures a human rights-based approach and social contracting is a form of cooperation between state and non-state service-providers, particularly at the operational level.
- International Training Centre of the Republic of Belarus continues to act as a platform for training law enforcement agencies in the region, as well as an institution to bring together specialists from different countries, which is useful for mutual legal assistance and international cooperation in general.
- Ministries responsible for the protection and assistance to VoTs at national level should be actively involved in the distribution of public funds to help VoTs and share responsibility with the police; there is a need for a multidisciplinary approach to budgeting in accordance with the obligations under the law.
- Development and implementation of the social contracting as a form of social partnership with NGOs and the public funding mechanism for NGOs contribute to acknowledgement of their role and competence in the field of combating human trafficking.

Working Group 3, moderator – NGO representative, Moldova.

In course of discussion the group determined that the establishment of the NRM in the country should preferably be done within the framework of a specially developed and approved a policy document (PD) on THB – a strategy, state plan or program. This document define strategic goals and objectives, as well as the necessary measures, which may include establishment of an institutional and regulatory framework for NRM, personnel training, etc. Depending on the available resources, NRM can be set up in phases and the plan can be designed for several years. Monitoring of NRM creation could help keep track of policy implementation and the degree of progress.

Monitoring of the implementation of the NRM as a strategic tool is a constant process of collecting and analyzing data in order to compare performance as per the planned results. Monitoring of the implementation of the strategy is usually required at various levels of Government, given the decentralization processes.

The discussion covered the following issues:

- Objectives and frequency of monitoring;
- The role of civil society in monitoring;
- Nexus between quality of monitoring and quality of planning;
- Development of monitoring indicators;
- The role of research.

On the issue of objectives and frequency of monitoring the team members - representatives of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine - shared information on their countries having no

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standards/regulations on the procedure for monitoring the implementation of legislation as of yet, though monitoring is conducted. It usually means collecting information about the performed actions and drawing up a summary report on the country, but there is no assessment of the impact of the legislative framework on the situation or its adjustment per monitoring results. It was agreed that monitoring could play a greater role in policy making.

It was determined that the main task of monitoring was providing country leadership, national coordinator, as well as subjects of the policy with data on the performance in implementation of the strategy. Monitoring is mainly focused on: implementation of the planned measures, meeting deadlines, use of resources, and dynamics of change.

Monitoring is a cyclical process; its frequency is typically 1 year.

Discussion of the role of civil society revealed that not all of these countries engage civil society in monitoring the strategies implementation and evaluation of the quality of care for the VoTs. NGOs are very interested in doing this work, as it relates to their primary role in the society and the nature of their activities, but they do not always have the necessary resources to carry out such works independently, and the state structures do not always engage NGOs to state monitoring.

Summarizing the discussion of the nexus between quality of monitoring and quality of planning, the working group agreed that the quality of monitoring depends on the quality of the policy document and its content. Monitoring-related issues need to be devised at the stage of policy document development. The results of monitoring should be used to improve the quality of planning for the subsequent planning period.

The development of indicators is also an important component of monitoring. Indicator is a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that measures the results, reflects the changes brought about by the policy. Indicators are developed at the stage of creation of the policy document via analyzing the expected performance, set forth by the document.

Formulation of realistic and appropriate specific indicators reflecting the results of policy implementation is a difficult task. The working group members were of the opinion that it is necessary to combine scientific and creative approach in development of indicators.

As for to the role of research, they do not yet play a major role in monitoring in the participating countries. However, such research, especially independent, i.e. conducted by representatives of organizations not responsible for the implementation of the policies, may stimulate strategies that contribute to the improvement of the measures taken.

Resulting from the Group 3 work were the following recommendations, developed and presented to the other participants on the second day of the conference

- Civil society should be actively involved in:
 - policy planning (making proposals);
 - implementation (voluntary participation in the implementation of public policies and the implementation of their own projects financed by donors);
 - monitoring and evaluation (voluntary monitoring reports, submitted to the national coordinator, and alternative reports);
 - there is a possibility to set up a permanent working group to develop and monitor policies featuring government and non-governmental organizations;

- Monitoring should be developed as part of common cyclic process of policy management, which begins with the policy development. The monitoring procedure should be devised during the development of a policy document;
- For the document to create political preconditions for good monitoring, it should contain:
 - identified problems and goals;
 - objectives;
 - tasks;
 - measures;
 - government agencies responsible for implementation;
 - partners - non-governmental (NGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs);
 - timeframe of action;
 - resources (financial);
 - performance indicators
- When developing the policy indicators preference should be given to specific indicators and multivariate data should be handled carefully, as it might distort the actual results of policy implementation.
- It is necessary to enhance the monitoring role of research, which may be conducted by government bodies and non-governmental organizations.
- When planning monitoring, one should take in consideration the role of special organizations with databases that can provide information for the comparative analysis of statistical data.

Conference recommendations.

International conference "Development of the National Referral Mechanism for protection and assistance of victims of human trafficking", held in Minsk on 12 - 13 December 2012, was primarily aimed at exchange of experiences and best practices in the field of combating trafficking in human beings through the development and implementation of the NRM and elaboration of recommendations for the development and improvement of the NRM in the region of Central and Eastern Europe on the basis of available international experience.

The conference addressed the practical aspects of the implementation of the NRM, focused on legislative aspects, coordination and institutional arrangements, as well as organization of monitoring, which is a key part of any strategy on NRM.

Participants of the Conference on NRM were given the opportunity to strengthen partnerships between the public authorities and civil society in order to improve cooperation and further exchange of information on relevant aspects of the NRM implementation.

The conference served a platform for elaboration of recommendations for the development and improvement of NRM for the Central and Eastern Europe and highlighting the generally accepted standards.

The following recommendations resulted from the conference:

- Comprehensive approach should be reflected in the Law on combating human trafficking. All standard operating procedures and job descriptions should be detailed and legally approved.
- The role of the National Coordinator should be determined by law.
- Key policy documents - the strategy, program, and plan - should be designed for a minimum of 3-4 years to comply with the timeframe for quality implementation, monitoring, evaluation and planning for the next phase.
- It is recommended to develop and strengthen communication and cooperation between the public sector, civil society and international organizations at the state level.
- It is recommended to consider revising the existing bilateral and regional agreements between countries of origin and destination on prosecution and mutual legal assistance, and to include provisions on protection and assistance of (potential) VoTs due to the changing trends of THB and difficulties in identifying VoTs in destination countries.
- States should provide opportunities for meaningful participation of NGOs at the political level via signing cooperation agreements and including specific NGOs with relevant expertise into the national strategy, national program and plan.
- International Training Centre of the Republic of Belarus is recommended as a platform for training and cooperation of law enforcement agencies in the region, as well as experts from other ministries and agencies at the international and national levels.
- It is recommended to use a multidisciplinary approach to budgeting in accordance with the obligations under the law.
- Development and implementation of the social contracting as a form of social partnership with NGOs and the public funding mechanism for NGOs contributes to acknowledgement of their role and competence in the field of combating human trafficking.

- Civil society should be actively involved in policy planning, its implementation and monitoring.
- Monitoring should be developed as part of common cyclic process of policy management, which begins with policy development. Monitoring procedure should be devised at the policy document elaboration stage.