

**National Coordinator on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, police General-Lieutenant, Mr. Vilayat Eyvazov's Annual Report on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings**

**03.05.2019**

**Dear Mr. Chairman!**

**Dear Parliament Members!**

**It is known that one of the most dangerous types of transnational organized crime is trafficking in human beings, as well as it is one of the acts that threaten the stability of each country, the rule of law and violates human rights.**

**At the same time, in terms of the high organization level of criminal groups in this area and rapidly expanding their scales, it is always in the focus of global community and influential international organizations, as one of the sharp challenges of the twenty-first century.**

**It is not a coincidence that in the next global report of the United Nations, published in 2019, it is noted that the number of trafficking crimes in most parts of the world has increased, has widespread in the armed conflict zones, where impunity of these deeds is in force, and the high percentage of women and girls among its victims – approximately 70 %.**

**59% of the detected crimes are sexually exploited, 34% compulsory labor facts, some cases of illegal transplantation of trafficking in human beings in different countries, involving into criminal activity and adoption are specifically emphasized.**

**Nevertheless, the measures taken to prevent trafficking in human beings, the protection of victims' rights and freedoms haven't been slackened. The report also states that 17,880 crimes of trafficking in human beings, more than 100,000 victims were identified last year, and 7,045 convictions were sentenced by the courts.**

**One of the most complex and systematic combating trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the tasks set forth have been consistently and fully implemented with relevant government agencies, civil society institutions and international partners with the third National Action Plan.**

**In this area, the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Psychological Assistance" provides for the right of persons, victims of trafficking, to receive free psychological assistance, and the Law on Protection of Children from Harmful Information - mechanisms for protecting teenagers from the materials which are contrary to social morality, national and ethical values have been identified.**

**In accordance with the Decree signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On the Activities of the Sustainable and Operative Social Security Agency" signed in 2018, the measures related to the rehabilitation of victims of trafficking in human beings have also been taken into consideration in the social services provided by "DOST" centers.**

**General Collective Agreement has been signed among the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Trade Union Confederation and National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) Organizations for – 2018-2019 and it has been confirmed by a joint decision of these institutions. In this document, there are the norms on the elimination of child labor, forced labor, and trafficking in human beings, supporting state social programs which regulate labor migration and organizing joint monitoring.**

**Awareness and propagation activities on individual social layers, which are the basis of measures to prevent trafficking in human beings, have been systematic as in previous years.**

**More than 2000 meetings with about 85,000 pupils of 9-11 grades of secondary schools and their parents were organized by the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Education, Health, Youth and Sport, State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and the protection of children from trafficking issues was discussed extensively.**

**Representatives of law-enforcement agencies, mass media, local executive authorities, medical, social protection organizations, international and civil-governmental organizations took part in these events, covering 46 cities and regions of the Republic, social reels were demonstrated. Similar activities were also arranged for students from a number of universities, higher and secondary specialized educational institutions.**

**With the support of the State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations, ASAN Service centers have distributed informational booklets to citizens, and the Center for Monitoring of Labor Relations has conducted explanatory work related to the legalization of labor relations at 195 construction sites.**

**In order to encourage the conclusion of employment contracts and to provide the population with the necessary information in this field, a Common Internet Portal for Labor Relations was established and put into operation in 2018.**

**The executive authorities of the capital, as well as the cities and districts of the republic, have been closely involved in the awareness measures.**

**Work on informing the country's people about the danger of trafficking in human beings was continued, and instructional materials were distributed to thousands of passengers in customs and border checkpoints.**

**In the organization of the propagation, Coalition of Non-Governmental Organizations which unites 45 public organizations, civil society institutions, and**

mass media have a great deal of work, and 17 public associations which had contributed a lot to this field were awarded.

At the same time, 15 projects which non-governmental organizations introduced on trafficking in human beings and cost 110,000 manats were funded by the Council for State Support to Non-Governmental Organizations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Considering the approach to the professional training of law enforcement officers with new criteria, the need to increase the effectiveness of the training-education system, training courses for government agencies and civil society representatives which involved in combating trafficking in human beings and realized social rehabilitation have been organized.

Employees of the special police department participated in 51 conferences, seminars and training in foreign countries and in our country and they were involved as trainers in international training.

**Dear Parliament Members!**

Implementation of important tasks to strengthen cooperation with international and regional organizations during the reporting period was also effective.

The results obtained in combating against human trafficking, prospects of cooperation, expansion of joint projects – were discussed in detail at the meetings with the representatives of the United States Department of State, embassies of this country and some other states in Azerbaijan, the International Organization for Migration and the International Center for the Development of Migration Policy last year.

The agreement on the increasing the intensity of information exchange, the extradition of the accused persons who declared wanted and other important issues were obtained during the meetings with the representatives of relevant state bodies of Turkey, Uzbekistan, Iran and the United Arab Emirates from the origin and destination countries.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs signed more than 100 contracts with about 40 countries of the relevant government agencies – these contracts are giving real results in the operative determination of the place of residence of Azerbaijani citizens who are victims of human trafficking in other states, collecting data about the persons who committed these crimes, and realizing joint measures.

At the same time, a large amount of joint work implemented with some prominent international organizations, including UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, European Union, Islamic Cooperation, International Migration, and other organizations, was directly involved in the problem of trafficking in human beings and their solving ways.

**The tasks on preventing forced labor, eliminating the circumstances causing these illegal acts have been realized in a planned way.**

**It was revealed by the Center for Labor Relations Monitoring of the State Agency for Citizens Service and Social Innovations that 946 people had been working in 79 construction sites without any labor or service contract.**

**Criminal proceedings have been launched by the Republic Prosecutor's Office on 6 organizations related to violations, 35 ones of them was imposed an administrative penalty of 527,000 manats, 27 were imposed a tax sanction of 468.000.**

**19,210 foreigners who violate the rules of residence and living in the country were involved in administrative liability and 3.740 of them were removed out of the Republic borders. It had great importance in the prevention of forced labor.**

**450 children who are outside the family environment, pedagogical and social influence, working at streets and begging have been determined during the measures to prevent child labor exploitation.**

**The inspections did not confirm that these children were victims of trafficking in human beings or forced labor. But in terms of eliminating some available problems, especially the need of care and help for children, 760 materials were sent to the commissions under local executive authorities, guardianship and protection bodies, administrative punishment measures were taken against 207 parents who did not fulfill their duties regarding the education and training of their children.**

**As a result of monitoring, 75 neglected juveniles and their parents received qualified legal and psychological assistance, as well as, each of 143 children who were adopted, given in custody were provided with social aids.**

**The activity in the area of detection on trafficking in human beings and the prosecution of guilty persons has been purposeful in the reporting period, as in previous years.**

**As a result of carried out operational search measures, related to 144 victims of trafficking in human beings, 4 forced labor victims, as well as, illegal actions with the documents of trafficking in human beings, 35 crimes were registered and 13 criminal groups consisted of 28 people were rendered harmless.**

**Dear Parliament Members!**

**According to calculations of the International Labor Organization (ILO), there are now 40.3 million people who are victims of modern slavery in the world. 16 million of them are exposed to forced labor in housing, construction, agriculture, and 4.8 million to sexual exploitation. Every fourth victim is a young man and a girl.**

**Taking into account the fact that it is becoming a global problem, complex steps are being taken to increase efforts to eliminate trafficking in human beings, tighten penalties for illegal acts, and care for victims.**

**Thanks to the strong political will of our state, Azerbaijan has undergone institutional reforms in line with the world standards in combating trafficking in human beings and necessary organizational and practical measures have been undertaken.**

**Third National Action Plan, covering 2014- 2018, which was completed last year, huge activity in the field of maintaining the country's economic growth rates, increasing employment and improving living standards, has also made significant conclusions in solving the problem of trafficking in human beings.**

**This period is characterized by increasing standards of combating against trafficking in human beings. In addition, the capabilities of modern information technologies have been used to achieve the aims, professionalism of state agencies and civil society organizations, state support for victims have increased, infrastructure and technical support have significantly strengthened.**

**During the period of implementation, 9 laws regulating trafficking in human beings were adopted, 10 decrees, 20 declarations, an agreement were signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 17 decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers and one state program were approved.**

**Strengthening the interdepartmental co-operation, as well as, the activity of Interdepartmental Commission that consist of representatives of 14 central executive bodies which operates within the National Referral Mechanism related to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings was also effective.**

**237 cultural events, including training and seminars, were held in all cities and districts of the country with the participation of civil society representatives and mass media to inform the public about dangers of trafficking in human beings. The prevention work covers almost all schools, lyceums, colleges and children's homes.**

**The donors for the implementation of National Action Plan and the fields where the assistance will be used have also been identified, the Council of State Support to NGOs under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan has financed 53 projects and spent 412,000 manats for these purposes.**

**65 non-governmental organizations, which are especially distinguished in the combating against trafficking in human beings, were provided financial aids of nearly 60,000 manats by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.**

**Over the past five years, 755 trafficking victims and 169 individuals on forced labor have been prosecuted.**

**With the implemented operational-search measures, the activity of an international criminal network in our country has been prevented, 2 organized groups, 58 criminal groups were deactivated. 312 of identified 356 victims were placed in safe shelters and each one was provided with lump-sum payments, and 280 victims received aids from the Foundation.**

**More than 124 people were employed, 188 were involved in vocational courses, and some of them were registered in the Assistance Centers at the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. 706 victims of trafficking in human beings were provided with medical assistance by the Ministry of Health.**

**The effectiveness of trafficking in human beings and forced labor prevention is also specifically emphasized in relevant documents of reputable international organizations.**

**So, the work in the implementation of the National Action Plan done by the Committee of the Parties to the European Convention on Trafficking in Human Beings, the Expert Group of the**

**Council of Europe - GRETA, and the Special Representative of the Council of Europe in the relevant field had been appreciated and the obtained progress was highlighted.**

**A new National Action Plan, covering 2019-2023, was prepared and submitted to the government in order to continue the systematic co-operation with the relevant state bodies and civil society institutions in combating these types of crimes.**

**The main goals of this project, consisting of 67 measures in the beginning, are: increasing the effectiveness of criminal prosecution, operational-investigation activity, awareness work, victim protection and social rehabilitation activities in combating against trafficking in human beings and developing international cooperation.**

**In addition, - strengthening material and technical support of the special police body, creating necessary conditions to improve the living standards of victims and potential victims, increasing the capacity of the shelters and care centers serving them, conducting researches in the field of trafficking in human beings, conducting scientific researches and etc. important issues are reflected in the Plan.**

**36 state bodies, local executive authorities, and related non-governmental organizations are considered to be involved to the implementation of this conceptual document.**

**Undoubtedly, in the next reporting period, the activities aimed at preventing all forms of trafficking in human beings, forced labor, implementation of legal, political and socio-economic measures, expanding relations with civil society and**

**international organizations will be strengthened and will be continued with great determination that is appropriate with our country's commitments.**

**Dear Mr. Chairman!**

**Dear Parliament Members!**

**At the end of the report, I express my deep gratitude to you, as well as civil society and media representatives, for improvement of the legal framework on combating trafficking in human beings, your direct involvement in the implementation of public policy in this important area, your practical and effective cooperation.**

**Thanks for your attention.**