



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

## Organized Crime Involvement Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants

Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice  
Side event – Panel Discussion  
19 May 2010

In order to provide elements of a response, if not a complete response, UNODC has initiated, in partnership with the Institute for International Research on Criminal Policy (IRCP) of Ghent University, a study focusing on the role of organized crime in trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants cases.

A panel discussion was organized as a side event to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to provide:

- Additional insight in the evaluation of the involvement of organized crime in these crimes;
- Opportunity for a dialogue on how to enhance anti-trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants efforts;
- Views on how to move forward in the analysis of the links between these phenomena and organized crime.

The panel was composed of:

**Ms NATALIA OLLUS:** Senior Programme Officer, European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, HEUNI, part of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme. Ms Ollus managed an EU-funded project entitled FLEX: Forced labour and exploitation, looking into trafficking for forced labour in Estonia, Finland and Poland. At HEUNI, Ms Ollus also worked on issues relating to violence against women and anti-corruption. In addition to HEUNI, she had worked with trafficking issues as a member of civil society, with UNODC in Southern Africa and most recently at the OSCE in Vienna.

**Ms VITTORIA LUDA DI CORTEMIGLIA:** Focal Point on Human Trafficking at the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, UNICRI. Vittoria had been with UNICRI since October 2001 and involved in UNICRI anti human trafficking activities in various countries, including Costa Rica, Italy, Nigeria, Thailand and Ukraine. She was currently coordinating a UNICRI program on trafficking in girls and young women from Nigeria to Italy implemented in cooperation with UNODC Country Office in Nigeria.

**Mr ERIC PANLOUP :** Chef d'escadron, Délégation aux victimes, Direction générale de la Gendarmerie Nationale. Mr Panloup was the co-founder of the national coordination mechanism against trafficking in persons in France.

**Mr FABRIZIO SARRICA:** Researcher in the Studies and Threat Analysis Section of UNODC. Mr Sarrica had been working for UNODC since 2002 as a researcher on different crime issues, including organized crime and corruption. He worked on the UNODC-Trafficking in Persons: Global Pattern Report, in 2006 and was the lead Researcher for the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2009, as well as other studies at national and regional level.

**Ms ALEXIA TAVEAU (Chair):** Associate Crime Prevention Expert for the Anti-Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Unit of UNODC since 2004 in various capacities, including as researcher for the Global report on Trafficking in Persons in East Asia and the Pacific.

## SUMMARY

The panel discussion was chaired by Ms. Alexia Taveau, who presented the main findings and recommendations from the study “Organized Crime Involvement in Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants”. A literature review and experts consultation revealed that, despite the increasing attention being given to the issue of the involvement of organized crime in trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, there is still too little knowledge about the realities. The exercise also emphasized the scarcity of data in this area, and, while featuring interesting cases, the study remained theoretical. The study also highlighted the extreme diversity in crime groups and actors.

Ms. Natalia Ollus, Senior Programme Officer, European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, HEUNI, spoke of the current challenges in studying organised crime involvement in trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, including the difficulty of establishing linkages between organised crime and trafficking in humans and smuggling migrants. “We don’t know much”, she said. Data is needed from various sources, including official data and unofficial data from direct and indirect sources, in order to create a more coherent picture of organised crime involvement in different regions of the world. Despite recent research trends showing less-organised criminal activity and unorganised criminal networks, the elements of organised crime should not be undermined.

Ms. Vittoria Luda di Cortemiglia, Focal point on Trafficking at the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, UNICRI, cited many examples from her research in Nigeria of women exploited and trafficked for sexual exploitation. Trafficking of women from Nigeria, she said, is quite atypical because of its use of women traffickers and that traffickers and exploiters are from the same origins in Nigeria”. This trafficking is conducted by a network of numerous criminal groups linked horizontally that maintain all aspects of the trafficking, from recruitment to exploitation.

Mr. Eric Panloup, Chef d’escadron, Direction générale de la Gendarmerie Nationale, commented on the need for utilising joint investigation teams and international sharing of information. He mentioned the need for harmonisation of laws against transnational organised crime, citing an example where two Member States may not take criminal action on the same offence. Additionally, he mentioned actions should be taken to address corruption in the context of these two crimes.

Mr. Fabrizio Sarrica, Research Expert on Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, Studies in Threat Analysis Section of UNODC, began by citing some of the findings of the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, including increasing trends in identifying child trafficking and the relevance of identifying regional trafficking flows as well as international ones. However, he said, “What we have is clearly not enough. Much of the long time series data we have are from European regions give us some understanding of the trends. And from this data we have seen that some of the trafficking flows prevalent in the [1990s] are actually decreasing. However, we still lack more than a basic understanding of trafficking flows in other regions of the world. (...) Few member states collect information on organised crime involvement in trafficking in persons”.

Ms. Taveau concluded the panel discussion by taking questions from the audience and recounting an overview of recommendations which appeared in each of the panellist's presentation:

The recommendations that came out of the panel discussions were:

- The need for a balanced approach to data collection, which should include various sources, and be based on strengthened data collection systems and harmonisation of laws among Member States;
- Support of training in victim identification and special investigative techniques to provide adequate assistance, detect links between trafficking, smuggling and related crime, and identify how victims are recruited and trafficked, where the victims are from and by whom they are trafficked;
- Increase the awareness of the different types of organised criminal groups and networks operating in specific regions and countries, e.g. establishing linkages between crimes and organised mafia-like organisations and/or networks of brokers;
- Interviewing victims and perpetrators to collect data and support the criminal justice response;
- Creating an “index of severity” to measure and compare trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling in different regions;
- Identifying and addressing corruption.