



31th session of the CCPCJ - Side event
Operationalizing engagement in the
Blue Heart Campaign
Held online on 17 May 2022



Anna Ekstedt Swedish Ambassador-at-large for Combating Trafficking in Persons			Jean-Claude Brunet Ambassador of France for Transnational Criminal Threats
Oliver Peyroux International Consultant			Marijana Savic Director - ATINA
Silke Albert Moderator, UNODC HTMSS			Linda Ristagno International Air Transport Association

#CCPCJ31

The Blue Heart Campaign, supported by governments, private sector, NGOs, goodwill ambassadors and concerned individuals around the world, seeks to encourage involvement and inspire action to combat human trafficking. All proceeds to the Blue Heart Campaign go to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

Addressing demand that fosters trafficking in all forms of exploitation is crucial to prevent and stop this crime. It is a commitment of States parties to the UN Protocol against Trafficking in Human Beings.

[Anna Ekstedt, Ambassador for Combating Trafficking in Persons \(Sweden\)](#)

- Prostitution harms not only the victims involved, but society at large, and both prostitution and sexual exploitation are highly gendered crimes. **The Swedish strategy aims at disrupting the market but also empowering the balance between man and women.**
- **Legislation** and its normative effect are part of this model: by criminalizing the buyers of sexual services but not people in prostitution, prostitution rates have decreased, and the normative aspect proved to be an effective tool to fight THB and reduce demand.
- **Social aspects** are another key part of this model: Support are needed to people in prostitution and the buyers have to stop buying and to achieve this goal Sweden offers a support system to allow them to stop.
- **Prevention:** Providing comprehensive sexuality education by including men and boys in prevention is part of the strategy to reduce gender-based violence, and so is discussing gender roles and that sex is based on consent.
- **The joint Swedish-French strategy for combating human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation** focuses on initiating constructive discussions with States, international organizations, and civil society representatives regarding the nexus between human trafficking for sexual exploitation and prostitution, sexual and gender-based violence, and the effects of criminalizing the buyer but not the person in prostitution.

Jean-Claude Brunet, Ambassador in charge of the fight against organized crime (France)

- **The French approach** is part of a **holistic strategy** to develop and implement a National Action Plan against THB, with two **landmark laws of 13 April 2016 aimed at stepping up the fight against the prostitution system and supporting prostituted persons and of 27 March 2017 on the duty of vigilance of parent companies and contracting companies.**
- It is time for **more comprehensive and better coordinated response** in protection, identification and assistance of victims. In this regard, the role of the ICAT and the Blue Heart Campaign is crucial.
- Updated strategies are needed to cope with **modern technologies**, which offer good opportunities to better prevent and combat Trafficking in Human beings.
- Action on **demand is a crosscutting issue** which prevails for both sexual and labor exploitation.
- **Joint support from key parties** should involve representatives of States, International organisations, UNVTF, the Private Sector and NGOs.

Olivier Peyroux, International Consultant

- The report of the **Regional Initiative on Trafficking in Persons in South Eastern Europe** implemented in 2021 by UNODC with the active contribution and funding of France and Sweden is to be launched.
- The Initiative was developed **to support the region in this area during the COVID-19 crisis**. It resulted in the organization of **five regional online expert workshops**. **Local experts** were also engaged to ensure regular contact with national authorities while travel was restricted.
- **Needs for capacity building** were highlighted in particular in the following areas:
 - **Collection of data** on the trafficking in persons phenomena
 - **Identification and inter-institutional cooperation**
 - **Protection of victims and access to remedies**
 - Trafficking in persons facilitated by **online technologies**
 - **Financial investigations and asset recovery**
 - **Regional and international cooperation**

Marijana Savic, Director and Executive Secretary of NGO Atina

- *“We say that slavery has vanished from European civilization, but this is not true. **Slavery still exists, but now it applies only to women and its name is prostitution**”* (Victor Hugo, Les Misérables), is a quote that applies to many women in Serbia. NGO ATINA has been dealing with sexual exploitation for several years, working with hundreds of women surviving sexual exploitation and providing **direct support to victims, who were mostly forced into prostitution.**
- **Discouraging demand** should be further engaged. There is no **sexual education in schools** and no **exit program for victims in prostitution**. These programs should be established by investing in education, support services, and awareness raising.
- **Women engaged in prostitution should be de-criminalized and protected**, and **women in general should be made part of the legislative process tackling THB and sexual exploitation.**

Linda Ristagno, International Air Transport Association

- IATA gathers **290 air transport companies** representing **more than 80% of Airline traffic** worldwide
- IATA has developed a powerful campaign called #eyesopen and a **plan of action** to mobilize its members to identify and report suspicions of THB:
 - **Training for cabin crew**
 - **Guidance and practical tools**
 - **Awareness raising events with other industry stakeholders**
 - **Joint standard regional meetings to present the UNODC Blue Heart Campaign**

Of particular note the #Aquietoy Campaign in South America in collaboration with UNODC, airports and airlines.