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MINISTÈRE  
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INTERNATIONAL

# FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

QUARTERLY LETTER

FEBRUARY 2017, NO. 5

## SUMMARY:

- « Better understanding for more effective action » : presentation of the 2017 strategy against human trafficking in Southeast Europe
- The post of special advisor in the fight against human trafficking in Southeast Europe what is its purpose?
- 15 French initiatives for an effective fight against human trafficking in the Southeast Europe

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## AMBASSADOR'S EDITORIAL, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, JEAN-LOUIS FALCONI

« In September 2016 Caroline Charpentier joined the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations and the international organizations in Vienna to address the issue of the fight against human trafficking in Southeast Europe. We are delighted to have a voluntary magistrate with us who is experienced and determined to commit herself fully to the implementation of an ambitious action plan which is realistic and in tune with the needs of professionals.

One thing is clear today: the establishment in Vienna of a magistrate in charge of this issue is both an asset and a necessity. An asset because the effectiveness of our operations depends on the quality of our cooperation with all stakeholders, including within international organizations which, like UNODC, are located in Vienna. A necessity because the area

covered by the international effort includes 11 countries located in Southeast Europe, where there has been an increase in human trafficking in recent years as a result of the immigrant crisis. Together with Lieutenant Colonel Alain Bouedo from the Permanent Mission to the OSCE, France thus has a group of people responsible for law enforcement at its disposal in Vienna.

The objective of the programme, shared by all stakeholders, is a concrete enhancement of our ability to dismantle human trafficking. This action plan will allow us to develop the control levers without which our operations are threatened by inefficiency. Whether it is a case of knowing more about the routes and forms of human trafficking, or promoting the sharing of



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Ambassador, permanent  
representative of France in  
the United Nations Office  
and the international  
organisations in Vienna.

information and best practice, or of developing new tools for cooperation between the police and judiciary, it lays the groundwork for concerted and focused action against a transnational phenomenon that threatens public order and is repugnant in each of our states.»

## LA LUTTE CONTRE LA TRAITE DES ÊTRES HUMAINS : UNE PRIORITÉ DE LA FRANCE

According to the *Additional Protocol [of 15th January 2000] to the United Nations Convention against transnational organized crime aiming to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children* (called the "*Palermo Protocol*"), trafficking in human beings (THB) is defined as "*the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, by abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or by the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve consent to a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation.*"

2.5 million people each year worldwide are victims of trafficking

79% of them are women and children

158 countries specifically criminalize THB in 2016, compared with 33 in 2003

€350,000 of the annual French budget is allocated to the fight against THB in the Balkans

The arrival of Ms Caroline Charpentier at the Permanent mission of France to the United Nations and international organizations in Vienna has prompted the relaunch of this quarterly newsletter whose last edition was published in December 2015. This fifth issue is devoted to the **French cooperative strategy for 2017 against trafficking in human beings in Southeast Europe**.

France is one of the main transit and destination countries for victims of trafficking in human beings (THB) in Western Europe and has made the fight against this phenomenon a **priority**.

Having identified the main organized crime networks in THB in West Africa and Southeast Europe, France has invested in these two regions by creating a regional technical advisor post (RTA) in Lomé (Togo) and a **special advisor "against trafficking in human beings" (SA THB)** in Vienna (Austria).

Since 2010, the SA THB for

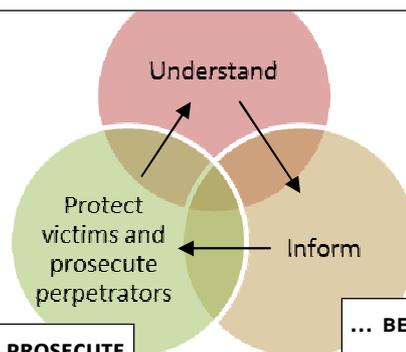
the Balkans has been attached to the Permanent mission of France to the United Nations and international organizations in Vienna. Its mission is to develop and **coordinate** cooperative activities in Southeast Europe and to **promote** French expertise in international organizations. This post has been occupied since September 2016 by Ms **Caroline Charpentier**, seconded magistrate at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MFAID).

Currently, **two forms of human trafficking** in Southeast Europe have been identified. The first is called "**traditional**" **trafficking**. It covers the exploitation of people who are particularly vulnerable because of their age, their belonging to a minority, their precarious economic situation or their gender. The second is the **exploitation of migrant populations along the migration route**. Trafficking can take several forms: sexual exploitation, forced labour or forced crime. A significant proportion of the victims are women/girls and minors.

Trafficking is often missed by official statistics, which, because they are incomplete and inaccurate, tend to underestimate the magnitude of this phenomenon. This is partly due to the difficulty of identifying cases of THB and systematically prosecuting the perpetrators under the specific relevant criminal laws. Moreover, inherent obstacles to international cooperation, particularly with regard to the **exchange of information between the countries of origin and destination** do not permit the proper identification and protection of victims or the satisfactory and systematic prosecution of the people behind the trafficking.

To overcome these shortcomings, the TEH 2017 programme, part of the **2014-2016 MIPROF National Action Plan** which is responsible for the national coordination of the fight against human trafficking, is divided into **3 components**:

**BETTER AWARENESS** of the working of trafficking networks from Southeast Europe in order to...



... **BETTER PROTECT THEM AND PROSECUTE PERPETRATORS** by strengthening the capacities of institutional actors and those in civil society.

... **BETTER INFORM** vulnerable people by raising their awareness of the risk of trafficking, in order to...

## THREE QUESTIONS FOR...

CAROLINE CHARPENTIER, MAGISTRATE, SPECIAL ADVISOR FOR THE "FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND RELATED CRIMES"



### Could you briefly introduce yourself?

*I have been a magistrate since 2006. I worked in France as a children's judge and as an investigating judge. I also have a lot of international experience. In particular, I worked with the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal in Rwanda. More recently, I spent three years with the EULEX-Kosovo mission, acting as a legal advisor to the Presidency of the Assembly of Judges and Criminal Courts. Since September 2016, I have been responsible for the mission "against human trafficking and related crimes," seconded to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Development in the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations and international organizations in Vienna. Together with my colleague from the Permanent Mission to the OSCE, Lieutenant Colonel Alain Bouedo, we handle trafficking issues in the OSCE area.*

### What is your role in the fight against trafficking in human beings?

*My activities are integrated into the national strategy against THB laid out by MIPROF and supported by the governance and globalization directive of MFAID. My role is to coordinate operations in the fight against human trafficking in the region of Southeast Europe and to launch new initiatives in the field at the same time. One thing is clear: because of the transnational nature of the networks and the great diversity of the actors in the field, the effectiveness of our operations is threatened by fragmentation. Without, of course, acting as a substitute for field personnel (attachés for internal security, liaising magistrates, attachés for cooperation, the Belgrade centre), I work to facilitate cross-border exchanges between professionals and to provide the necessary impetus for cooperation between France and the 11 states of the zone. This requires a lot of energy and personal investment, but the importance of the issue is ample justification for this.*

### How will your strategy bring more efficiency to the fight against trafficking?

*I am convinced that the control levers in the fight against trafficking in human beings have not yet all been activated. Every day field professionals tell me they lack information about both the phenomenon itself and about concrete possibilities for cooperation. So there is a lot of work to do to put the actors in touch, share information, and more generally, to develop the international response in the treatment of the problem. In this context, the French strategy, which is the result of a collaboration between the MFAID, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior, is particularly clear and pragmatic. Our action plan, overseen by Michèle Ramis, Ambassador for Transnational Criminal Threats, focuses on operational projects rooted in the needs expressed by stakeholders and in full cooperation with them. I prefer results, however small, to sweeping statements of intent. And when I see the extraordinary commitment of French, local and international players in the field in the countries where I go, I have no doubt that these results are within our reach.*

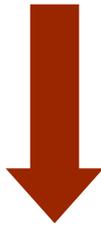
*"I see the extraordinary commitment of the players in the field, and I have no doubt that results in the fight against THB are within our reach"*

## FOCUS ON...

### ... French regional response

Under the leadership of the ambassadors, various French actors are involved in the fight against human trafficking in **each country** of Southeast Europe. Their skills and missions are complementary in the areas of governance (within the cooperation and cultural action services) and internal security (attachés for internal security).

This is complemented by **structures and agents whose operations extend over several countries**: the special advisor "against human trafficking and related crimes," the regional attaché for the rights of children, the regional centre for the fight against organized crime, called the "Belgrade centre", the regional attaché for internal security and the liaising magistrates.

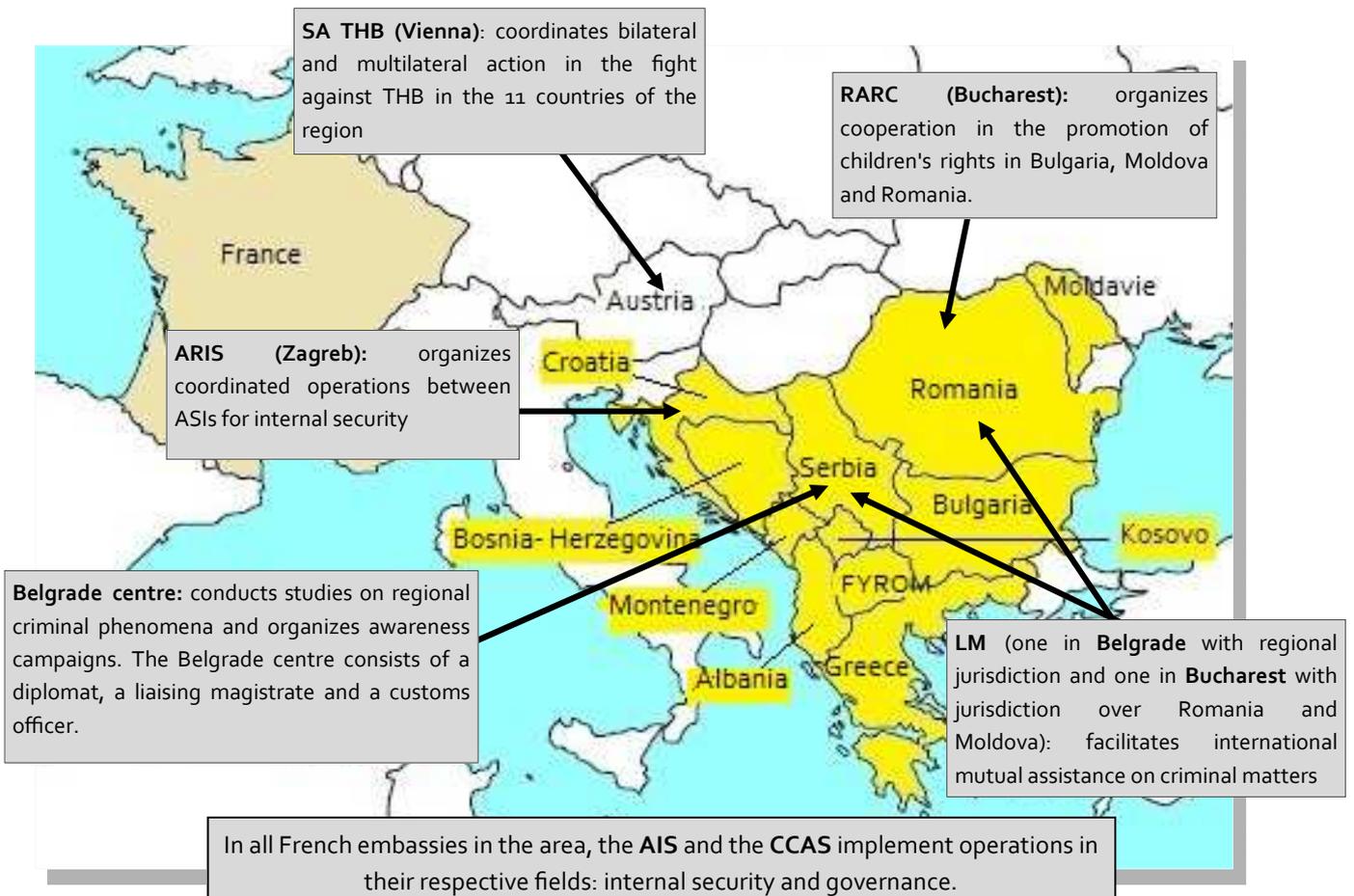


## THE 11 PARTNER STATES

Operations are being implemented in 11 countries in Southeast Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and, since December 2016, Greece, particularly for operations in the fight against THB in the context of the migration crisis.

### KEY

- ◇ **RARC**: Regional Attaché for the rights of children
- ◇ **AIS**: Attaché for internal security
- ◇ **ARIS**: Attaché for regional internal security
- ◇ **SA THB**: Special advisor "against human trafficking and related crimes"
- ◇ **ML**: Liaising magistrate
- ◇ **LOI**: Liaising officer for immigration
- ◇ **Belgrade centre**: Regional centre for the fight against organized crime
- ◇ **CCAS**: Cooperation and Cultural Action Service



## BEING BETTER INFORMED

Understanding the phenomenon of trafficking involves the implementation of specific **diagnostics**, established in and with source countries, to establish the historic, economic and sociological context of the phenomenon, and to evaluate existing mechanisms for prevention, support and assistance to victims.

Studies to this end have been carried out and financed by France since 2014 in various towns in Romania and Bulgaria; the 2017 programme will continue the implementation of the recommendations identified by these studies, including in particular the management of victims and the sharing of information among stakeholders.

This approach, action-oriented and based on shared diagnostics, will be extended to child victims of sexual exploitation from Bihor and Romania (Oradea), who will be the subject of a specific study. Similarly, a diagnostic effort and recommendations will be applied to the issue of unaccompanied minors on the Balkan route, an already known phenomenon which has been aggravated by the migrant crisis.

## BETTER PREVENTION

Improving the prevention of human trafficking involves better targeting of prevention measures and more **support for innovative initiatives** in the field.

Emphasis will be placed on certain **categories of victims** who are particularly affected. This is the case for the populations of towns in Romania and Bulgaria, where local diagnostics have already been performed: awareness campaigns will be conducted in liaison with NGOs on the ground. Similarly, specific operations to prevent trafficking of persons belonging to ethnic groups, with a focus on the Roma minority, known as the "Varna", will be reviewed as part of the programme in collaboration with the National Commission for the Fight against THB in Bulgaria.

Better prevention also means identifying specific themes in order to focus and intensify our efforts. Thus the problem of forced marriages in Montenegro is the subject of a project led by the OSCE which aims to take preventive action on behalf of the minorities who are particularly affected; this will lead to a concluding seminar in 2017. Moreover, in the fight against sexual exploitation, the focus will be on the **abolitionist approach** to prostitution defended by France, particularly through joint action with the states that share this approach.

Prevention should be better targeted, but it should also be **more innovative**. The programme provides an opportunity to support and develop new working methods in this respect. Thus in the fight against the exploitation of minors originating from Southeast Europe, France proposes the establishment of a targeted operational platform for the exchange of information between child protection professionals, exchange of good practice, and coordination of measures for prevention and awareness. Similarly, the programme will further support the project of the NGO PL4Y, which, in close cooperation with local authorities, aims for social and professional integration through sport for teenagers in vulnerable communities in Kosovo.

## BETTER PROTECTION OF VICTIMS AND PROSECUTION OF TRAFFICKERS

The final goal of our operation is the protection of victims and the prosecution of traffickers, corollaries of the dismantling of trafficking networks.

**Care of victims** by the police and judicial authorities can be further improved. This is why France supports the care of child victims in Romania by helping to finance the material means for interviewing these particularly vulnerable victims. Similarly, the identification and monitoring of unaccompanied minors is the subject of a project led by the Serbian NGO ATINA, in partnership with the NGO La Strada (FYROM) and Arsis (Greece), which aims to improve field procedures for identifying and protecting the most vulnerable migrants who are at risk from trafficking.

More generally, it is essential to **strengthen judicial and police cooperation** in order to improve efficiency in the suppression of traffickers. For this purpose, files currently being processed by France and the judicial and police authorities of the area should be systematically identified: a process to identify the files under active consideration will thus be initiated, with a view to a systematic exchange between countries of origin and destination. Furthermore, with regard to the fight against trafficking of migrants and associated money laundering, a UNODC project supported by France aims to strengthen the technical knowledge of the police and members of the judiciary who are involved in the fight against the phenomenon.

Ultimately the effectiveness of the cooperation requires **suitable resources, both logistical and human**. This is why France will support a project led by the OSCE to strengthen regional cooperation in the fight against trafficking of migrants between Serbia, Hungary and the FYROM, in particular by means of concrete support, equipment and interpreting as well as logistical support to strengthen the effectiveness of the fight against these organized networks. Innovative training activities will also be supported through an on-site training project led by the OSCE, making use of training exercises for police, judges, forensic doctors, labour inspectors, financial investigators and social services to fight against human trafficking networks, to identify victims and to prosecute perpetrators along migration routes



Vienna International  
Center, UNODC

## FOCUS ON...

### ... the trip to Belgrade of the special advisor "against trafficking in human beings and related crimes"

Caroline Charpentier was in Belgrade, Serbia from 1st to 3rd February 2017 to meet with her colleagues who are engaged locally in the fight against organized crime (ARIS, AIS, LOI and Belgrade centre). On this occasion, a coordination meeting on the topic of the fight against trafficking in human beings took stock of ongoing work in Serbia in which France is involved and presented the new French strategy for the Western Balkans.

This trip was an opportunity for all stakeholders (AIS, LOI, ARIS and Belgrade centre) to visit the reception centre for asylum seekers in Krnjaca, the largest in Serbia, which houses 1,200 individuals, including 65 unaccompanied minors. On site, in the company of professionals, they were able to experience the reality of reception conditions for asylum seekers on European soil. However no cases of exploitation of migrants have been formally brought to their attention.

During her trip, the special advisor to the THB mission met with institutional partners and NGOs working in the field. In particular she talked with Mitar Djuraskovic, police officer and national coordinator of the fight against THB, and Sanja Kljajic, director of the centre for victims of THB in Serbia. She also met with the Serbian NGO Atina, which is in charge of coordinating one of the activities of the 2017 strategy, as well as local representatives of UNICEF, UNHCR, UNODC and IMO, and thanks to the coordination of the Belgrade centre she was able to observe all developments in the operations in Serbia at close hand. This observation was shared by all: the redeployment of resources in the fight against human trafficking to the fight against the smuggling of migrants has been detrimental to the fight against traditional forms of trafficking.



Centre for asylum seekers,  
Krnjaca, Belgrade

#### IN SHORT

- From 18th to 20th January 2017, the special advisor travelled to Brussels to meet Myria Vassiliadou, European coordinator of the fight against human trafficking, and to visit the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) of the European Commission.
- On 24th January 2017, Ambassador Jean-Louis Falconi and Caroline Charpentier met with Messrs Le Borgn' and Mignon, deputies, members of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the National Assembly, as part of the report on the rule of law in the Western Balkans. They presented the French strategy against THB in Southeast Europe for 2017.

#### TO COME

- Visit of the special advisor to Romania from 21st to 24th February 2017
- On 2nd and 3rd March 2017, the special advisor to the THB Mission will participate in a seminar for discussion and promotion of awareness organized by the DACG for magistrates on the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings
- The OSCE alliance conference on child trafficking will take place on 3rd and 4th April 2017 in Vienna.
- From 26th to 28th April 2017 a regional workshop on money laundering in the context of the trafficking of migrants will be held in Croatia (UNODC project)

## CONTACT

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