



Trafficking Alert

International Edition
May 2006

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The Trafficking Alert is published by Vital Voices Global Partnership as part of our work to promote effective partnerships between government officials and NGOs across the United States and around the world to fight modern-day slavery.

Dear Friends:

Welcome to the **May 2006 Trafficking Alert: International Edition**. Thanks to your continued support, Vital Voices' 2006 Global Leadership Awards, **Women Changing Our World**, successfully drew over four hundred friends to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to celebrate and honor ten courageous women leaders from around the world who have made outstanding contributions in promoting democracy, strengthening economies, and safeguarding human rights. This year's Human Rights/Anti-Trafficking Award recipient is Rita Chaikin, a young and powerful anti-trafficking heroine from Israel. UN Goodwill Ambassador for the Abolition of Slavery and Human Trafficking, Julia Ormond, presented Rita this year's award. Through this signature awards event, the honorees are recognized for the significant difference they are making in their countries.

Over the last quarter, Vital Voices has worked with other NGOs, academics, businesses and government representatives to raise awareness and share best practices on effective anti-trafficking strategies. From addressing child sex trafficking through the **Global Efforts to Combat Sexual Trafficking in Travel and Tourism Conference** to strategizing with Indonesian and Chinese women leaders, Vital Voices continues to broaden our network and to build capacity in women who can make an impact in society.

Vital Voices continues our commitment to combating human trafficking in Asia through the upcoming high-level strategic dialogue in the Mekong Sub-region. With co-sponsors of the Royal Thai Government, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), US Embassy in Thailand and USAID, the Summit aims to facilitate cross-border and cross-sector collaboration in victim repatriation and criminal prosecution. We will share the outcomes in our next International Edition.

The 2006 Trafficking In Persons Report by the US Department of State is scheduled to be released on June 1, 2006. We will have a thorough analysis of this year's report in the next issue.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to your feedback.

Wenchi Yu Perkins, Managing Editor

Jessica Forrest, Editor

I. Israeli Anti-Trafficking Heroine Rita Chaikin Receives Vital Voices Global Leadership Award

On April 27, Vital Voices, along with supporters, dignitaries and friends, celebrated the accomplishments of an extraordinary group of women at the annual Global Leadership Awards at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC.



Julia Ormond presents Rita Chaikin with Human Rights/Anti-Trafficking Award

Vital Voices hosts its annual Global Leadership Awards to celebrate and honor courageous women leaders from around the world who have made outstanding contributions in promoting democracy, strengthening economies, and safeguarding human rights. The awards ceremony showcases the remarkable achievements of the honorees to a host of guests, including members of the diplomatic, corporate and government sectors, as well as civil society. Through this signature awards event, the honorees are recognized for the significant difference they are making in their countries.

Two of the honorees, Rita Chaikin of Israel and Mukhtaran Bibi of Pakistan, work to end violence against women. At the ceremony, Julia Ormond, UN Goodwill Ambassador for the Abolition of Slavery and Human Trafficking, presented Rita Chaikin with the Human Rights/Anti-Trafficking Award for her anti-trafficking work in Israel. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison presented Mukhtaran Bibi with the Fern Holland Award for her courageous commitment to democracy and human rights.

Honoree Discussion with Human Rights Advocates

Rita Chaikin and Mukhtaran Bibi were joined by fifty Vital Voices' friends and supporters for a breakfast reception on April 25th, 2006. The discussion was moderated by Vital Voices' Board Member, Ambassador Elizabeth Bagley, and hosted by Morrison and Foerster's Washington office. Attendees, mostly human rights advocates, had an interactive conversation about the accomplishments and courage exhibited by the two honorees.

Rita, originally from Ukraine and fluent in Russian, received the Human Rights Anti-Trafficking Award this year for her work with women trafficked into Israel for sexual exploitation. Her anti-trafficking efforts started when she encountered Russian women imprisoned in Israeli immigration facilities who were actually victims of human trafficking. "At first," she recalled, "I was all alone in the struggle to provide adequate services to these women, but now I have established good working relationships with government officials and law enforcement, as well as NGOs in these women's home countries." These relationships ensure the women's protection and reintegration into society when they are able to travel home.

Rita also acknowledged the role of the US government in supporting her work, as she remembered, "before the TIP report came out, the Israeli government did nothing to help fight trafficking, but immediately after it was released, the government started doing something."

Mukhtaran received the Fern Holland Award for her courageous efforts to promote women's education and stop violence against women. At the breakfast discussion, she shared that she won a court settlement for her rape case and received government compensation of \$8,000. Instead of taking the money for herself, she built two schools because she believes education is the best way to end violence against women and empower young girls to lead more fulfilling lives. For her, the most powerful change she has seen by her work is when "Fathers, many of whom think women are inferior to men, take their young girls to my school." She said that this is a sign that her village is beginning to recognize the importance of girls' education.

Rita Chaikin Meets with Representatives from the Jewish American Community

On Thursday April 27, Vital Voices Human Trafficking honoree, Rita Chaikin, met with members of the American Jewish community to discuss human trafficking in Israel. Attended by members of Jewish American organizations, the event was hosted by the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights of the American Jewish Committee.



Mukhtaran Bibi accepts Fern Holland Award from Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison

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Rita Chaikin*Continued from page 2*

Ms. Chaikin spoke about the historical pattern of women from the former Soviet Union being trafficked into Israel through the Egyptian border, and the complex crime syndicates that facilitate such operations. Her organization, Isha L'Isha (Woman to Woman) currently provides assistance to survivors, operates a trafficking hotline, conducts training sessions for law enforcements and other members of the community, as well as lobbies for policy change within the government.

Ms. Chaikin remarked that in spite of efforts, Israel still lacks sufficient anti-trafficking legislation. Despite these obstacles, Ms. Chaikin reported that prosecution of traffickers had risen dramatically in recent years, although those found guilty rarely received the maximum sentence. To illustrate the brevity of some of the sentences, she mentioned one instance in which the trafficking victim was still recovering in Israel when her trafficker was released from prison.

Many of the people attending the meeting raised the possibility of increasing activism within the American Jewish community on the issue of human trafficking, and discussed possible ways in which to aid Israeli's anti-trafficking efforts. Ms. Chaikin urged the community to call for greater legislative change and an increase in Russian-speaking Israeli police officers. Ms. Chaikin stated adamantly that, "It is crucial that we increase the number of police who can communicate in Russian, particularly in Northern Israel." Currently, the Israeli police force has only a handful of Russian-speakers. This discrepancy often leads to increased insensitivity and confusion when police come into contact with victims, who are primarily Russian-speaking and cannot communicate in either English or Hebrew. The meeting ended with a renewed commitment to increase ties between the respective organizations, and to improve awareness on the issue of human trafficking in both the U.S. and in Israel.

Biography of Rita Chaikin:

Rita Chaikin, Anti-Trafficking Project Coordinator for Isha L'Isha—Haifa Feminist Center, is the 2006 recipient of Vital Voices' Anti-Trafficking and Human Rights Award. A fluent Russian speaker and women's advocate, Ms. Chaikin was working at the Rape Crisis Center in Kiryat Shmona, Israel, when she was asked to counsel incarcerated Russian women. At first, she was stunned by how many Russian women were behind bars. Soon, she realized these women were not criminals but victims of human trafficking. Today, through her tireless efforts at Isha L'Isha, Ms. Chaikin is helping stem the scourge of trafficking in her country and around the world. Her pioneering programs have helped government and law officials and non-governmental organizations better collaborate in identifying, assisting, and protecting victims; prosecuting traffickers; and educating the public.

II. Vital Voices Anti-Trafficking Activities**United Front for Children: Global Efforts to Combat Sexual Trafficking in Travel and Tourism**

The University of Minnesota's Human Rights Program sponsored a conference and expert meeting from April 21st-22nd as a means to strengthen partnerships and norms on prevention, protection and prosecution regarding international sex trafficking and exploitation of children in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Vital Voices Global Partnership, along with other NGO, academic, business and government representatives, shared ideas and committed to action to combat child sex trafficking. The keynote speaker, Ann Veneman, Executive Director of UNICEF, explained that while tourism can help reduce poverty and create jobs, child sex tourism needs to be punished, and that gender equality and girls' education are key elements to prevent this crime.

Ms. Melanne Verveer of Vital Voices spoke on the importance of a multi-stakeholder approach and mentioned January's roundtable in Athens, Greece to engage the business community, as a measure of significant progress. She urged more companies to sign the Ethical Principles which came out of Athens.



Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Carlson Companies; Ambassador John Miller, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons; and Melanne Verveer, Vital Voices Global Partnership

Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman and CEO of Carlson Companies, introduced Ambassador John Miller, Director of the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons of the US Department of State and complimented airlines, cruise lines, and hotels for their anti-trafficking efforts. Business representatives from Microsoft and Carlson Companies, as well as government offices and foundations shared best practices and experiences working together. Students also presented their research projects and activities on campus to promote awareness about human trafficking and child sex tourism.

Vital Voices Screens *Water* with Director Deepa Mehta

On April 25th Deepa Mehta joined Vital Voices for a showing of her provocative and moving film, *Water*, which focuses on a wide range of women's topics in India including child marriage, human trafficking and discrimination against widows in the 1920's. *Water* is part of an internationally acclaimed trilogy including *Fire* and *Earth* that deals with social issues in India. It is currently in theaters in Washington, DC, and other major cities.



Indian widows wait for food handouts Source: BBC

Becoming Natasha performed at George Washington University

On April 22nd, George Washington University hosted a performance of *Becoming Natasha*, a multimedia production by Isadora Productions based in New York City. *Becoming Natasha* was inspired by Victor Malarek's book *The Natashas*, which follows the stories of six trafficked women and their capacity to survive at any cost.

Isadora Productions believes that "theater goes beyond what traditional activist organizations can accomplish by reaching a much wider audience on a personal and more humanistic level" and has taken the play to New York and in Latvia with the goal of spreading awareness and encouraging discussion about the issue of human trafficking. *Becoming Natashas* is a work in progress and the actors said that an upcoming adaptation of the script will focus specifically on the demand side of trafficking.



Becoming Natasha cast and panelists

Following the production, there was a panel discussion with Samantha Healy of Shared Hope International, Melysa Sperber of Tahirih Justice Center, Ruth Pojman from USAID and Jessica Forrest representing Vital Voices. Andrea Powell of FAIR Fund moderated the discussion and described FAIR Fund's programmatic anti-trafficking activities in Eastern Europe. Ms. Pojman gave an overview of the situation in Russia and factors related to the fall of the Soviet Union that led to increased trafficking in persons. She also discussed a range of USAID anti-trafficking programs. Ms. Sperber described the process of receiving T-Visas and the work Tahirih Justice Center has done to curtail mail-order brides including promotion of the *International Marriage Broker Regulation Act* (for more information visit <http://tahirih.org>). Ms. Forrest shared her experience with Vital Voices' leadership trainings for emerging Russian women leaders on issues of human trafficking and domestic violence. She also explained Vital Voice's work with actress Julia Ormond and the Russian Duma to promote strong anti-trafficking policies. Ms. Healy talked about her experience working with ABA-CEELI on anti-trafficking activities in Moldova and Shared Hope International's anti-trafficking work.

The play was sponsored by George Washington University Russian Bazaar, Campus Coalition Against Trafficking, FAIR Fund, Polaris Project, Georgetown University's SSTOP – Students Stopping the Trafficking of Persons and the BMW Center for German and European Studies at Georgetown University. Natalie Gontcharova, former Vital Voices intern coordinated the event and brought Isadora Productions to George Washington University.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.isadoraproductions.org/natasha.htm>.

Vital Voices' Discussion with Indonesian and Chinese Women Leaders on Human Trafficking

The State Department's International Visitor Leadership program seeks to provide emerging world leaders an in-depth look at American democracy and civil society. Recently, Vital Voices met with Ms. Wen Ling from the People's Republic of China and Ms. Tristanti from Indonesia to discuss anti-trafficking efforts.

On May 11th, Vital Voices met with Ms. Tristanti to discuss a new anti-trafficking program to be implemented in Indonesia. Ms. Tristanti works for the Cooperation and International Relationship Bureau of the Central Board of Muhammadiyah. Founded in 1917, Muhammadiyah is a Muslim non-profit organization that has over a million Muslim members.

Indonesian and Chinese Women Leaders

The all-female counterparts to this mostly male group are Aisyah, for older women, and Nasyiah, for girls under 17 years old. She said that she hopes to use the platform of Muhammadiyah to further anti-trafficking efforts in Indonesia.

Ms. Trisanti shared that Indonesia is a major country of origin for trafficking, mostly for labor exploitation, to countries like Malaysia, Singapore, and Egypt. She explained that many illegal “agents” go to rural villages and entice people to work in big cities, promising them a better salary. When these villagers join the agency, many fall victim to labor and sexual exploitation. In an effort to combat the problem of human trafficking, Nasyiah is developing an awareness-raising program to educate the women and girls on how to protect themselves, including legal assistance and know your rights education. The project is funded by USAID and also seeks to implement a victim service provision project to assist the survivors of trafficking.



Ms. Trisanti of Muhammadiyah discusses new anti-trafficking efforts in Indonesia



Ms. Wen Ling, Vice-Chairman for the Chongqing Women's Federation, speaks about women's status in the People's Republic of China.

On March 24, 2006, Ms. Wen Ling from the People's Republic of China visited Vital Voices Global Partnership, to discuss her efforts to promote women's status in Chongqing, a special district in South West China. Ms. Wen is the Vice-Chairman for the Chongqing Women's Federation, part of the All China Women's Federation, which works to advance women's status by providing direct social and legal services, as well as building capacity in emerging women leaders. Their anti-trafficking efforts focus on prevention by educating women about the risk of forced migration. Their work also includes capacity building in rural regions, particularly farming communities, to ensure girls receive the same opportunities in school.

III. International Government Anti-Trafficking Activities

UNODC Report Say No Country is Immune from Scourge of Human Trafficking

Virtually every country in the world is affected by the crime of human trafficking in millions of people for sexual exploitation or forced labor, and governments must take serious steps to eliminate a scourge whose main victims are women and children, according to a new United Nations report, [Trafficking In Persons: Global Patterns](#), released April 24, 2006.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report identifies 127 countries of origin, 98 transit countries and 137 destination countries. It shows that global efforts to combat trafficking are being hampered by a lack of accurate data, reflecting the unwillingness of some countries to acknowledge that the problem affects them. The report lists countries on a scale from “very low” to “very high” as countries of origin, transit and destination.

“Efforts to counter trafficking have so far been uncoordinated and inefficient. The lack of systematic reporting by authorities is a real problem. Governments need to try harder,” Executive Director Antonio Maria Costa said of the trafficking, which is usually from poor countries to more affluent ones. “Traffickers capitalize on weak law enforcement and poor international cooperation. The low rate of convictions for the perpetrators of human trafficking is a matter of serious concern which needs to be addressed.

Mr. Costa outlined three main challenges for governments:

- *to reduce demand, whether for cheap goods manufactured in sweatshops, under-priced commodities produced by bonded people in farms and mines, or services provided by sex slaves;
- *to target the criminals who profit from the vulnerability of people trying to escape from poverty, unemployment, hunger and oppression;
- *to protect trafficking victims, especially women and children.

“Protecting the victims may sound obvious, but in practice they are all too often treated as criminals who may face charges for violating immigration or anti-prostitution laws. Humane and sensitive treatment is not just a moral imperative - it also increases the likelihood that victims will overcome their understandable fear and testify against their abusers,” he declared.

Five Countries Ratify UN Anti-Trafficking Protocol in 2006

So far in 2006 five new countries have officially become party to the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, also known as the Palermo Protocol. The Palermo Protocol is a vital multilateral component of the worldwide effort to combat modern-day slavery. It seeks to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and promote anti-trafficking cooperation among governments.

Last month, April 2006, Sao Tome and Principe ratified the Protocol and on March 27, 2006, Kuwait ratified the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Crime and the two supplementing protocols: Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Vanuatu ratified the Protocol in January 2006, followed by Cameroon and the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland in February 2006.

For more information about the Protocol and its signatories and parties:

http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime_cicp_signatures_convention.html

Subcommittee of House International Relations Committee Holds *Germany's World Cup Brothels* Hearing

On May 4, 2006 Representative Chris Smith chaired a hearing in the House International Relations Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations entitled "Germany's World Cup Brothels" to discuss the potential for human trafficking during the upcoming World Cup games.

From June 9 to July 9, the World Cup in men's soccer will take place in Germany. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has expressed its concern that between 30,000 and 60,000 women and girls might be the target of trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation during the World Cup.

The panelists in the hearing included Michael Horowitz, director of the Hudson Institute's Project for Civil Justice Reform and Project for International Religious Liberty; Ashley Garrett, project manager for Trafficking in Persons within the International Organization for Migration's regional office for North America and the Caribbean; Jennifer Roemhildt, founder and executive director of the Greek NGO, Nea Zoi; Katherine Chon, co-founder and co-executive director of Polaris Project; Maureen Greenwood-Basken, Amnesty International advocacy director for Europe and Central Asia; and Dr. Juliette Engel, founder and director of the Mira Med Institute.

Ms. Greenwood-Basken of Amnesty International brought up labor trafficking as an important issue, citing The International Labor Office (ILO)'s November 2005 study, "Trafficking for Labor and Sexual Exploitation in Germany," which found that men, women, and children are trafficked into forced labor in a variety of industries in Germany, including domestic service, babysitting, agriculture and meat processing, restaurant and catering, sweatshop, construction, and sex work.

Panelists called on German authorities to prepare for the expected rise in human trafficking for during the World Cup by giving extra support to relevant organizations such as NGOs running hotlines for trafficking victims, shelters for trafficked women, and public campaigns to inform the German public of the problem of trafficking. In addition, Amnesty International urges them not to immediately repatriate trafficking victims but allow them to remain in Germany for a recovery and reflection period that should be at least 30 days, in accordance with the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

Mekong Governments and Partners Review Roadmap for Action Against Human Trafficking

On 10-12 May 2006, Cambodia hosted high level government officials from China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam for the Fourth Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) on human trafficking. The SOM reviewed progress made during the past year under the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Human Trafficking (COMMIT) Sub-Regional Plan of Action (2005-2007).

The crime of human trafficking continues to prevail in the region, according to a statement of UNIAP (the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region), which was established in June 2000 to facilitate a stronger and more coordinated response to human trafficking in the GMS. The six COMMIT governments adopted a comprehensive and strategic Sub-regional Plan of Action for joint endeavors against human trafficking at the third Senior Officials Meetings in Hanoi, Vietnam in March 2005.

Mekong Governments*Continued from page 6*

More than 30 senior officials from the six Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) attended the three-day meeting. Also present were senior officials of the UN Resident Coordinator of Cambodia. Donors and relevant organizations were also invited as observers to the SOM.

H.E. Dr. Ing Kantha Pavi, Cambodian Minister of Women's Affairs pointed out that "the responsibility for all of us to address the human rights abuses resulting from the crime of human trafficking is an enormous one" but emphasized that "we cannot rest as long as our citizens continue to be subjected to such inhumane conditions - in effect, as modern day slaves. The measure of a nation's development and progress [will] be ascertained from the protection it affords to its citizens and in particular the most vulnerable."

The COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action in focusing on both the areas of law enforcement and criminal justice, and prevention, protection, recovery and reintegration of victims sets the standard for anti-trafficking work in the Asian region. The Plan itself is a practical roadmap for priority action, buttressed by the technical expertise and support of UN agencies, international and national NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral donors.

While significant achievements from the past year were highlighted, the governments in the region also acknowledged the challenges that they encountered. China reported that the regional workshop among the COMMIT countries triggered off their recognition to develop their first National Plan of Action on Human Trafficking. Myanmar recently passed a new national law on trafficking in persons, which incorporates victim protection at its core. Laos and Thailand reported on an innovative new bilateral arrangement between the two countries to use information from the community to trace actual missing persons in Thailand and use existing repatriation mechanisms to return them home safely. Cambodia has been leading the way in promoting child safe tourism and reported on their strengthened law enforcement response. While Vietnam has been moving forward on implementing their national plan of action on human trafficking, they also recognize the need to strengthen their capacity in the area of repatriation and reintegration.

For more information, visit COMMIT's website: www.no-trafficking.org

Inter-American Development Bank Launches Regional Campaign against Human Trafficking with Ricky Martin Foundation and IOM

The Inter-American Development Bank launched a regional campaign against human trafficking called Llama y Vive ("Call and Live") to raise public awareness of the problem and promote hotlines for prevention and victim protection.

The campaign, to be launched initially in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Peru, consists of distributing and disseminating print and audiovisual materials featuring Puerto Rican singer Ricky Martin. "We have to reach the masses, the people, so that they know that anyone can be a victim of trafficking. It is crucial that governments be involved and be aware of what is going on. Without them we cannot win this battle," Martin recently declared.

Llama y Vive is the result of a regional partnership between the IDB, the Ricky Martin Foundation and the regional offices of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for Central America and the Andean Region. The program targets young men and women who plan to seek new opportunities far from home, along with victims of human trafficking in their own countries or abroad.

"The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has decided to take an active role in the fight against trafficking because the phenomenon is linked to poverty and the lack of opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean," said IDB President Luis Alberto Moreno. "We want to support those governments that are committed to carrying out specific projects for prevention of trafficking, effective administration of justice and victim protection," he noted.



Llama y Vive ("Call and Live") Campaign

In addition to the campaign, the IDB has produced a half-hour documentary on best practices in the fight against human trafficking in Latin America, with testimonies and information on projects in Colombia, Argentina and Guatemala. The documentary, the first of its kind in the region, will be presented in the coming months and distributed free of charge to all television channels. This educational film is presented by Ricky Martin.

Russia's State Duma and the U.S. Embassy Co-sponsor NGO Conference on Human Trafficking

On March 16, 2006 Russia's State Duma Committee on Legislation's Working Group on Human Trafficking and the U.S. Embassy co-sponsored a one-day conference on human trafficking at the Russian Academy for State Service in Moscow

Opening remarks were delivered by Georgiy Sergeyevich Poltavchenko, Presidential Envoy to the Central Federal District; U.S. Ambassador to Russia William Burns; and Pavel Vladimirovich Krashennikov, Chairperson of the State Duma Committee for Civil, Criminal, Arbitrage, and Procedural Legislation. The conference's goal was to unite non-governmental organizations involved in anti-trafficking work from every region of Russia to discuss how to combat human trafficking and how best to assist trafficking victims. The meeting also addressed ways in which cooperation between NGOs and police can be strengthened.

At the conference Ambassador Burns said that the U.S. is impressed by the progress Russia has made in combating human-trafficking, but believes the Russian authorities still have much to do in this area. He added that Russia has no complex mechanisms of cooperation between non-governmental organizations and law enforcement agencies to help curb human-trafficking or programs to aid the victims of such crimes.

Inquiries concerning this conference can be addressed to Irina.Fedorovna@mail.ru

IV. International NGO Anti-Trafficking Activities

First SOS Phone-Line for Roma Women and Children Started in Serbia

In February of 2006 the first SOS Phone-Line for Roma Women Victims of Violence was opened in Nis, Serbia. The SOS Phone is open to women and children from other ethnic communities and volunteers can communicate in Romani and Serbian languages.

"The SOS Phone is dedicated primarily to Roma women, who rarely use the existing SOS lines, although they are often victims of violence in the family", says Ana Sacirovic, SOS Line Coordinator. According to Sacirovic, the Roma women rarely seek assistance when subjected to violence, because of their traditional upbringing.

The SOS Phone works with the "Osvit" (Dawn) Roma Women Association, and has been established in cooperation with the volunteers of the SOS Line for women and children that has been working in Nis for years. The SOS Phone Volunteers are available every day from 10:00 to 12:00 hours, and in the afternoon from 17:00 to 19:00 hours. The number is 018/515-318 when dialing from Serbia.

Council on Foreign Relations Features Symposium on Human Trafficking

On May 3, 2006 New York Council on Foreign Relations held three panel discussions as part of "A Day of Learning" Symposium on Human Trafficking.

Three panels covered a range of issues related to human trafficking: *U.S. Foreign Policy and Women Symposium: Human Trafficking - An Overview, Human Trafficking and Global Health, and The U.S. Government Response to Trafficking*. Featured speakers included: Ambassador John Miller, Director, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons of the US Department of State; Ann Jordan, Director, Global Rights Initiative Against Trafficking in Persons; Neha Misra, American Center for International Labor Solidarity; Jyoti Sanghera, Advisor on Trafficking, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; Sarah E. Mendelson, Senior Fellow, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Joy Zarembka, Director, Break the Chain Campaign; Alice Miller, Professor, Department of Population and Family Health, School of Public Health, Columbia University; and, Kavita Ramdas, President and Chief Executive Officer, Global Fund for Women.

Nicholas D. Kristof, columnist for *The New York Times* moderated the panel on health and security issues associated with human trafficking and the efficacy of national and international legislations designed to combat trafficking.

For more information or to read transcripts from the symposium, visit:

http://www.cfr.org/publication/10603/us_foreign_policy_and_women_symposium.html

V. Calendar of Events and New Resources

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 22-24, 2006

Civil Society and Government Collaboration to Combat Trafficking in Persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, Bangkok, Thailand

The international conference “Civil Society and Government Collaboration to Combat Trafficking in Persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-region” will take place on May 22-24, 2006 at the Plaza Athenee Hotel in Bangkok. It aims to help determine the priorities for next steps against trafficking in the Mekong sub-region and develop strategies to strengthen and solidify government-civil society cooperation. The conference will use plenary meetings and participatory small group sessions to discuss and determine priorities for work on key areas where collaboration between Government and civil society is critical: such as protection and support for victims of human trafficking, and successful prosecution of human traffickers. The conference will also assess both current progress as well as obstacles to closer collaboration, and develop a set of priorities and recommendations for the Mekong governments and their civil society partners. The conference is co-sponsored by the Royal Thai Government, UNODC, USAID, US Embassy to Thailand and Vital Voices Global Partnership.

For more information, please contact Wenchi Yu Perkins, email: wenchiyuperkins@vitalvoices.org

June 27 – 29, 2006.

Expert Practitioners Colloquium on the Transnational Exploitation of Women and Children – The 21st Century Challenge, Canberra, Australia.

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) will conduct an expert practitioner's colloquium - *Transnational exploitation of women and children – the 21st century challenge* held in Canberra, Australia. The colloquium is being held under the auspices of the AFP Leadership in Criminal Intelligence Program and is designed to develop the most efficient intelligence processes to support the work of Australia's law enforcement agencies.

The three-day program will concentrate specifically on the exploitation of women and children for purposes of sexual exploitation. This colloquium is designed to engage interested and affected government, non government, international and domestic law enforcement experts for the purposes of developing a suite of distinctive and creative outcomes designed to attack, disrupt and dismantle those who prey on and exploit human beings for criminal, financial and self gratification purposes. Vital Voices will take part in this colloquium.

NEW RESOURCES

The Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement Launches New Website: *End Human Trafficking Now!*

The Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement, in partnership with business community and other supporters, has been very active in carrying forward the campaign to promote the Ethical Principles (For more information on Athens, visit: http://www.vitalvoices.org/desktopdefault.aspx?page_id=93). They have used several important events, such as the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos in January, the launch of the Institute of Peace Studies in Alexandria in February and the International Human Rights Film Festival in Geneva in March, to strongly advocate for the *End Human Trafficking Now! Campaign*.

The *End Human Trafficking Now!* Website was launched at: <http://www.womenforpeaceinternational.com> to provide a platform for information sharing and will inspire other companies, organizations and individuals to join the campaign.

Updated Congressional Research Service (CRS) Reports and Issue Briefs:

* *Trafficking in Persons: The U.S. and International Response*. Download from:

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/62684.pdf>

* *Trafficking in Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Download from:

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/64989.pdf>

Trafficking Alert

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New Resources

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May 2006 Forced Migration Review: People trafficking: upholding rights and understanding vulnerabilities

The Forced Migration Review (FMR) is published three times a year in English, Arabic, Spanish and French. FMR provides a practice-oriented forum for debate on issues facing refugees and internally displaced people in order to improve policy and practice and to involve refugees and IDPs in programme design and implementation.

Some of the topics address in the May 2006 Forced Migration Review include: the line between smuggling or trafficked, the business community's response to human trafficking, problems of internal trafficking, trafficked children, and in-depth looks at trafficking in South Asia, Africa, UK and Middle East.

To read the Review: <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR25/FMR25full.pdf>

Updated HumanTrafficking.org

The purpose of the HumanTrafficking.org website is to bring Government and NGOs in East Asia and Pacific together to cooperate and learn from each other's experiences in their efforts to combat human trafficking. This website has country-specific information such as national laws and action plans and contact information on useful governmental agencies. It also has a description of NGO activities in different countries and their contact information.

Visit the updated content: <http://humantrafficking.org/>

To receive the *Trafficking Alert*, please go to the sign-up page: www.vitalvoices.org/desktopdefault.aspx?page_id=38

To submit or give your feedback, please email Jessica Forrest jessicaforrest@vitalvoices.org.

To learn how you can support Vital Voices and its work to advance the economic, political and social status of women around the world, please contact 202-861-2625 ext. 3010

Vital Voices is a 503 (c) (3) nonprofit organization.