

US-Based Program on Assistance to Human Trafficking Victims for Delegation from Russia: From March 5-13, the OPDAT RLA to Russia led a high-level Russian delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Ministry of Health on a US-based program on assistance to victims of human trafficking. Sponsored jointly by OPDAT, State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (G/TIP), and Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the program involved meetings in Florida and Washington, DC, to examine US anti-human trafficking best practices. OPDAT has been working with the Government of Russia to support efforts to establish facilities and mechanisms for providing appropriate services to victims of human trafficking. While in Florida, the delegation met with prosecutors, ICE agents, and FBI agents on both the Florida Statewide Taskforce on Human Trafficking and the South Florida Task Force to examine the task force approach. They also met with public defenders to speak about the inherently hidden crime of trafficking in persons. Discussion in these meetings focused on the need for continuing training of US law enforcement to view US citizens, and not just foreign citizens, as potential victims of trafficking. In addition to law enforcement, the Russian delegation met with a variety of NGOs such as the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Migrant Farm Worker Justice Project to discuss labor trafficking of migrant cases, migrant rights, and the role that civil society plays in assisting law enforcement to assist victims and prosecute traffickers. They visited the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, a community-based organization of immigrants working in low-wage jobs throughout the state of Florida. These meetings and visits highlight a main goal of this program, which was to demonstrate the need for cooperation between NGO's, law enforcement, and the legal system. While in DC, the delegation met with the Department of Justice's Office of Victims of Crime and Health, Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement, and the Civil Rights Division's Victim/Witness coordinator about the evolution of victim services in the US. TIP victim assistance evolved out of the broader crime victims' movement. The Office of Refugee Resettlement spoke about eligibility for refugee benefits through certification and the types of services offered to victims. The study tour concluded with a meeting at the G/TIP Office.

OPDAT Anti-Human Trafficking Assistance in Bulgaria Has Impressive Results: On March 9, Bulgaria's Council of Ministers and two NGOs, Risk Monitor Foundation and the Open Society Institute, sponsored a round table discussion on the "Project Strategy for Curbing Money Laundering in Bulgaria." As part of the presentation, speakers referred to statistics on the current number of pending money laundering cases, based on its predicate crimes. Human trafficking charges constitute the greatest number of predicate cases for money laundering charges -- 37%. Several years ago, the OPDAT RLA program in Bulgaria specifically linked its human trafficking assistance and training to money laundering and financial crime, in a series of workshops entitled "Taking the Proceeds out of Human Trafficking." That human trafficking is now the most frequent predicate crime for money laundering charges demonstrates the strong and lasting impact of the OPDAT program..

Regional TIP Programs in Djibouti and Ethiopia:From February 7-10, OPDAT in partnership with the International Organization for Migration and the UN Refugee Agency, conducted a regional program on the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking, using a victim-centered approach, in Djibouti, Djibouti, for Government of Djibouti officials, representatives of various NGOs active in the region, and two representatives from the Government of Ethiopia. The Ethiopian officials introduced the task force approach recently implemented in their own country, as Djibouti, with the help of an OPDAT Intermittent Legal Advisor, is contemplating doing the same in the near future. DOJ experts participating in the program included Attorneys from the Criminal Section, Civil Rights Division, and an Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In order to encourage the adoption of a uniform approach

to human trafficking in the region, the three instructors followed the Djibouti program with a one-day workshop on February 14 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for Ethiopian prosecutors and police.