

US embassy cable - 04ANKARA5002**TIP IN TURKEY: TURKISH MEDIA ATTENTION, AUGUST 15- 30, 2004**

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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE

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TAGS: PREL, KCRM, PHUM, KWMN, SMIG, KFRD, PREF, TU, TIP IN TURKEY

SUBJECT: TIP IN TURKEY: TURKISH MEDIA ATTENTION, AUGUST 15-30, 2004

1. (U) In response to G/TIP inquiries about anti-TIP public information campaigns, post provides as examples the following TIP press reports. Text of articles originally published in Turkish is provided through unofficial local FSN translation.

2. (U) Published August 26, 2004 by Minsk Belarusian Television 1 in Russian:

TITLE: Belarusian Police Catch Human Traffickers in Western Region
BEGIN FBIS TRANSLATED TEXT: Because Belarus is located in the very center of Europe, it has to battle international crime. Law-enforcement officers in Brest Region have opened a third human-trafficking case since the start of this year. An attempt to smuggle out three women for sexual exploitation has been foiled at the Makrany crossing point on the Belarusian-Ukrainian border. A 33-year-old Moldovan national with a previous criminal record, who has long been living in Brest, and his 29-year-old female compatriot, currently residing in Turkey, have been apprehended as primary suspects. The women, as it turned out, were supposed to be brought to that faraway land. END TEXT.

[Video shows the suspects being arrested and the women being released]

[Description of Source: Minsk Belarusian Television 1 in Russian -- State-owned national television; offers uncritical pro-government line]

3. (U) Published August 26, 2004 by Baku Space TV in Azeri:

TITLE: Azerbaijan: Deputy Interior Minister Says Officials Involved in Human Trafficking

BEGIN TEXT: [Presenter] A conference on human trafficking was held in the capital today.

[Correspondent over video of conference] Today's conference, which was attended by representatives of many NGOs, the OSCE and foreign countries, was based on [Azerbaijani] President Ilham Aliyev's national action plan against human trafficking. Speakers at the conference noted that human trafficking is becoming a global issue. The participants in the conference said that human trafficking should be fought jointly and stressed the necessity of applying a sensitive approach to this issue. The factors that create a breeding ground for it should be investigated, and NGOs cannot struggle by themselves to eradicate this problem. Therefore, the issue is serious and it should assume the form of an international fight. Not only Azerbaijani, but also foreign nationals have a role in it. But it should be especially noted that the victim in this case cannot be regarded as a criminal.

The speakers said that human trafficking could occur in different ways: forcibly, by means of deception and voluntarily. For example, stressing that more women were involved in this process, the conference participants said that some women visited

foreign countries and were sold there like slaves. Others are deceived under the cover of finding jobs and taken abroad where they become a subject of trafficking. Cases of trafficking in Azerbaijani nationals are more often recorded in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan.

[Zahid Duniyaliyev, captioned as deputy interior minister] People exported from Azerbaijan move predominantly in these three directions.

[Correspondent] Duniyaliyev said that some officials were also involved in human trafficking. The chairwoman of the State Committee on Women's Problems, Zahra Quliyeva, said that the problem was multi-sided and that it was necessary to teach people to fight this problem. The Milli Maclis [Azerbaijani parliament] will again table the issue of human trafficking in its autumn session and many laws will be drawn up with regard to this problem. END TEXT.

[Description of Source: Baku Space TV in Azeri -- Independent, pro-government TV, has been rumored to have links with former presidential adviser Eldar Namazov and with President Aliyev's daughter]

4. (U) Published August 19, 2004 by the Christian Science Monitor:

TITLE: Stopping the 'Natasha' Trade

BEGIN TEXT: In the sex trafficking world, the victims are called "Natashas," a generic label for women and girls transported across borders and forced into prostitution.

This despicable business is part of a growing international trade in humans, including for labor, which the US State Department estimates at 800,000 to 900,000 people a year.

But sex traffickers may have met their match in Southeastern Europe, which, in the wake of the Balkans chaos and communist meltdown, is a trafficking hot spot.

With US assistance, a unique program based in Bucharest is making excellent headway against the traffickers. The name of the program is a mouthful - the Regional Center for Combating Transborder Crime of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative - but it's worth every syllable.

In June, for instance, more than 1,000 police officers swept the region and identified 545 traffickers. Of those, 328 were charged. It was the third sweep for human traffickers - mainly in the sex trade - since the program began in 2001.

The June effort represents remarkable law-enforcement coordination among 13 countries, several of which one might assume do not have the funds, personnel, or the will to do this work. That's why they deserve naming: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Another US-sponsored group plans to replicate this program in former Soviet Union countries. With each arrest, the world's Natashas have a chance to reclaim their identities. END TEXT.

5. (U) Published August 18, 2004 by the Anadolu News Agency:

TITLE: Security Meeting Between Turkey And Iran
 BEGIN TEXT: VAN - The 38th 'sub-security meeting' was held between Turkey and Iran on Wednesday. Governor of Khvoy of Iran Mohammad Emin Rizazade and other officials, who came to Van from Iran to attend the meeting held once every three months, met Van Governor Hikmet Tan. Governor Tan told reporters, 'Van province has 285 km of border with Iran, thus, meetings continue with officials of Iran's Urumiyah, Khvoy and Salmas cities about border security.'
 Reminding, 'Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan during his visit to Iran, had meetings with Iranian officials on activities of terrorist

organization'' Tan said, ''We will discuss activities of PKK terrorist organization, illicit drug and human trafficking which are high on the agenda.'' Under Ankara Agreement, which was signed between Turkey and Iran, two countries have held sub-security meetings once every three months in border cities of Iran and Turkey since 1995. END TEXT.

6. (U) Published August 15, 2004 by the Hamburg Welt am Sonntag (Internet Version-WWW) in German:

[Report by Friedemann Weckbach-Mara: "Human Trafficking: Major New Mafia Business; Old Clans Made Italy Turnstile for Illegal Migration, Including to Germany"] [FBIS Translated Text]

BEGIN TEXT: When German Interior Minister Otto Schily talks about "the crime of the inhuman smuggling of illegal immigrants," you cannot fail to notice his anger. The rising tide of illegal migration across the Mediterranean Sea had been ignored for quite some time. Then, Schily had to take quite a beating when he proposed that the European Union should establish reception camps for refugees in Africa.

In the next few weeks, Schily plans to search intensively for solutions with his colleagues in the Mediterranean states that are also affected. Cooperation between Italy and Tunisia is seen as a model in this respect. Two years ago, the two countries agreed on a package to stem illegal migration. It contains economic assistance for Tunisia, a quota for the legal immigration of 2,000 Tunisians per year, and police cooperation. The first successes are now tangible.

Italy has been forced to do something. The reason is that, according to the findings of German security authorities, the country has become "the turnstile of illegal migration" to the countries of the old European Union, which have removed the controls on their internal borders under the Schengen Treaty. On Wednesday [11 August] alone, three boats carrying more than 200 refugees landed on the island of Lampedusa situated south of Sicily.

New intelligence reports, of which Welt am Sonntag has copies, cite figures of 1.6 million legal and 300,000 illegal migrants to Italy annually. For many of them, this is only the transit route to Germany.

The reports reinforce the suspicion that the pullers of the strings of illegal migration are the organized gangs. They are assumed to carry out their trafficking business in connection with drugs and arms smuggling. The main player is Sacra Corona Unita based in Apulia, southern Italy, which cooperates with smugglers from Albania, Russia, and Turkey.

The second player involved is the Camorra. It also maintains close links with Albanian and Russian gangs and also with Kurdish, Nigerian, and Romanian groups, as well as the Maghreb Mafia based in Tunisia and Morocco. Caserta, home of the Camorra clans of the Casalesi, has meanwhile become the capital of illegal migration to Italy. In Sicily, the Cosa Nostra is said to cooperate with gangs from the Maghreb and Nigeria. The meeting point of illegal migration from Africa is Marsala, which is under the control of the d'Amico, Licari, and Ala-Filipello clans.

Chinese gangs are seen as being of growing significance. They smuggle their victims, disguised as tourists and carrying false passports, from Asia into Italy and on to the north. The most important transit route out of Italy leads from Verona and Bolzano to Austria and on to Germany. Other routes go via Como and Switzerland or from Ventimiglia on the Gulf of Genoa via France to Germany.

"For these traffickers, people are cargo, like drugs, for example. Transport in small boats costs between \$4,000 and 5,000, air travel with forged documents costs \$10,000 to 30,000," Bavarian Interior Minister Guenther Beckstein (Christian Social Union) told Welt am Sonntag.

According to intelligence service information, Turkish gangs now earn more money from human

trafficking than from drugs. More than 150,000 illegal immigrants per year come to Germany, above all, from Iraq, with numbers from Africa and China increasing.

In the first half of 2004, police apprehended 18,500 foreigners without residence permit in railway stations, airports, seaports, and a 30-kilometer-wide strip along the borders. Last year, the figure was 21,300. The drop is mainly due to the fact that since eastern enlargement on 1 May, citizens of the 10 new EU member states are no longer counted. When they work illegally in Germany with only a tourist visa, this is only seen as an infringement of regulations.

"Illegal migration will gain in importance in Europe, because increasing numbers of people want to escape the worsening of their living conditions in Africa, Arab countries, and East Asia," Beckstein warned. This is why Schily's suggestion to set up reception camps in North Africa together with the European Union and the United Nations is correct.

German Red Cross President Rudolf Seiters specified the terms: agreements between European and African states; UN approval; observance of the Geneva refugee convention; and speedy processing of the applications. "Under such circumstances, the proposal of providing decent accommodation at home would be thoroughly acceptable."

[Description of Source: Hamburg Welt am Sonntag (Internet Version-WWW) in German -- Sunday edition of Die Welt, Hamburg's right-of-center daily]. END TEXT.

EDELMAN