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IOM International Organization for Migration  
МОМ Международная Организация по Миграции  
МЭАУ Миграция боюнча Эл Аралык Уюму

## Press Release

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Contact person:  
Bermet Moldobaeva  
Tel.: (996 312) 62 79 36  
e-mail: [bermet@iom.elcat.kg](mailto:bermet@iom.elcat.kg)

The Mission of the International Organization for Migration in the Kyrgyz Republic has the honor to announce the start of a new 27-month's Program on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, funded and supported by USAID.

This project is a follow up to USAID's project "Combating Trafficking in Persons in Central Asia: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution (Legislation)" implemented by Winrock International, which was completed in December 2005. In this project, IOM will continue to cooperate with NGOs in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, which successfully disseminate information on risks of human trafficking and illegal migration, organize and facilitate trainings with target populations, and provide assistance to victims of trafficking.

In cooperation with the NGO network in Kyrgyzstan, IOM will continue to organize the repatriation and to offer medical, psychological, legal and rehabilitation assistance to victims of human trafficking who return and attempt to reintegrate into their home societies/countries. The operation of shelters will also continue, with more specialized services offered to victims of trafficking. Existing shelters will work with victims of human trafficking, and new shelters will be established in the areas where services are lacking. New consultation centers for victims of labour exploitation also will be established in select areas.

IOM will continue to conduct awareness campaigns among risk groups and the general population. The campaigns will focus in particular on youth, especially children from underprivileged backgrounds, in orphanages and detention centers for young offenders, and on other groups of vulnerable adults (poor, single mothers, migrants and refugees). Special attention will be devoted not only to the risks, but also to recommendations on how to minimize or avoid these risks and how to handle situations when a person becomes a victim of human trafficking. Moreover, trainings also will be geared towards raising awareness on issues of labor rights and obligations (contracts, résumé writing tips, etc). Trainings will be facilitated in cooperation with partner NGOs and high school teachers, who will teach courses on the problems of trafficking in persons using the existing IOM handbook for counter-trafficking education.

IOM will design and print flyers, stickers and posters, and produce video and audio materials with information on counter-trafficking. In particular, produced documentaries and public service announcements will be televised nationally. Theater plays on the problem of human trafficking will be staged using 4 scenarios written for IOM, and new theater plays will be selected on a competitive basis.

In cooperation with partner NGOs, IOM will provide return, reintegration, health care, and legal assistance to trafficking victims, both upon their release in countries of destination and upon their

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### IOM Mission in the Kyrgyz Republic:

245 Chuy Avenue • 720001 • Bishkek • Kyrgyz Republic  
Tel: 996 (312) 627936/37/38/39 • Fax: 996 (312) 627940 • E-mail: [iomkyr@elcat.kg](mailto:iomkyr@elcat.kg)



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return to home countries. Victims will receive vocational training that will improve their ability to find jobs in local markets. Vocational training will be offered to vulnerable groups as well.

IOM will establish cooperation with leaders of religious congregations represented in the region, in order to engage the religious leaders in preventive and assistance activities.

The expected results of the 27 month project will be as follows:

- higher awareness of trafficking risks and of exit strategies from situations of (sexual and/or labor) exploitation among risk groups and vulnerable populations;
- preventive vocational training for risk groups available that will improve their chances to find legal employment opportunities in home countries and abroad;
- improved assistance services available to trafficking victims, provided by NGOs;
- increased sustainability of these NGOs;
- the establishment of consultation centers for labor migrants;
- through information among the general population and religious leaders, better understanding for the suffering of trafficking victims, and decrease of their stigmatization and re-victimization;
- reduction of the scale of trafficking in persons from and in Central Asian countries during project implementation.

For more information and future cooperation, please contact the Mission of the International Organization for Migration in the Kyrgyz Republic.

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