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LAUNCH OF THE PROJECT "DEVELOPMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE MECHANISMS IN SUPPORT OF READMISSION OF MIGRANTS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION"

In September 2009 a new project "Development of Administrative Mechanisms in Support of Readmission of Migrants in the Russian Federation", funded by the European Union and implemented jointly by IOM Moscow and FMS of Russia, was launched. This project

comes as a logical follow up action for the Programme "Assistance to the Government of the Russian Federation in Establishing Legal and Administrative Framework for the Implementation and Development of Readmission Agreements" which will end in December 2009. The results of this 2-year project will be presented in the Manual for migration professionals as well as an e-training based on this Manual. The Manual is unique due to the fact that its authors analysed and summed up working experiences of Readmission centres in several European countries and came up with practical recommendations on how to run such establishments.

One of the main purposes of the new project is further development of administrative, legal and practical mechanisms in the Russian Federation to ensure compliance with its international obligations in the field of readmission, especially in its part of reception, accommodation and transfer of third country nationals and stateless persons; as well as enhancing the capacity of the FMS of Russia and other relevant authorities of the Russian Federation in implementing readmission agreements in the Russian Federation.



Participants to the Seminar

The project provides for a number of activities including development of analytical materials, in particular a) needs' assessment report on readmission agreements implementation for third country nationals, and b) gap analysis for optimizing readmission applications workflow. In the framework of activities in establishing effective mechanisms of reception, accommodation and transfer of third country nationals and stateless persons development of a training programme for readmission centers personnel with the particular focus on safeguarding of migrants' human rights, observing international

standards and norms, ensuring the security and safety of the centers inhabitants, and holding of such trainings for readmission centers personnel are planned.

With the purpose of enhancing the practical dialogue between the Russian and EU competent authorities and increasing the FMS of Russia's staff knowledge on EU Ms's modern approaches in overall migration management with a particular emphasis on return and readmission, *the technical meetings* will be held with involvement of both European and Russian experts, *a study tour* will be organized, a specialized *English language course* for FMS of Russia's officials working in the area of readmission will be developed and tested in the course of the trainings.

Within the frameworks of the informational activities, a film and informational materials will be developed in direct cooperation with the FMS of Russia. The film will be addressed to migrants, potential migrants and travelers and will raise their awareness on the legal channels of emigration to the EU and risks of irregular migration, including trafficking in human beings. A particular focus will be put on prospectus of readmission.

The project is implemented during the period of September 2009 - March 2011.

THE FEDERAL AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE BORDER OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (ROSGRANITSA) AND IOM MOSCOW SIGNED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Being a leading international organization which acts in the field of migration IOM considers its Technical Cooperation for Migration (TCM) activities including establishing effective mechanisms of Border Management as one of the main priorities. IOM TCM activities are designed as a partnership with all concerned parties working closely together to define and determine priority needs and goals in order to establish programs strategy and to support projects implementations.

IOM Moscow has initiated various projects supporting the RF government in the field of Border Management and continues to act in the field of TCM. Presently IOM Moscow initiated a Project titled "Enhancement of management of the Russian Federation border checkpoints" developed by IOM Moscow in close cooperation the governmental partner - the Federal Agency for the Development of the State Border of the Russian Federation (Rosgranitsa) and funded by EC. Rosgranitsa is now the leading Russian agency working in the field of border management with the functions of development and administrating of the state borders of the Russian Federation.

However the cooperation of IOM Moscow and Rosgranitsa is not limited by the framework of one common project. IOM Moscow has established close working contacts with the Agency. Beginning already in January 2009 this continuous collaboration resulted in that the Memorandum of Understanding between two organizations in the person of Head of Rosgranitsa Bezdelov Dmitriy Aleksandovich, and

IOM Moscow, in the person of Chief of Mission, IOM Moscow Enrico Ponziani was signed In August 2009.

Within the framework of the Memorandum both parties underlined their interest in establishment and promotion of cooperation in the area of management and maintenance of the checkpoints on the State border. Using the experience of modern international and European practices in design and development of the effective systems of state border management, in particular:

- exchange of information on creation of conditions needed for organization of various kinds of control in the checkpoints,
- promotion of universally recognized human rights and freedoms of migrants,
- close cooperation between the Parties in matters of common interest,
- further enhancing and strengthening of such cooperation
- other essential topics

The parties note the fruitful results of interaction and expressed confidence in further cooperation.



Chief of Mission, IOM Moscow Enrico Ponziani and Head of Rosgranitsa Bezdelov Dmitriy Aleksandovich at the ceremony of signing of Memorandum of Understanding

IOM MOSCOW LAUNCHES NEW PROJECT: "ENHANCEMENT OF MANAGEMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION BORDER CHECKPOINTS"



In 2007 the Russian Federation has undertaken a number of developments in its border management strategy. A new entity – the Federal Agency for the Development of the State Border of the Russian Federation (Rosgranitsa) with the functions of management, administrating and development of the borders of the Russian Federation was established

The Russian authorities have expressed a keen interest in international and particularly EU expertise in development and maintenance of the effective systems of state border management and efficient border control procedures. Recognizing the significance of this subject and in order to support the Russian Government, IOM in close cooperation with Rosgrantsa elaborated set of proposals resulted in signing in July 2009 the Agreement with the Delegation of the European Commission to Russia, which contracted IOM Moscow to implement a Project titled "Enhancement of management of the Russian Federation border checkpoints".

The Federal Agency for the Development of the State Border of the Russian Federation is both a Project partner and final beneficiary party.

The Project started on the 15th of September and will last for 18 months.

The main goals of the initiative are the provision of methodological, technical and institutional assistance to the Russian Federation in the implementation of the effective systems of state border management and efficient border control procedures. Specifically the project activities include four components as follows: **Component One** aiming to assist to assigned state agencies in implementation of the state policy in border management area, **Component Two** is a building capacity of the Russian state agencies in border and migration management area, **Component Three** seeking to strengthen of international cooperation and **Component Four** seeking to optimize data sharing.

Presently IOM Moscow project team is working on the following activities:

- Needs assessment aiming at identifying gaps in management of the border infrastructure in the RF
- Development the review of best European practices on building and modernization of border infrastructure as well as management solutions using for effective work of checkpoints
- Study Tour to Finland for high profile representatives of concerned agencies for familiarization with the best examples of solutions in border management organization.
- Development of the specialized English Language course for the officials.

"DEVELOPMENT OF PRACTICAL MECHANISMS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF REINTEGRATION COMPONENT OF AVR PROGRAMME IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION"

During the period of September 2008- June 2009, IOM Vienna, in close collaboration with IOM Moscow, has implemented a joint Research Project "Situation and Status of the Russian Nationals Receiving Basic Welfare Support in Austria". In the framework of the research, IOM Vienna conducted Profiling Study of more than 200 migrants from the Russian Federation (namely, the Chechen Republic) currently residing in Austria. The main goal of the study was to receive and analyze information on demographic, socio-economic characteristics of the group, as well as their reasons for migration to Austria and possible demand for voluntary return to the Russian Federation. Profiling study was complemented by collecting information on demographic, socio-economic situation in the

Chechen Republic, as well as existing infrastructure and organizations working in the region. Collection of region-specific information was done by IOM Moscow. Additionally, IOM Moscow established contacts with organizations, which can be considered as potential partners for reintegration.



Near the Parliament of Chechnya

Starting from August 2009, a new project, "Development and Implementation of a Pilot Project for the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration to the Chechen Republic" is being implemented. The project aims at the careful development and subsequent implementation of a pilot program for the assisted voluntary return and reintegration for 30 selected vulnerable beneficiaries who wish to return to their region of origin. In the framework of the pilot project, reintegration support will include: financial assistance for housing and living costs for the first three months after return, informational support and detailed counseling on reintegration opportunities existing for the returnees. Additionally, financial support for selected reintegration activities up to EUR 1.000 per participant will be supported.

Current project is being implemented jointly by IOM Vienna and Moscow, in close collaboration with national, regional authorities, local civil society and international organizations, working in the region.

On 21 July 2009 The World Health Organization and the International Organization for Migration conducted the roundtable «Bilateral cooperation of Russia and Tajikistan in the Area of Improvement the Access of Labor Migrants to HIV and Tuberculosis Prevention and Treatment».

PROVISION OF ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES FOR MIGRANTS. ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

In the frameworks of the roundtable participants discussed the legal aspects of migration flows, the issues of medical control, prevention measures for combating infectious diseases, in particular- HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

During the discussion participants came to an agreement on the most important issues and supported the frameworks defined during the

meeting of Mr Putin, the Prime Minister of Russia and Dr Margarit Chan, Director-General of WHO on 26 June 2009, aimed at the prevention of spread of infectious and communicable diseases transmitted by labour migrants from a number of Eastern European and Central Asia States.

Roundtable participants discussed the issues of cooperation and collaboration between state structures of Russia and Tajikistan dealing with the issues of health and migration, EurAsEC, IOM and WHO in solving the problems related to the access of migrants to health care systems, defined the necessary steps to achieve the fruitful collaboration in this area.



Participants to the Round Table in WHO

Thus, following issues were discussed within the roundtable: the necessity of labour migration facilitation were; the issues of unified and bilaterally agreed medical examination; on establishment the Centers for Medical Examination; on development the standard medical certificates and elaboration the procedures of unified medical examination. It was offered to work on unification of medical indicators; on development of the medical insurance strategies which will correlate to the national legislation of Russia and Tajikistan.

During the discussions on HIV/AIDS issues, it was stressed that the main risk groups are 20-30 years old, that the new risk groups emerged recently- i.e., prisoners, military men and migrants. It was pointed out that the prevention programmes does not have the sufficient funding and that a very limited number of patients has the access to the treatment covered by the Global Fund.

In the frameworks of the roundtable the difficulties of getting the objective data of migrants impact on epidemiological situation in home and destination countries due to the high number of illegal migrants in Russia from CIS countries were discussed. It was stressed that it is complicated to get verified data in Russia and in Tajikistan.

Participants pointed out that awareness raising programmes on STDs and HIV/AIDS prevention and on the safe sex behavior of is required for labour migrants and for the members of their families. A number of participants stressed that the correlation between Russia and Tajikistan health programmes is weak and pointed out on limited access of labour migrants to free and anonymous tests on STDs and

HIV/AIDS.



Participants to the Round Table in WHO

Participants highly evaluated the roundtable and emphasized that the roundtable might become a major landmark on a way of strengthening cooperation between the respective structures of Russia and Tajikistan.

FINAL SEMINAR ON ESTABLISHMENT OF MECHANISMS FOR REFERRAL OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

On June 29-30, 2009 in Moscow region IOM has organized a final seminar on the establishment of the sustainable inter-agency mechanism for the referral of trafficking victims.



Participants to the Seminar

In the course of the project "Prevention of Human Trafficking in the RF" IOM organized three round-table sessions involving the same agencies per each pilot region (Moscow, Astrakhan and the Republic of Karelia (Petrozavodsk). The final seminar in Moscow region was the 9th event of this kind.

IOM views a referral mechanism as an inter-agency operational network, involving the governmental authorities, such as the regional and municipal administrations, law enforcement authorities, public health care and social support institutions, as well as NGOs and international organizations, for the referral of victims of trafficking to

appropriate agencies/organizations for assistance, offering them professional and case-specific services.

Engaging the above entities in a referral mechanism implies the establishment of a standard pattern for their coordinated action in providing assistance to trafficking victims.

The primary goal of all seminars, organized within the project life, was to sensitize the authorities and other stakeholders to the special status of trafficking victims and promote internationally recognized standards of treating such victims, proceeding from the principles of human rights, non-victimization and non-discrimination.

The purpose of the seminar in Moscow region was to report on the caseloads of victims assisted, on the model referral mechanisms, implemented by the project partners, discuss types of assistance provided, as well as the gaps and problems encountered.

The event was attended by around 50 representatives of governmental structures, law-enforcement agencies, embassies to the RF, experts, 18 non-governmental organizations from Astrakhan, Pskov, Petrozavodsk, Kazan, Chelyabinsk, St. Petersburg, Primorskiy Krai and other regions of Russia – all partners of the project.

The participants were welcomed by Mr. Enrico Ponziani – Director of IOM Moscow, and Mr. Alberto Andreani – IOM Moscow CT projects coordinator.

The welcome speech was also made by Mr. Georgiy Timofeev – Deputy Head of the Department of Labour and Employment of Moscow city government.

During the first day of the seminar the following participants addressed the audience with the speeches and presentations:

- Mr. Victor Kulikov – Head of the National Anticriminal, Antiterrorist Foundation, Moscow;

- Ms. Tatiana Kholshchevnikova – expert in the Russian legislation on the problem of human trafficking;

- Ms. Mariya Klimova - Investigative Committee of the Ministry of Interior of Russia – spoke about difficulties of investigation of THB crimes;

- Mr. Sergio Carbone – attaché of the Italian Embassy to the RF – made a presentation on financial aspects of investigations of the cases of human trafficking;

- Mr. Samat Toktobolotov – attaché of the Embassy of Kyrgyzstan to the RF, representative of the State Committee on Migration and Employment of Kyrgyzstan – made a Power Point presentation on migration regulation processes, developed by the State Committee;

- Ms. Tatiana Lineva – Head of the Red Cross office in St. Petersburg – made a presentation on the two-month results of work of Information and Consultative Center in St. Petersburg, functioning within the IOM project, funded by the Belgium government.

Mr. Alberto Andreani made a presentation about the mechanisms of human trafficking.

He has also demonstrated a new counter-trafficking video spot, made by VALERIA, IOM CT Goodwill Envoy. VALERIA said a few warm welcome words for the participants by phone.

The second day of the seminar was mainly devoted to the presentations, made by the NGOs.

In the end of the day, two presentations were made by the CT unit colleagues: on "Fund raising opportunities and project development

training for NGOs" and "Psychological characteristics of victims of trafficking and specifics of rehabilitation assistance (medical, psychological and social aspects)".

For their work during the seminar, the participants were awarded memorable IOM Certificates.

"COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION" (Sida Project)
"PREVENTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION"
(The EC funded Project with co-funding provided by the
US and Swiss Government)

*International conference "Enhancing International Cooperation in
Counteracting Human Trafficking" in Moscow*

On 29-30 of September 2009 CIS Executive Committee in cooperation with the Bureau of IOM Moscow organized an international conference "Enhancing International Cooperation in Counteracting Human Trafficking". The event was held in Marriot Hotel in Moscow.

The conference was held as a joint activity within the framework of the MoU between CIS Executive Committee and IOM as well as CIS Member States' Programme for Combating Human Trafficking for the period 2007-2010 and IOM-implemented counter-trafficking projects, funded by the European Union, governments of USA, Switzerland and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The conference was attended by around 70 participants, among them were representatives of CIS states' law enforcement agencies, as well as concerned CIS structural divisions, a number of EU Member States representatives, as well as the Delegation of the European Commission to Russia, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Collective Security Treaty Organization, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and other international institutions.

The main purpose of the conference was to further contribute to and sustain the dialogue among law enforcement professionals, launched by similar conferences previously organized by IOM missions in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova. The conference was aimed at strengthening the cooperation between the CIS and EU Member States, UN institutions and other international organizations at bilateral and multilateral levels.

The conference was opened by the welcoming remarks addressed to the audience by the representatives of:

- Executive Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States
 - Bureau of International Organization for Migration in Moscow (Bureau of IOM in Moscow)
 - Delegation of European Commission in the Russian Federation
 - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
 - Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
 - Coordination Council of CIS Prosecutors General (CCPG)
- The conference brought together the CIS representatives from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the

Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Ukraine. They presented substantial speeches on national experiences in combating human trafficking and spoke about the prospects for development of international cooperation in this sphere.

The main result of the conference was joint elaboration of the summarizing document with the participants' proposals on enhancing counter-trafficking action further to be included into a draft CIS Member Nations' Programme for Combating Human Trafficking in 2011-2014.



Participants of the Conference

**"A MULTIAGENCY MODEL OF COOPERATION FOR
COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN THE
RUSSIAN FAR EAST"
(INL FUNDED PROJECT)**

Training for Law Enforcement officers in Vladivostok

The objective of the 1 day training was to increase the capacity of relevant institutions in Primorskiy Krai (police, ICPPO investigators, prosecutors, NGOs and other interested persons) to effectively counteract human trafficking crimes and to raise the awareness on the issue among these agencies.

The training was organized on July 5th 2009 in cooperation with Vladivostok Center on Organized crime and Corruption Research under the jurisdiction of Far East State University and Public council of the Mol PK. This training was a part of the Far East Criminology Summer School organized for LE practitioners, Mol officers, ICPPO investigators, prosecutors, criminal law professors and postgraduate students.

The training participated 45 participants; among them: representatives of PK Administration, Mol PK officers, ICPPO PK investigators, Vladivostok prosecutors, postgraduate students of Vladivostok Institute for the Studies of Organized Crime and Far-East State University, specialists of legal institute of the Far-East State University, researchers of Mol All-Russia Scientific Research Institute PK branch, professors of Russian Legal Academy of the Ministry of Justice of the RF, advocates of PK and NGO representatives.



Working session at the Training for Law Enforcement officers

Workshop on Establishing a Task Force

A workshop on establishing a region-wide interagency Task Force to exchange relevant data on the trafficking situation and design response measures took place on 6 July 2009 in Vladivostok.

The workshop participated 30 participants; among them representatives of: Department on coordination of the LE activities of the PK; Department of the Social Protection of the PK; Department of the Education and Science of the PK; Department of the Health of the PK; Mol PK; MFA PK; Ombudsman PK; Department on Mass Communication of the PK; Department of the Public Employment of the PK; UFMS PK; American Bar Association in PK; PK NGOs dealing with the assistance to the VoTs and IOM Assistance Center for Victims of Trafficking in Vladivostok personnel.

The Workshop emphasized on the exchange of relevant data on trafficking situation; discussion and exchange of ideas and opinions; providing additional information on the support provided by IOM Assistance Center for Victims of Trafficking in Vladivostok.



From left to right: Mr. Victor Logachev - Director of the Governmental Social Association of Primorskiy Krai and Ms. Svetlana Bazhenova - Chairperson of the NGO "Far East Center"

IOM MOSCOW CULTURAL ORIENTATION

IOM Moscow Cultural Orientation team has delivered trainings for prospective migrants to US and Canada in Malta, Romania, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia in the last quarter. The schedule was quite tight and the populations were quite diverse.

Among the highlights of the period are, of course, the new locations where we delivered the trainings for the first time, such as Odessa and Minsk. The refugees from these regions had an opportunity to attend a longer seminar closer to their home. We were pleasantly surprised by the almost 100% show-up rate. The seminars revealed how important the information provided and the skills developed during these sessions are for the people who would soon start their new life in such a remote and unknown country like the United States. And, of course, there were uncountable questions and lively discussions which indicated that the atmosphere of the trainings was that of a friendly conversation. The facilitator was touched by the warm words of gratitude coming from the refugees at the end of the seminar.



CO seminar for refugees in Odessa, Ukraine August 2009

Due to the fact that our CO team has adopted a new way to reach the populations we serve, by going to the regions where they reside, the number of refugees who attend CO seminars in Moscow has dropped significantly. In the last three months we delivered one three-day session for P1 refugees (who as a rule have no relatives in the US)

What is typical for the overwhelming majority of P1 cases, the participants knew very little about their destination country, the pre-departure procedures and the progress of their case. Neither Russian nor English is native for the third countries' refugees, and migrants feel shy and uncertain about making telephone inquiries. The trainer had to literally take the applicants from the CO classroom to the IOM information window.



Afghan refugees at IOM Moscow Counselors' Booths

Seven out of 18 people on the scheduling list spoke Farsi only. Ahmadullah, our Dari/Farsi interpreter, demonstrated great professionalism at translating the CO sessions because he has been working freelance for IOM for years. In the 1980-s he himself delivered Cultural Orientation for his Afghan fellow-citizens who were coming to the USSR to work and study.

Criss-cross games and drafting an average monthly budget for a family in the USA were among the most favorite activities, apart from discussing films "Be Who You Are" and "Welcome to the United States".



US Cultural Orientation Moscow July 2009

Among the P2 refugees (those with close relatives in the US) it is not uncommon that they have already been to the US. Their questions are more specific. The applicants were interested whether they needed the translation of school certificates. If they already had higher education what kind of documents would be recognized in the US? Some were quite disappointed to find out that apart from the Secondary Education Certificates from their country, all other

educational documents would not be automatically recognized in the US.

The participants of the session also needed information for the following questions:

1. Is the pension from the country they are fleeing going to continue or will it seize?
2. Where is it better to start studying English – in Russia or in the US? If they want to obtain a certificate in TOEFL can they do that in the US?
3. What will they have to do if they are 62-63 years old and 2 or 3 years are left before the retirement?
4. Dual citizenship – whether it is possible to retain the Russian citizenship after naturalization?

In July–September 2009 two COA sessions were conducted by IOM Moscow COA team: a five-day session for a group of Ethiopians approved for resettlement to Canada and temporarily accommodated at the Evacuation Transit Centre for Refugees in Timisoara, Romania; and a two-day session for Afghan refugees at the IOM Moscow office, Russia.

Both groups participated in COA sessions actively and considered them to be very informative and helpful. The participants from Ethiopia were obviously less informed about Canadian life on the whole and governmental support in particular, as compared with the Afghans most part of which had relatives or close friends resettled to Canada earlier. Different segments of videos “Destination Canada” demonstrated by the COA facilitator to the Ethiopian group were met by them with delight and even with applause (e.g. people lying in snow without winter clothes or sportsmen skiing in the Rocky Mountains). The questions asked during the session were mostly related to accommodation and job opportunities (“Can I move to another apartment if I do not like the first one? Shall I take my things with me in this case?”, “Can I change Edmonton for Toronto? I think life in a big city is better than in a small one”; “If I find a job within the first year of living in Canada, what will happen to the governmental assistance assigned to me?”, “Should children report to the government if they find a temporary job, e.g. if they help their neighbors to do some household job and are given some money for it?”). The participants were encouraged by the COA facilitator to share their ideas and opinions on different topics discussed in the class; the received answers were really interesting and even surprising. Thus while discussing the Canadian symbols the group was asked to guess why a maple leaf was placed on the Canadian flag; one of the participant suggested that the angles of the maple leaf mean the number of the Canadian provinces and territories. The Ethiopians were shocked to learn how cold the weather could be in winter; in their opinion they were expected to collect as much winter clothes as possible during their stay at the ETC in Timisoara, otherwise they would have to sit at home and would not be allowed to go out in winter. The participants were also asked to guess why the Canadians use garbage bags of different colors (as it is shown in the video “First Steps” in the “Housing” segment); after a long discussion they came to the conclusion that each family had garbage bags of a particular color for two purposes: the landlord could determine which

family was cleaning their apartment better, or families having smaller garbage bags would pay less than those having bigger ones.

All the sessions went rather smoothly, no obvious obstacles were met during the seminars.

During the COA session at the ETC in Timisoara the main problem was absence of proper child-minding. While the parents were sitting in the classroom the small children were looked after by their elder brothers and sisters; some of the youngest children would enter the classroom during the seminar shouting and disturbing the participants. The parents had to leave the classroom in turn to look after the children to let the others listen to the COA facilitator. The day schedule was also affected by the fact that parents needed extra time to feed the children and take care of them during the breaks, so the facilitator had to extend the breaks and make the daily schedule flexible depending on the participants’ needs.

During the COA session at the ETC in Timisoara the COA facilitator had an opportunity to provide a five-day training for a group with a low literacy level, as compared to a two-day seminar usually conducted for Moscow groups. Though the duration of the Moscow training is limited to two days which does not allow extending much on each topic some of the discussions and activities suggested for the five-day training were later successfully implemented in the two-day seminar. The COA facilitator also had a chance to work with refugees belonging to another ethnic group, which gave the facilitator the opportunity to compare expectations and needs of each group. The Afghans trained in Moscow usually get a lot of information from their Canadian relatives and friends; they do not have any fear in view of their resettlement. The Ethiopians seemed to be more anxious about the forthcoming travel to Canada, and their thoughts and feelings were confused. Some of them expected that the Government would provide them with free accommodation and give them financial support as long as they would need it; in their opinion they would start with studying English/ French, then they would get professional education, and only after that they would search for employment. The participants shared their fears about the long travel to Canada as well as elevators, escalators and moving walkways which they had seen in the airports on their way to Timisoara. The Ethiopians also worried if someone would meet them in the Canadian airport and how they could distinguish the official staff from the people that could deceive or even hurt them (they were frightened by the stories about Somali thieves who used to introduce themselves as officials or taxi drivers and would rob the deceived passengers). The COA facilitator also had a chance to compare how various teaching methods and techniques could be applied at the sessions provided to groups of different origin and background. These opportunities and invaluable experience will certainly enrich the COA sessions in future and will make them more productive.

MOSCOW MIGRANTS’ PROCESSING AND MOVEMENT

IOM Moscow works with the Russian government, the U.S. State Department, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and various UNHCR offices and U.S. Embassies across Europe and the ex-USSR to implement a program of voluntary resettlement to the

United States for migrants and refugees. Activities include receipt of applications, initial screening, supporting interviews with the U.S. Immigration Service, and assisting approved applicants with cultural orientation, placement in the USA with resettlement NGOs, arrival documentation, and departure.

The biggest beneficiary groups are (1) religious minorities from the ex-USSR joining immediate relatives already in the United States; (2) refugees referred for resettlement by the United Nations, including Afghan refugees in Central Asia, and Afghan and African refugees in Russia and Ukraine; and (3) African boat people stranded in Malta.

Comprehensive statistics for the period 01 July 2009 through 30 September 2009 are as follows:

Applications received and processed: 914 individuals
Presented to DHS for status determination: 1034 individuals
Departures to the U.S.: 712 individuals

In total, IOM staff traveled to process cases, interview applicants, prepare files for interviews, and assist U.S. government officials in: Baku (Azerbaijan), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Chisinau (Moldova), Kyiv (Ukraine), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Timisoara (Romania) and Moscow.

MIGRATION ISSUES

1. The State Duma tabled a bill that would allow traveling abroad by the old valid passport while the new passport is being processed. The author of the bill is the Chair of a Duma Committee on Constitutional Legislation and State Management, Mr. Vladimir Pligin. According to the paragraph 3, article 11 of the current law on "The Procedure of Exit From the Russian Federation and the Procedure of Entry to the Russian Federation" it is forbidden to issue a new foreign passport without withdrawal the old foreign passport. Exception is made to the persons who due to their professional activities often travel abroad.

At the beginning of July the State Duma tabled a bill allowing doubling the validity of a foreign passport (from 5 years to 10 years).

The Federal Migration Service of Russia put forward an initiative to establish a state unitary body that would issue foreign passports in a relatively short time for extra charge. The procedure will cost about 2- 3 thousand rubles. (Gazeta.ru)

2. As the result of bilateral negotiations that took place in Bern Russia and Switzerland signed an agreement on a simplified procedure of visas issuance. The Russian Side was represented by Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Swiss side by the Head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police Evelyn Widmer Schlumpf. (Vesty)

Agreement on visa free regime as well as memorandum on intentions in the field of oil recovery were signed in Managua by the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Igor' Sechin.

3. By the end of this year the authorities are planning to introduce some amendments to the Compatriots Programme. The requirements for the Regions willing to participate in the Programme will be simplified and the rights of those wishing to resettle to Russia will be extended.

The State Programme on voluntary resettlement to the Russian federation of the compatriots living abroad was adopted in June 2006. It was foreseen that by 2012 the regions will receive 443 300 returnees and their families. But in 2007 only about 700 families returned to Russia in the framework of the Programme, in 2008 – 8, 8 thousand and 20 000 returnees are expected in the year 2009. It makes only 13, 5% of the estimated number. The problem preventing people from returning is that the requirements to the regions are overstated. This is why it was decided to simplify them.

Lack of a relevant programme in the regions that were not identified as priority destinations before will not be an obstacle for returnees – the conditions there were less agreeable comparing to regions of priority. The participants to the programme will have more freedom. For instance according to the terms of the current programme the returnees are not free to move their place of residence and work – in practice they become pawns of the programme. (NEWSru.com)

4. The Labour migrants quotas were introduced in Russia in 2008. The aim was to legalize the work of the migrant workers and prevent the foreigners from extruding the Russian nationals from their working places. The employers identify the required number of the foreign workers and apply to the Ministry of Economy and Development. Some professions are exempt from quoting.

In 2008 the quota of 1, 8 million workers were exhausted by summer and the authorities were forced to increase it up to 3, 4 million. Nowadays the low demand of foreign workers results from financial and economic turn-down. The recession brought to decrease in salaries and made lot of migrants return to their countries of origin. Some areas of economy experience severe staff reductions. The crisis negatively affected construction the area traditionally employing lots of migrants. The quotas for labour migrants will be considerably decreased in 2010.

5. The labour migrants in Sverdlovskaya Oblast who would voluntarily pass HIV tests will get SIM-cards with 100 rubles balance for free. The aim of the campaign is to support law-abiding labour migrants and to inform them of the problem of AIDS by forwarding to them SMS messages in their native languages. The majority of the labour migrants come from the countries such as Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kirgizstan with a high level of AIDS where the disease has a latent nature. It is important to establish a system allowing not only to detect the disease but also to prevent it.

5. The Prosecutor's Office of Russia suggests making employers to reserve funds to cover travel costs back to the countries of origin for labour migrants. Lack of such guarantees doom migrants stay in Russia without any means of living. (Vedomosti)

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