

THE ROMANIAN PATRIARCHATE

✝ DANIEL

Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church

RELIGIOUS CULTS AGAINST THE TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS*

We notice with great concern that Romania, just like the whole of Europe, is faced with the extension the trafficking in persons phenomenon has reached. The alarming statistics of the international bodies show that the majority of the over 2.5 million persons trafficked are women and children; the trafficking in human beings has become one of the most profitable crimes, the third in the world after weapons and drugs dealing.

Given the fact that the trafficking in persons is a well-organized trans-national criminal phenomenon that cannot be separated from the international migration, the interventions for combating the phenomenon must involve the conjugated efforts of all the countries affected.

We think the trafficking in persons is a serious sin as well as a social danger which affects the dignity of the person, depersonalises the human being, destroys humans physically and spiritually, and turns them into slaves, into merchandise, with no value as persons, into a source of profit, implicitly degrading the human society. God has not given the right of life and death over the human being to anybody and nobody is entitled to change the human person into an object of profit.

In order to be efficient we must speak concomitantly of combating the phenomenon as well as of the social reintegration of the victims that must begin with the spiritual healing because the traumatic experience these persons suffered changed their way of perceiving the world and the inter-human relations, losing their self esteem and trust in their fellow beings. Consequently, the spiritual healing of the victim is a must, because only a healed soul can be a free sociable person with self-esteem and trust in other people. While trying to help the victims and their families, we must give them not only good advice, moral support and spiritual strengthening, but we must also try hard to make the community sensitive to their reintegration in family and society.

Such an example is given by the programmes for combating the trafficking in persons in which the Romanian Patriarchate has cooperated for quite a long time with the International Organisation for Migration, as well as by the project subsidized by the European funds in which we shall participate through the *Philanthropia* Federation for creating an efficient mechanism for reintegrating the victims in community and in the process of work.

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- Message of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel addressed to the International Workshop entitled *“Consolidation of the ecumenical actions against the dynamics of the trafficking in persons phenomenon”* held at the Patriarchal Palace, Bucharest, October 8, 2009

In the present European context and in the perspective of the free circulation, Romania must intervene responsibly, involving the entire society in the fight designed to prevent and combat this menace, adopting an inclusive and integrating attitude, providing the aid and protection of the victims and militating for harmonizing the European and Romanian legislation concerning illegal work and protection of the employees' rights.

In conclusion, we think that, through coherent policy and programmes to begin with the education for human dignity and for preventing the trafficking in persons, on the basis of faith in the love of God for the humans, the religious organizations of Romania can bring a substantial share of contribution to the support of the community's efforts for defending human dignity and healing social life.

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