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## SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE: HOW NOT TO BECOME A VICTIM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING? WE ARE LOOKING FOR A SOLUTION

**Róbert Jáger - Anna Schneiderová\***

On February 24 – 25, 2014, Hotel Poľana Kúpele Brusno, a.s. held an International Conference entitled “*How not to become a victim of human trafficking? We are looking for a solution.*” under the auspices of the Secretary of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic and the National Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Mr. **Jozef Buček**. This International Conference is one of the outputs of the Institute of Criminological Studies and Law Faculty of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica based on the Call number III. KMV 2013 for the submission of applications for subsidies from the state budget through the budget chapter of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic of June 7, 2013.

In his opening speech, the Secretary of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic and the National Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Mr. **Jozef Buček** praised the Institute of Criminological Studies, which annually prepares scientific conferences on the issue of human trafficking. The 2014 scientific international conference has been organised in cooperation with a relevant scientific and educational institution in Slovakia, i.e. the Faculty of Law of the Matej Bel University. This institutional linkage of the Institute of Criminological Studies with the Faculty of Law of the Matej Bel University was evaluated by the Secretary of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic as very useful, resulting in the creation of more specialised and interdisciplinary framework for solving serious social problem – human trafficking.

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Mr. **Jozef Buček**, however, also pointed out significant changes that occur in the Slovak Republic thanks to scientific research in the field of human trafficking. According to the latest evaluation report of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Slovak Republic belongs among top ten countries in terms of efficiency and effectiveness of the fight against human trafficking. However, despite this positive report, in the Slovak Republic there is still room for improvement. Therefore, the scientific research of the fight against human trafficking across various scientific disciplines, i.e. sociology, victimology, criminology, psychology, medicine as well as other related scientific disciplines, has an irreplaceable role in this further improvement. Only a close link between the science and practice may in the future bring significant success in the fight against the crime of human trafficking.

After the introductory speech of the Secretary of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic and the National Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Mr. **Jozef Buček**, the floor was given to a member of the Executive Committee of the Institute of Criminological Studies and Professor of Criminal Law of the Law Faculty of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Mr. **Vladimír Čečot**. Professor **Čečot** in his speech informed scientists and practitioners involved in the international scientific conference on the nature of the Project *“How not to become a victim of human trafficking? We are looking for a solution.”* He informed the audience about the results of previous research in this area and consequently he also presented practical steps and changes in society that have already been implemented thanks to examining the problem of human trafficking by the Institute of Criminological Studies.

The actual papers presented during the international conference dealt with many variations and aspects of human trafficking. Prevention in this area was dealt with by **Jozef Madliak** (Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Slovak Republic), **Kristina Magdolenová** (Prevention of Human Trafficking and its Specifics in the Area of Roma Communities). Historical and legal aspects of human trafficking was addressed by **Michal Turošík** (The Term Slave in Roman Law), **Robert Jáger** (Did the Slavery Exist in the Territory of Today's Slovakia?) and **Martin Skaloš** (Historical and Legal Aspects of Human Trafficking in our Country in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century).

Legal aspects of human trafficking were addressed by **Darina Mašľanyová** and **Štefan Zeman** (Human Trafficking in Current EU Legislation and its Transposition into the Criminal Codes of the Slovak Republic), **Sergej Romža** (Application of the Procedural Rights of Persons Prosecuted for Offenses of

Human Trafficking), **Mojmír Mamojka** (Definition of Trade Legality and Perception of Ethics in Commercial Law Creation and Business Practice), **Peter Čopko** (Importance of the European Arrest Warrant and some other Instruments of the European Union for the Effective Prosecution of Human Trafficking Offenses), **Libor Klimek** (Legal Guarantees for the European Union in the Fight against Human Trafficking ) and **Jaroslav Klátik** in (Trafficking in Human Beings and Their Procedural Status). Actual assistance to victims of human trafficking, and elimination of the phenomenon as such, was dealt with by **Petra Jurinová** (Instruments Reducing Risks of Human Trafficking), **Henrich Koprda** (Mode of Obtaining and Recruitment of Victims of Human Trafficking), **Milan Janíček**, **Juraj Matiaško**, **Daniel Čechvala** (Trafficking in Human Beings from the View of the Police Force) and **Pavol Kádek** (Forced Begging as a Phenomenon of Modern Human Trafficking) and others.

At the conclusion of the International Scientific Conference *“How not to become a victim of human trafficking? We are looking for a solution.”*, the conference participants adopted a common final communiqué containing 10 points representing recommendations for further scientific research in the field of trafficking in human beings, as well as for the implementation of the results of such research into practice.

In this communiqué it was declared, among other things, that the positive changes that could have been observed in recent years in the field of prevention and assistance to victims of trafficking in the Slovak Republic are the result of purposeful and effective action by the competent authorities in this field. Trafficking in human beings, however, remains one of the most topical issues in our society. Due to the timeliness of this issue, it was suggested within the communiqué that scientific research projects and grants for human trafficking issue should be focused on systemic, interdisciplinary approach which will result in a scientifically justified legislative, organisational and other related proposals and mechanisms. It was also suggested that the issue of human trafficking should be presented to the widest field of media, as well as to be the part of the curricula of university studies. In connection with this it was suggested that the authorities of law enforcement would more widely inform the public about the crimes of human trafficking. In the conclusion of the communiqué it was noted that more emphasis should be given to targeted and effective prevention of crime in this area, not only through the public administration but also through scientific and research institutions, NGOs, and citizens themselves.

To conclude, it may be said that the International Conference was marked by a spirit of friendship, academic discussion full of inspiring new impulses not only to further theoretical research in the widest area of human trafficking but also in practice, where it is already possible to notice positive developments. It is necessary, therefore, to highlight the importance of this Conference as a forum where theory intersects with practice, and the results of this blending can be actually seen in the society. Following this international conference, its proceedings were published, i.e., KLÁTIK, J. (ed.): *“How not to become a victim of human trafficking? We are looking for a solution.”* Banská Bystrica: Institute of Criminological Studies, 2014. 245 pp. ISBN 978-80-557-0687-0.