

Session 55 – Bosnia and Herzegovina

Recommendations made under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

Prepared by Child Helpline International and Udruženje roditelja teško bolesne djece u BiH – April 2010

Background:

Udruženje roditelja teško bolesne djece u BiH is the national child helpline in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The national child helpline is available 24hrs per day, seven days a week. The telephone number of the child helpline is toll free. The child helpline has applied for the regionally harmonised number 116 111. According to national statistics, there were only a few officially registered cases of sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in 2009. However, the child helpline evaluates that there is a much bigger real problem than is apparent from official data. There is a lack of awareness about a problem and it is necessary to have media campaign on increasing awareness, especially regarding child pornography because of increased but not registered Internet criminality. Such campaigns will motivate children to denounce cases of abuse. In child prostitution there is significant element of voluntary sexual contacts, without elements of applying a force to have sex with children. Based on these findings, we make the following recommendations to achieve full implementation of the Optional Protocol by Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Recommendation A

The government of Bosnia and Herzegovina should ensure that the child helpline can assist to address and prevent child trafficking, child prostitution and child pornography. To this end the government should

- Allocate a regionally harmonised, short toll-free number to the child helpline. Ideally in region this number will be 116 111
- Allocate appropriate financial resources to support long-term activities of the helpline including for training and capacity building to meet international quality standards;
- Assist in Raising awareness in the country on the existence of the child helpline and how it can be reached.

Recommendation B

The Government should recognise the important role that child helplines and hotlines have in addressing and preventing sexual exploitation, sale of children or child pornography. To this end the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina should:

- Recognise Udruženje roditelja teško bolesne djece u BiH as an important source for data on this issue and to inform holistic child protection policies;
- Cooperate with governments and police of other countries in the region and world wide to combat sale and trafficking of children and child sexual exploitation.

Recommendation C

The Government should make use of all means available to prevent the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as well as address related issues to safe guard marginalised children and children at risk. To this end, the government should:

- Fully implement the national action plan to combat the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
- Train students, teachers, social workers and police on the issue and allocate the appropriate resources to do so.
- Raise awareness with the general public on this issue.

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