

Created in the image of God - treated as slaves!

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RENATE Meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, March 2024

Twenty-six members of RENATE Working Board met in the city of Sofia, Bulgaria this week to share on issues of human trafficking, in each of the European countries where members work in Shelters with victims, advocate on their behalf, raise awareness of this crime against human dignity and human rights.

RENATE is a faith-based organisation, consisting of women Religious and few men, consecrated as well as lay, whose sole aim is to eliminate human trafficking and exploitation particularly where they live and work in Europe. RENATE European Network, adopts a Victim-Centred, Human Rights, Trauma-informed approach in relation to the Law. There are a number of shelters run by members, caring for victims of human trafficking.

Among the very informative country report, one of the most heart-rending came from Ukraine, where the invasion of Russia since February 2022 has had a dramatic impact, traumatising an entire population particularly children. Over six million refugees fleeing Ukraine are recorded across Europe, while an estimated 8 million others are displaced within the country.

Air alarms, war strikes, shelling, bombing - all the daily realities in the country.

Air alerts announced approximately 14,870 times since 2022. On average, there were 47 air alarms per day. Just imagine the effects of these on the people! War & Drone strikes, shelling, and bombing continue to inflict devastating damage across Ukraine, particularly in conflict zones. Civilians endure constant fear and uncertainty. Whole towns and villages are reduced to rubble. The ongoing conflict exacerbates a humanitarian crisis, leaving communities struggling to access basic necessities and essential services amidst the chaos.

Children and the Elderly and infirm are too often those in vulnerable situations who are most impacted by war and conflict. The figures are staggering since 2022: In the case of children: 525 are dead; 1255 wounded; 2099 disappeared; 24,345 found; 19,546 deported or forcibly displaced of which 388 returned. Even as we gathered in Sofia, Russia launches its largest missile attack on the Capital Kiev with over 30 missiles fired.

In solidarity with Ukraine and the many victims of human trafficking, RENATE gathers to remember in prayer those whose human dignity and rights are violated on a daily basis.

RENAME Network is staunch in its commitment to support and stand in solidarity with victims of human trafficking and to work towards a world free of modern slavery.