

United States of America
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)
Update to 2016 Report

Overview:

The Santa Marta Group was established in 2014 as an alliance of international police chiefs and Catholic Bishops to raise awareness of human slavery develop relationships amongst civil society, help the care of victims and share experiences, best practices and skills among members.

Considering the objectives of the Santa Marta Group, several cooperative initiatives are being leveraged and enhanced by the Santa Marta Group participation, including capacity building measures, information sharing with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and joint analysis efforts to further define the nature scope and scale of human trafficking within our national borders.

In October 2016, former ICE Deputy Director Daniel Ragsdale attended the 4th Santa Marta Group conference. Former Deputy Director Ragsdale discussed ICE's efforts to combat human trafficking, specifically highlighting how partnerships between law enforcement and non-governmental organizations are vital to combat human trafficking. Former Deputy Director Ragsdale specifically highlighted HSI's human trafficking successes in Colombia, including an international investigation which led to the rescue of 114 victims of human trafficking and the prosecution of 12 traffickers.

Initiatives:

HSI is a core member and contributor to the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center (HSTC). The HSTC is an interagency center whose mission is to provide multi-source and multi-agency data fusion and analysis to assist law enforcement and policymakers in preventing trafficking, protecting victims and prosecuting traffickers. Under the auspices of the HSTC, HSI will re-engage in collaborative efforts with the United Kingdom's National Crime Agency (NCA), the Australian Federal Police (AFP), Nigerian authorities, the Bali Process and the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2018.

HSI and the HSTC have contributed to the Development of a Methodology for Determining Human Trafficking Prevalence report that was published in September 2016. The report explored the feasibility of applying multiple systems estimation (MSE) to the U.S. federal administrative data environment to formulate a prevalence estimate of human trafficking in the United States.

Since October 2017, HSI has continued targeted capacity building sessions in multiple countries, including Vietnam and Thailand. HSI continues to encourage foreign governments to combat trafficking through international diplomacy and engagement.

On January 3, 2018, ICE/HSI joined the HSTC and FBI in a joint briefing to Vatican Ambassador Callista Gingrich. The Ambassador received a strategic briefing on global trends

and statistics, a case presentation on international sex trafficking, and an overview on available types of immigration-related relief. The briefing prompted a conversation on how U.S. law enforcement has made a difference using a victim-centered approach, rooted in prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership.

ICE/HSI is committed to the DHS Blue Campaign; the Department's unified voice to combat human trafficking. Working in collaboration with law enforcement, and NGOs, the Blue Campaign strives to protect the basic right of freedom and to bring those who exploit human lives to justice. Additional Blue Campaign members are United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG).

Program Highlights:

HSI is the lead U.S. law enforcement agency responsible for combatting human smuggling and human trafficking. Particular emphasis is placed on transnational criminal organizations that pose a risk to national security and public safety, including human trafficking and child exploitation.

ICE/HSI has the largest international footprint in the Department of Homeland Security and works with international partners to combat crime. ICE/HSI has over 200 offices within the United States and 67 international offices in 50 countries. Our global footprint allows us to be strategically situated to work with our law enforcement partners as well as non-governmental organizations, which bring us human trafficking tips and leads worldwide.

HSI provides international training related to trafficking in persons, which is delivered to foreign law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim service providers in collaboration with HSI Attaché offices. The training includes HSI efforts to combat human trafficking, investigative techniques, bilateral investigations, indicators of human trafficking, victim identification, and victim assistance with a focus on building the capacity to conduct human trafficking investigations with host country authorities. In 2017, HSI coordinated 22 international training events, which were attended by personnel from 72 countries.

HSI developed human trafficking training modules which are part of the permanent curricula for the Department of State, and International Law Enforcement Academies in Bangkok, Budapest, Gaborone and San Salvador.

ICE/HSI employs 27 Victim Assistance Specialists across the country and coordinates with non-governmental organizations, to include Catholic Charities, to provide services to trafficking victims for stability, safety and recovery.

- T and U nonimmigrant visas provide legal immigration status to victims of trafficking and provide a pathway for victims to obtain lawful permanent residency.
- ICE/HSI does not seek to deport victims of trafficking who are unlawfully present in the United States.

- ICE/HSI has the authority to grant Continued Presence to victims of trafficking, which provides yet another form of immigration relief for trafficking victims.

ICE/HSI Statistics:

Enforcement Statistics: From October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017, HSI initiated 833 human trafficking investigations, resulting in 1,602 criminal arrests, 921 indictments, and 578 convictions.

Victim Assistance Program Statistics: From October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017, 518 human trafficking victims and 1,126 child exploitation victims were identified in the course of HSI investigations and referred for services to NGOs, including faith-based organizations, to ensure their appropriate short- and long-term needs were met—including shelter, medical, legal, and case management related issues—while advocating for their legal rights and interests in criminal and civil matters.

Summary:

These initiatives represent existing efforts to combat human trafficking both domestically and internationally in cooperation with the Catholic Church. Promoting the objectives of the Santa Marta Group include efforts to provide awareness in targeted countries of human trafficking, promote greater reporting of the crime, and when possible share data on emerging trends and transnational criminal organizations encountered in their discipleship endeavors.