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Allegations against the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) and warnings against return to Nigeria

Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission to Abuja, Nigeria

9 to 17 June 2010

Copenhagen, June 2010

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Overview of fact finding reports published in 2008, 2009 and 2010

Protection of victims of trafficking in **Nigeria**, Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission to Lagos, Benin City and Abuja, Nigeria, 9 – 26 September 2007
2008: 1

Protection of victims of trafficking in **Ghana**, Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission to Accra, Ghana. February 25 to March 6 2008
2008: 2

Recruitment of IT specialists from **India**, An investigation of the market, experiences of Danish companies, the attitude of the Indian authorities towards overseas recruitment along with the practices of other countries in this field. Report from the fact finding mission to New Delhi and Bangalore, India 4th to 14th May 2008
2008: 3

Report of Joint British-Danish Fact-Finding Mission to Lagos and Abuja, **Nigeria**. 9 - 27 September 2007 and 5 - 12 January 2008
2008: 4

Cooperation with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons and other related matters (NAPTIP). Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission to Abuja, **Nigeria**. 14 to 24 February 2009
2009: 1

Security and Human Rights Issues in Kurdistan Region of **Iraq (KRI)**, and South/Central Iraq (S/C Iraq), Report from the Danish Immigration Service's (DIS), the Danish Refugee Council's (DRC) and Landinfo's joint fact finding mission to Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, KRI; and Amman, Jordan, 6 to 23 March 2009
2009: 2

Honour Crimes against Men in Kurdistan Region of **Iraq (KRI)** and the Availability of Protection, Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission to Erbil, Sulemaniyah and Dahuk, KRI, 6 to 20 January 2010
2010: 1

Entry Procedures and Residence in Kurdistan Region of **Iraq (KRI)** for Iraqi Nationals, Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission to Erbil, Sulemaniyah, Dahuk, KRI and Amman, Jordan, 6 to 20 January and 25 February to 15 March 2010
2010: 2

Human rights issues concerning **Kurds in Syria**, Report of a joint fact finding mission by the Danish Immigration Service (DIS) and ACCORD/Austrian Red Cross to Damascus, Syria, Beirut, Lebanon, and Erbil and Dohuk, Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), 21 January to 8 February 2010
2010: 3

Allegations against the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) and warnings against return to **Nigeria**, Report from Danish Immigration Service's fact-finding mission to Abuja, Nigeria, 9 to 17 June 2010
2010: 4

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Introduction and disclaimer

The Danish television broadcasting company TV2 News reported on 23 May 2010 that:

- The former Executive Secretary/Chief Executive of the Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Women and other related matters (NAPTIP), Carol N. Ndaguba, was recently involved in trafficking of at least one woman in Nigeria. This allegation was based on statements from Mogens Pedersen, alias “Christian”, Head of the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) called Christian’s Venner¹, a Danish NGO assisting victims of trafficking.
- NAPTIP’s shelter for victims of trafficking in Benin City has been defunct for some time. According to TV2 News’ camera team who visited the alleged shelter neighbours of the shelter were unaware of any activity in the shelter.
- That the United Nations (UN) has warned against returning victims of trafficking to Nigeria.²

The Danish Immigration Service (DIS) undertook a fact-finding mission to Abuja, Nigeria, in February 2009 as similar allegations were made against NAPTIP in late 2008.³

On the basis of the recent allegations the DIS immediately decided to undertake a fact-finding mission to Abuja to gather information on the performance of NAPTIP and its shelter in Benin City, its former Executive Secretary/Chief Executive, and Western embassies’/countries’ cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and NAPTIP.

Since 2004 the DIS has undertaken a number of fact-finding missions to Nigeria concerning trafficking in women and protection of victims of trafficking in Nigeria.⁴

The delegation to Abuja in June 2010 consulted a number of western embassies, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), IOM, NAPTIP and the former Executive Secretary/Chief Executive of NAPTIP.

All interlocutors consulted have had their statements forwarded for comments, corrections and approval. All agreed to have the approved statements included in the report at hand. All interlocutors were informed that the delegation’s report would be public and that it would be published on DIS’ website www.newtodenmark.dk.

¹ I.e. “Friends of Christian”.

² TV2 News, *Sent straight back into the hands of traffickers: Denmark departs victims of trafficking to Nigeria despite UN warnings*, 23 May 2010 [<http://nyhederne-dyn.tv2.dk/video/index/id/30729444>]. Journalist Ditte Kristensen, TV2 News, *Denmark funds empty house in Nigeria*, 23 May 2010 [<http://nyhederne.tv2.dk/article/30663168>]. Note that the TV broadcast and the news article were published in Danish only.

³ Danish Immigration Service, *Cooperation with the Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Women and other related matters (NAPTIP), Report from Danish Immigration Service’s fact-finding mission to Abuja, Nigeria 14 to 24 February 2009*, Copenhagen April 2009. This report is available at DIS’ website www.newtodenmark.dk.

⁴ Reports from these fact-finding missions are available at DIS’ website www.newtodenmark.dk.

The delegation to Abuja comprised Jens Weise Olesen, Chief Adviser and Jan Olsen, Country Adviser, Documentation and Research Division, DIS.

Summary

The following comprises key findings based on statements from all sources consulted in Abuja.

- NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City is not defunct as reported by TV2 News. The building shown by TV2 News is NAPTIP's Zonal Office in Benin City and not its shelter. NAPTIP's shelter is located elsewhere in Benin City.
- All sources consulted dismissed the allegation that the former Executive Secretary of NAPTIP has been involved in trafficking.
- None of the sources consulted had heard of any UN warning against return of victims of trafficking to Nigeria. UNHCR and UNODC have never issued such a warning.

1. The performance of NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City

According to Aminat Tope Abdulrahman and Anne Ikpeme, UNODC the picture shown by the Danish TV2 News does not show NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City but it shows NAPTIP's Zonal Office in the city. The two buildings are located in different places in the city. Aminat Tope Abdulrahman personally visited the shelter in November 2009 and she described the shelter as well functioning. At that time the shelter accommodated eight victims of human trafficking. Anne Ikpeme explained that last week she visited NAPTIP in Benin City concerning a UNODC project on micro credit and skills acquisition schemes. It was added that UNODC runs an assistance programme together with NAPTIP and NGO Coalition in Benin City. The project aims at preventing and combating trafficking in persons in Edo State (Benin City is the capital of Edo State). It was added that the Italian Cooperation is the donor of this project.

In addition, Aminat Tope Abdulrahman and Anne Ikpeme, UNODC explained that in February 2009 NAPTIP opened a new shelter in Benin City. The new shelter replaced the former one and it was described as "very well functioning and well equipped". The new shelter has all the necessary facilities and Aminat Tope Abdulrahman emphasized that she was impressed by the standard of the new shelter. The shelter comprises of four flats located in a bungalow compound. Each flat comprise three bedrooms and each bedroom can accommodate four residents, i.e. altogether 48 victims of trafficking can be accommodated in the shelter at once. At the time being the shelter accommodates two victims of human trafficking. During the last two weeks eight victims of trafficking have passed through the shelter. It was added that victims of human trafficking only reside in NAPTIP's shelter for a short time, unless they are in need of further protection. The maximum period of time victims stay in the shelter is normally two weeks. However, if it is considered that a victim of trafficking is in need of protection because she has given evidence in order for NAPTIP to investigate and eventually prosecute human traffickers, or if she has problems with her own family she will be permitted to stay for an extended period of time. They explained that the number of victims of trafficking accommodated in NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City varies according to these concerns and considerations.

If a victim does not wish to return to her own family for various reasons she may be referred to a local NGO such as COSUDOW in Benin City. Aminat Tope Abdulrahman and Anne Ikpeme, UNODC explained that Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women (COSUDOW) runs its own shelter and provides assistance to the returning victims of trafficking. Concerning the safety and reintegration, NAPTIP monitors the victims' progress, reintegration and development until they are successfully reintegrated into their local community and their family.

Chief of Mission, IOM explained that he arrived in Abuja on 23 November 2009. He visited NAPTIP's shelters and zonal offices in Lagos and Benin City in April 2010. In addition he also visited two NGOs in Benin City: COSUDOW and Network for Justice and Democracy. The two NGOs have a close cooperation with NAPTIP, and COSUDOW runs its own shelter in Benin City. At the time of the visit by IOM, NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City accommodated two adult women. The Chief of Mission stated that the shelter is "a well functioning shelter with adequate facilities: clean water, air condition, kitchen, provisions of food, vocational training and recreational facilities etc.". It was added that IOM supports NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City.

NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City has always been the destination of most victims of trafficking who spend quite a short time at the shelter because they would like to go straight home.

NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City continuously reports on details concerning the victims of trafficking it accommodates including their numbers. The Chief of Mission stated that there is no evidence to support the view that the shelter has been empty for extended periods of time. It was added that if the number of victims of trafficking in the shelter is high it means that there is a problem of referring the victims to their communities. Furthermore, NAPTIP runs a referral system in close cooperation and collaboration with the NGOs network, including COSUDOW and Network for Justice and Democracy. These NGOs also provide vocational training and further assistance, like legal counselling, to victims of trafficking. It was added that the zonal NAPTIP offices provide the necessary statistics to the investigation and monitoring unit of NAPTIP, which runs a centralized database.

The Chief of Mission explained that the NGO-NAPTIP referral system has been activated. Of recent for example, NAPTIP identified some 40 victims of trafficking, whom they would now like NGOs to make a follow up in terms of supporting them to develop their skills in various trades, like fashion design, hair dressing, catering, petty trading among other trades. NAPTIP continues to improve its day to day work and the Chief of Mission added that "I have no doubt that these victims of trafficking are developing the necessary skills, capacity and confidence in reviving meaningful livelihoods and achieving their objectives."

The delegation presented to the Chief of Mission an alleged picture of NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City as broadcasted by the Danish TV2 News on 23 May 2010. The Chief of Mission immediately stated that the picture did not depict NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City.

The Chief of Mission explained that at the moment a team of IOM experts from Italy and Netherlands are in Benin City monitoring the implementation of community based projects. The team met with community leaders in areas that are endemic to trafficking, i.e. villages in the vicinity of Benin City. It was added that IOM also has established a technical work team of University of Benin Teaching staff, who were initially instrumental in doing the baseline assessments and are now evaluating the impact of IOM interventions.

Regarding the allegation by TV2 News that NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City is defunct a Western embassy (D) stated that this is not the case. The shelter is located in another location than NAPTIP's Zonal Office in the city. The new shelter is a one storey building not in any way similar in to the building shown by TV2 News.

The embassy added that the shelter is a well functioning sanctuary for victims of trafficking in need of protection. However, the shelter accommodates a varying number of victims according to the changing ongoing needs. In addition people do not come and go to this shelter as it is a protected refuge. If neighbours of NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City find that it is a rather quiet place, and that they have not seen women or girls come and go it could be correct. The shelter is there to protect persons and its doors are not just open for any visitor or journalist. Being a protection facility no one is supposed to know or to see who come and go.

Concerning NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City UNHCR stated that the situation could be attributed to the fact that victims of trafficking accommodated in any shelter may vary over time or even on a day-by-day basis. It was added that if the shelter in some periods of time accommodates a limited

number of victims of trafficking this could very well illustrate that NAPTIP's referral system in Benin City has been successful. However, UNHCR is not in a position to confirm this as the agency has no prior knowledge of this particular situation in Benin.

Concerning allegations that NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City is defunct and that it was not in use at the time of the visit of the Danish broadcast company TV2 News a Western embassy (A) stated that its staff had not visited NAPTIP's shelter in the city since the last visit in 2008. It was added that the shelter in Benin City was never empty during the visits of the embassy. However, the majority accommodated in the shelter were minors.

A Western embassy (A) confirmed IOM's statement that when there are only a few victims of trafficking accommodated in the shelter it is because the victims have been reunited with their families or they have been referred to local NGOs cooperating with NAPTIP in Benin City. These referrals take place in order to assist victims of trafficking to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into their local communities. Victims of trafficking that are accommodated in NAPTIP's shelter for an extended period of time (more than one or two weeks) are those whose cases are under investigation by NAPTIP. This would typically be cases where the victim has given evidence against her trafficker and an investigation is taking place.

A Western embassy (B) stated that it did not have information about the number of victims of trafficking who are accommodated in NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City. The embassy cooperates with IOM but it does not have any close cooperation with NAPTIP as trafficking is not a pressing issue in the home country of the embassy. It was added that the embassy had not visited NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City in recent years.

Concerning allegations that NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City is defunct, Simon Chuzi Egede, Executive Secretary/Chief Executive, NAPTIP stated that the shelter has been functioning since its establishment in 2004 and it has never been completely empty. However, in November 2009 the Benin City shelter and NAPTIP's Zonal Office was acquired [replaced] by a new office building and a new shelter, with all necessary facilities. The furnishing of the new shelter and office in Benin City was supported by IOM, the international donor community and some embassies in Nigeria. Simon Chuzi Egede found it shocking to hear that a well known news channel such as the Danish TV2 News would report that NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City was empty and defunct. Simon Chuzi Egede suspected that TV2 News never visited NAPTIP's shelter in Benin City but only the Zonal Office of NAPTIP, which is located in a different place than the shelter. The shelter is completely excluded from the public and the media for security reasons. Visits can only take place after approval by the head of Benin City Zonal Office.

NAPTIP forwarded the following statement to the delegation: "I write to inform you that the picture shown in the publication [TV2 News' article, see below (footnote 5)] is NOT OUR SHELTER, BUT THE BENIN CITY ZONAL OFFICE."



NAPTIP's Benin City "shelter" according to TV2 News.⁵



NAPTIP's Benin City Zonal Office, according to NAPTIP.



NAPTIP's Benin City shelter, according to NAPTIP.

Simon Chuzi Egede and his staff explained that NAPTIP has seven Zonal Offices in Nigeria plus its headquarters located in Abuja. Altogether NAPTIP runs eight shelters in Nigeria. None of these shelters are defunct.

⁵ Journalist Ditte Kristensen, TV2 News, *Denmark funds empty house in Nigeria*, 23 May 2010 [http://nyhederne.tv2.dk/article/30663168]

2. Comments on allegations against NAPTIP and cooperation with the agency

Concerning allegations that the former Executive Director of NAPTIP, Carol N. Ndaguba, has been involved in re-trafficking of a returnee from Denmark, Aminat 'Tope Abdulrahman, National Protection Officer (Human Trafficking) and Anne Ikpeme, National Protection Officer (Smuggling of Migrants), UNODC stated that there is no reason whatsoever to believe that this has been the case. Aminat 'Tope Abdulrahman explained that she had worked closely together with Ndaguba for a period of three years, and Anne Ikpeme stated that she knows Ndaguba very well personally. They both emphasized that they found it unthinkable that Ndaguba would have been involved in the activities mentioned. Besides, if this had been the case they would definitely know about it. Ndaguba lives in Abuja with her family, and after her retirement she has continuously been in contact with NAPTIP and UNODC. She actively supports NAPTIP and she personally took initiative to establish the new NAPTIP shelter in Benin City in February 2009. Ndaguba supports the activities of UNODC by voluntary work for the agency and she is presently also a consultant for NAPTIP. In addition she is a member of the board of trustees for the Victim's Trust Fund, which is funded by NAPTIP through assets of traffickers that are confiscated and funds from development partners.

Concerning allegations that senior NAPTIP officials have been directly involved in trafficking UNHCR stated that it had no knowledge of irregularities - either corruption or involvement in trafficking - in NAPTIP's management. UNHCR does not yet cooperate directly with NAPTIP, but a large number of international organisations and embassies in Nigeria work closely together with NAPTIP, and it would be known if any senior officials in NAPTIP had been involved in trafficking. On the contrary NAPTIP has a high stand in combating trafficking in humans and assisting victims of trafficking, and for that reason neighbouring countries are inspired by NAPTIP. This is also the reason why UNHCR is planning to engage in a close cooperation with NAPTIP and IOM concerning identifying international protection needs of victims of trafficking.

UNHCR stated that it is the general perception that the former Executive Secretary of NAPTIP, Mrs. Carol Ndaguba managed to create an efficient agency that enjoys a high level of respect nationally and internationally. UNHCR found it impossible to believe that the former Executive Secretary could have been involved in the re-trafficking of an individual in Lagos Airport as reported by the Danish TV2 News. It was added that if the former Executive Secretary of NAPTIP had been engaged in trafficking it would have been a "big scandal" in Nigeria. The media would have reported extensively on this had it occurred.

Concerning allegations that NAPTIP's leadership is corrupt and/or involved in trafficking Chief of Mission, IOM, stated that since he was appointed Chief of Mission in November 2009 there has not been any evidence that this was the case. If NAPTIP had been involved in illegal activities, IOM and other stakeholders would know about it and take the necessary action. The Chief of Mission did not meet the former NAPTIP Chief Executive, since he arrived on mission in Nigeria in November 2009.

Concerning allegations by the Danish NGO "Friends of Christian" that the former Executive Secretary of NAPTIP had been involved in the re-trafficking in Lagos Airport of a returning victim from Denmark a Western embassy (D) stated that it considered such an allegation as "ridiculous"

and “completely unfounded”. The former Executive Secretary was, and still is a well-respected and well-known person, who would never be involved in such activities. Moreover, the Executive Secretary would have been easily recognized by the immigration authorities and the police if she turned up in Lagos airport in such circumstances. The embassy stated that it has full confidence in NAPTIP’s performance and activities.

The embassy has a close cooperation with IOM and thus also cooperates with NAPTIP. There has never been filed a case for corruption or trafficking against any member of NAPTIP’s leadership. However, as in most governmental agencies in any country in the world it can never be completely excluded that there are employees that could be involved in corruption. On the other hand, NAPTIP and its leadership consist of responsible persons that enjoy a high degree of respect.

Concerning allegations that the leadership of NAPTIP, including the former Executive Secretary have been involved in trafficking, a Western embassy (B) stated that it found it implausible and hard to believe that this should be the case. The embassy added that such serious allegations needed to be supported by hard facts. The embassy had never received information that indicated any kind of irregularities within the NAPTIP leadership.

According to a Western embassy (A) there have been no reports that members of NAPTIP’s leadership have been engaged in any illegal activities, including trafficking. This was the case even before the resignation of the former Executive Secretary, Carol Ndaguba, in February 2009 and this is still the case. The embassy had no information as to allegations in the Danish media that the former Executive Secretary of NAPTIP has been involved in a re-trafficking case in Lagos Airport. It was added that the embassy had no information concerning the resignation of the former Executive Secretary of NAPTIP.

A Western embassy (A) explained that at the moment it has no direct cooperation with NAPTIP but it supports NAPTIP through its cooperation with IOM.

Concerning allegations by the Danish NGO “Friends of Christian” that the former Executive Secretary of NAPTIP had been involved in the re-trafficking in Lagos Airport of a returning victim from Denmark a Western embassy (E) stated that it considered such an allegation as highly unlikely and difficult to believe. The former Executive Secretary was, and still is a well-respected and well-known person, who has never been known to be involved in such activities. Moreover, the Executive Secretary would have been easily recognised by the immigration authorities and the police if she turned up in Lagos airport in such circumstances. The embassy stated that it has no reason to doubt NAPTIP’s performance and activities. The embassy has a close cooperation with IOM and thus also cooperates with NAPTIP. To our knowledge there has never been a case for corruption or trafficking filed against any member of NAPTIP’s leadership. However, as in most governmental agencies in any country in the world it can never be completely excluded that there are employees that could be involved in corruption. On the other hand, NAPTIP and its leadership consist of responsible persons that enjoy a high degree of respect.

A Western embassy (C) explained that its cooperation [with NAPTIP] dates back a couple of years. The embassy’s collaboration with different departments of NAPTIP has always been positive and the embassy has learned to know the NAPTIP staff at all levels as professionals who carry their duties with dedication and in a responsible manner.

Human trafficking is a serious and multifaceted challenge, but during its six operational years NAPTIP has managed to achieve concrete and tangible results. NAPTIP's mandate is unique because it covers all areas from protection and rehabilitation to investigation and prosecution and further to awareness rising and preventive measures.

During the last year there have been seemingly politically motivated changes in the leadership of NAPTIP. According to local newspapers in Nigeria, the Government of Nigeria is currently looking into the use of funds by the organisation's present leadership.

Concerning allegations that NAPTIP and its former Executive Secretary, Mrs. Carol Ndaguba has been involved in trafficking Simon Chuzi Egede, NAPTIP, stated that he had never heard of such negative, alarming and harmful allegations before. So far NAPTIP has only received positive comments regarding the performance and accomplishments of the agency. Simon Chuzi Egede stated that he has absolute confidence in Carol Ndaguba and that she could never have participated in any illegal trafficking activity. Carol Ndaguba always did her job as an Executive Secretary "incredible well" and Simon Chuzi Egede stated that "we are proud of her activities". She is an accomplished woman who had risen in her position as Director of Public Prosecution of the Federal Ministry of Justice before she was appointed as Executive Secretary. In addition Simon Chuzi Egede mentioned that Mr. Mohammad Babandede, who is Director of NAPTIP's Investigation and Monitoring Unit, also enjoys confidence and that he was recently promoted to a position as Controller of the Nigerian Immigration Service. Other members of NAPTIP's leadership have also been promoted.

Today NAPTIP enjoy more support from the government, the international community and donors than ever before. Nigeria is one of very few countries in Africa that has a National Assistance and Protection Programme for victims of trafficking. Many other African countries, including Kenya and South Africa as well as most West African countries are consulting NAPTIP on anti-trafficking issues.

Simon Chuzi Egede emphasized that he hopes that the severe and unfounded allegations and accusations from the Danish media TV2 News and the NGO "Friends of Christian" will soon stop. NAPTIP as an agency feels very much obliged to answer any question regarding its activities and performances, Simon Chuzi Egede stated, while hoping that these media and NGOs would be responsible and support their allegations with evidence.

Simon Chuzi Egede explained that Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands have put together a joint fund in order to support NAPTIP in its efforts to combat trafficking and support child witch victims that have been branded witches in the three endemic states. The agreement on the fund was signed last week [mid June] and the fund will support awareness campaigns and victims of trafficking. The three funding countries monitor the activities of NAPTIP continuously and NAPTIP has never received complaints regarding its activities. Simon Chuzi Egede added that NAPTIP has an agreement with UNODC with whom NAPTIP has a close cooperation.

Simon Chuzi Egede emphasized that during an official visit to Nigeria by the US government NAPTIP was singled out and praised as a well functioning and transparent governmental agency in Nigeria. Simon Chuzi Egede strongly rejected the allegation that NAPTIP is marred by corruption or that its former Executive Secretary had been involved in trafficking. NAPTIP is not corrupt and the Nigerian government even increased the budget of NAPTIP by 400 % last year.

Simon Chuzi Egede explained that yesterday was a day of celebration in NAPTIP as the US Secretary of State published the annual 2010 Trafficking in Persons Report.⁶ According to this report “The Government of Nigeria fully complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. It demonstrated sustained progress to combat human trafficking during the reporting period. In 2009, the government convicted 25 trafficking offenders and provided care for 1,109 victims, increases over the previous reporting period. [...] In addition its National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP) ceased the practice of interrogating trafficking suspects at the same Lagos facility housing its shelter for trafficking victims”.

When asked if the Nigerian media would report on any irregularities within NAPTIP Simon Chuzi Egede and his staff members stated that the Nigerian media would never spare NAPTIP if they suspect any wrongdoings by the agency.

Finally, Simon Chuzi Egede and his staff members explained that NAPTIP are always in the focus of the media and some NGOs would even criticize NAPTIP for not having taken action in cases that are not even known to NAPTIP. During a visit concerning trafficking from Benin City six Western ambassadors listened to Sister Florence of COSUDOW stating that a mother of a victim of trafficking had been killed in a most gruesome manner in Benin City. Sister Florence criticized NAPTIP for not having undertaken any investigation into the matter. However, it turned out that the mother of the victim was living in Benin City and that she had never been persecuted by traffickers. Sister Florence had based her criticism of NAPTIP on a statement from one victim of trafficking residing in the Netherlands and it was a completely unfounded allegation.

The delegation met with the former Executive Secretary of NAPTIP, Carol N. Ndaguba in her private home in Abuja. She stated that she regretted the allegations that have been raised against her by the Danish NGO “Friends of Christian” and TV2 News, and she considered that such allegations should be based on firm evidence and not on scanty assertions from one individual victim of trafficking. In addition, Carol N. Ndaguba urged the persons behind these allegations to consult her concerning these accusations before accusing her publicly. She was also disappointed that the Danish broadcasting company TV2 News would show her picture while accusing her for being involved in the re-trafficking of a returnee from Denmark in Lagos Airport.

Following the delegation’s meeting with Carol N. Ndaguba she forwarded the following statement to be included in the delegation’s report:

“THE ADVERSE REPORT ON ONE OF YOUR TELEVISION STATIONS [TV2 News]

I am amazed by the allegation leveled against me and the organization NAPTIP. They are of course baseless and unfounded. It is very obvious that the victim thought this sort of fabrication would gain her a permanent residency in Denmark.

I left NAPTIP meritoriously 1½ years ago and have since been variously honoured for my work there. Nigeria has also attained the Tier one status for 2 consecutive years by America’s rating in the field of the fight against Trafficking in persons.

⁶ US Department of State, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, *2010 Trafficking in Persons Report – Nigeria – Tier 1*, 15 June 2010.

My advice to the journalists who published this falsehood is that they should always crosscheck the truth of whatever they publish or undertake a trip to Nigeria to find out the true position of things.

I believe the least the journalist or whoever is responsible for this can do is to publicly publish an apology for slandering my name and defaming the great job being done by NAPTIP.”

According to Western embassies in Abuja the National Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign⁷ and NAPTIP will award Carol Ndaguba a prize at Sheraton International Hotel in Abuja on 17 June 2010 for her struggle against trafficking in humans. Carol Ndaguba has received a number of awards during her position as Executive Secretary of NAPTIP and even after she left office.

⁷ A Nigerian nationwide anti-trafficking project.

3. Has the UN warned against forced return of victims of trafficking to Nigeria?

Concerning an alleged UN warning against return of victims of trafficking to Nigeria UNHCR stated that it has never issued such a warning, and the agency was unaware of such a warning being issued by any other UN agency. It was added that UNHCR would be one of the relevant UN agencies to issue such a warning.

Concerning alleged UN warnings against return of victims of trafficking to Nigeria, UNODC stated that such a warning has never been issued. It was added that return of victims of trafficking is fully safe when NAPTIP has been notified about the return. When this is the case the returning victims will be received in Lagos Airport by NAPTIP officials. Finally, Aminat Tope Abdulrahman and Anne Ikpeme explained that UNODC continuously report to their donors on any expenditure they have had in respect of any project. They further advised donors to demand for periodic reports from implementing agencies as a means of tracking donors' funds.

According to a Western embassy (D) the UN has not issued a warning against returning victims of trafficking to Nigeria as reported in the TV2 News. The embassy would certainly have been aware of any such warning issued by the any UN agency at all times. The embassy noted that it would most likely be the UNHCR that would issue a warning but this has not occurred.

Concerning return of victims of trafficking to Nigeria Chief of Mission, IOM stated that IOM, NAPTIP and NGOs receive such returnees in Lagos Airport and they are properly looked after at various shelters that would accommodate them. The reintegration projects that the victims of trafficking get involved with are also monitored to the extent that they are phased out when the micro-projects projects become self sustaining. This is the reason why IOM, NAPTIP and NGOs collaborate closely with NGOs whose close contacts with local communities and their sponsors often make it easier for them to have access to the returnees and their families/relatives. It was added, however, that it is a precondition for a successful reception, monitoring and reintegration that IOM and/or NAPTIP have been notified about returns. If this takes place IOM or NAPTIP will also report to the relevant authority of the country returning the victim of trafficking. The Chief of Mission requested that NAPTIP is notified of all returns of victims of trafficking in order to ensure that returnees will arrive safely and are provided protection.

The Chief of Mission emphasized that it has never happened, during his tenure, that a victim of trafficking has been re-trafficked upon arrival in Lagos Airport when IOM or NAPTIP have been notified about the return. It is mandatory for IOM and/or NAPTIP to take action if it becomes known that an attempt to re-traffic a returnee should occur. Finally, the Chief of Mission stated that IOM has full confidence in NAPTIP's competence and that the agency undertakes its tasks very seriously.

Concerning the alleged warning by UN, according to TV2 News that victims of trafficking should not be returned to Nigeria the Chief of Mission stated that IOM is a member of the UN Country Team in Nigeria, and he had never heard that the UN had issued a warning on this.

Concerning allegations that the UN has issued a warning against return of victims of trafficking to Nigeria a Western embassy (B) stated that it was unaware of such a warning.

According to a Western embassy (E) UN has not issued a warning against returning victims of trafficking to Nigeria as reported in the TV2 News. The embassy would certainly have been aware of any such warning issued by the any UN agency at all times. The embassy noted that it would most likely be the UNHCR that would issue a warning but this has not occurred.

Consulted organizations, agencies, embassies and authorities

A Western embassy (A), Abuja

A Western embassy (B), Abuja

A Western embassy (C), Abuja

A Western embassy (D), Abuja

A Western embassy (E), Abuja

Aminat Tope Abdulrahman, National Protection Officer (Human Trafficking), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Abuja

Anne Ikpeme, National Protection Officer (Smuggling of Migrants), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Abuja

Aondoaver A. Kuttuh, Superintendent of Police, Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Women and other related matters (NAPTIP), Abuja

Carol N. Ndaguba, former Executive Secretary/Chief Executive, Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Women and other related matters (NAPTIP), Abuja

John Nanpon Dashe, Assistant Director, Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Women and other related matters (NAPTIP), Abuja

Martin Ocaga, Chief of Mission, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Abuja

Simon Chuzi Egede, Esq., Executive Secretary/Chief Executive, Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Women and other related matters (NAPTIP), Abuja

Terna Tumba, Esq., Chief Intelligence Officer, Nigerian Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Women and other related matters (NAPTIP), Abuja

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Abuja

Abbreviations

COSUDOW – Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women

DIS – Danish Immigration Service

IOM – International Organization for Migration

NAPTIP – National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Women and other related matters

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

UN – United Nations

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

US – United States