

Ahern welcomes Romanian Court Case on Human Trafficking

The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr. Dermot Ahern T.D., today welcomed cooperation between An Garda Síochána and the Romanian authorities which has enabled convictions for people trafficking offences to be secured in Romania.

Three persons were sentenced for offences ranging from the trafficking of human beings to Ireland, illegal possession of firearms and organising a criminal syndicate. The persons involved had returned to Romania from Ireland and were tried there largely on the basis of evidence gathered by An Garda Síochána.

The Minister said : **"I congratulate An Garda Síochána on its co-operation efforts with the Romanian authorities which enabled these convictions to be secured. Tireless efforts are being made by An Garda Síochána to combat the trafficking of human beings into and within Ireland."**

The trafficking for the purposes of labour exploitation involved 28 people including one child being brought to Wexford, paid low wages and required to work long hours in a controlled environment and with a debt of €2,500 to pay. These people were threatened, beaten and sometimes held at gunpoint.

The Minister said: **"The Government is committed to the continued development of an overall strategy to proactively and comprehensively address the issue of human trafficking utilising all the resources of the State including An Garda Síochána. Our aim is to make Ireland a more hostile environment for those who might consider trafficking people into, out of, and within the jurisdiction"**.

2 December 2009

Note for Editors

The case involved trafficking of people to Ireland for the purposes of labour exploitation, organising a criminal syndicate and illegal possession of firearms. Three persons have been sentenced. The gang leader has been sentenced to 7 years imprisonment and his 2 co-accused to 5 years imprisonment. The case involved trafficking of people to Wexford where they had to work long hours in a controlled environment and were debt bonded. As those who have now been sentenced had returned to Romania the case was tried there on foot of evidence transmitted from this jurisdiction.