



NEWS RELEASE

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The Public Prosecution Service pledges to continue to help tackle human trafficking ahead of Anti-Slavery Day

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) for Northern Ireland has been involved in on-going co-operation with prosecution services across the United Kingdom to share the work being done by each of the jurisdictions to combat human trafficking.

Human trafficking is modern day slavery. It is a global problem which knows no borders and subjugates men, women and children in a variety of ways. Control can be exerted on the victims by a number of means including, for example, force, coercion, threats of violence and retention of travel and identity documents.

Last October, the Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland, Barra McGrory QC, attended an historic summit in Edinburgh with his counterparts from across the UK and Ireland. Since then work has been on-going with those prosecution services to meet and to share the good work being done to combat these modern day forms of slavery.

Mairead Lavery, the senior policy lead in human trafficking for the PPS, said:
“Human trafficking is a global problem but it is happening here in Northern Ireland. The PPS is committed to working in co-operation with our criminal justice partners across the UK to give victims the support and confidence they need to come forward.

“As we prepare to mark Anti-Slavery Day, the PPS is collaborating with those partners in a dynamic and strategic way to tackle all types of human trafficking and exploitation.”

Three meetings have taken place since the summit – previously in Belfast and Edinburgh, and most recently in London today (FRIDAY 16th OCTOBER) - with representatives from the UK prosecution and police services. These meetings have included consideration and scrutiny of new legislation introduced throughout the UK in the last year, the sharing of best practice in human trafficking cases and the coordination of cross border elements of the offence.

To follow on from this, Barra McGrory QC will attend a summit in London early in 2016 which will bring together many of the key stakeholders to launch the commitments agreed by the UK prosecution services. It is to be hosted by the Director of Public Prosecutions for England and Wales, Alison Saunders.

The PPS for Northern Ireland has been involved in the drafting of these commitments and looks forward to continuing to work with investigators and prosecutors across the UK to utilise innovative means of dealing with these crimes.

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Notes to Editors:

- *Anti-Slavery Day falls on 18th October every year. It was created by an Act of Parliament to raise awareness of the issues and urge work to eliminate it.*
- *For further information please call PPS Communications on **02890897187** or out of hours officer on **07790 031568**. Email: **ppspressooffice@ppsni.gov.uk***