

Kidnapping for Ransom

Sinai – Yemen - Mexico

Wednesday 12 June 2013, 8am – 9am, CIG - Room 5

Chaired by Ms. Karin Keil, International Delegate of Caritas Internationalis

Speakers

Mr. Ran COHEN

Executive Director, *Physicians for Human Rights Israel*

Mr. Chris HORWOOD

Coordinator, Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat, *DRC's Horn of Africa & Yemen Office*

Fr. Josef Guadalupe VALDES

Director, *Migrant Shelter Piedras Negras Mexico*

Kidnapping of refugees for ransom has become a more and more attractive source of income for human smugglers and –traffickers. Migrants from South-America have been kidnapped and tortured for ransom on their way to the US for several years. The Catholic Church has been providing assistance to victims along the route and has built a wealth of information about the violations and possible ways to assist the victims. The ransom method has been taken over by human traffickers and –smuggler in North Africa and some Arabian countries who kidnap refugees (and migrants) from Sub-Saharan countries to be held for ransom in Egypt and Yemen. During their ordeal the victims are routinely tortured, often while calls with the ransom demand are made to relatives in the countries of origin or in the country of destination.

The side-event aims to raise further awareness on the issue and to address the lack of a coordinated international response.

The organizations that brought global attention to these worrying trends will provide first-hand information, witness reports and evidence. The presentations are followed by an open discussion on steps forward to a more coordinated response.

Coffee & Croissants, sponsored by UNHCR, will be served