**Visit to Organised Crime Unit of Carabinieri to meet Lt Col Tomasetti**

**Friday 23rd March**

In attendance: -

* Anthony Steen, Chairman HTF
* Tamlin Vickers, HTF

Key points: -

* Cooperation with other countries’ police forces is done on an ad hoc basis – there is no permanent communication. Europol and Interpol are both helpful channels.
* A common pattern: a victim arrives in the South of Italy and is exploited in the North.
* Increasingly, victims are also being used as drug ‘mules’.
* The police attitude to victims of trafficking has become increasingly sympathetic in recent years, thanks to the work of Major Bonifazi and others, who work with officers and train them to spot signs of trafficking. This has led to a victim-centred approach rather than a presumption of criminality.
* Repatriation costs are covered by the Interior Ministry, with support from the EU. Article 18 provides that victims should be assisted to reintegrate back home should they wish to do so.
* There is public support for Article 18.
* The classification of human trafficking as an ‘organised crime’ offence enables police to use special powers to fight it – it is easier to start and investigation and sentences are more severe.
* The head traffickers are generally foreign.
* There is a bi-annual report issued by the Interior Ministry which outlines the number and nationality of victims, trafficking patterns etc.