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AMERICA/BRAZIL - Fighting trafficking of women with international emergency telephone help lines

Brasilia (Agenzia Fides) – Increasing numbers of Brazilian women are victims of prostitution exploitation, with the complicity of sex tourism which reaches its peak during the Carnival season. During this period with the arrival of numerous foreign tourists, many in search of "sexual adventure", Brazilian women fall easily into the hands of criminal gangs, which exploit them at home and then ‘export’ them abroad for more prostitution.
To address the phenomenon also in view of international Women’s Day on March 8, various initiatives to support women are planned. A report sent to Fides says the first to adhere to the initiative has been the government of Brazil, but organizers expect participation and cooperation from no less than ten countries in North America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East.
The inter-institutional anti-crime action, (the Catholic Church in Brazil is also participating) has contacted countries with the highest rate of crimes reported. The aim is to guarantee support for women at risk also outside Brazil.
In 2012 Brazil’s Centre for Assistance for Women (international exchange 180) received 80 telephone calls from Brazilian women victims living in foreign countries. The service accepts free calls from Brazilian women abroad and has special help lines with 3 countries: Spain, Portugal and Italy.
Brazilian victims of violence living in Spain can call 900 990 055; from Portugal the number is 800 800 550; from Italy the number is 800 172 211. Brazilian women living in Brazil may also contact the Centre for Assistance to Women, by calling 180.
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