

Media Update

30 July 2015

UNODC

PRESS RELEASE

On World Day against Trafficking in Persons, far more still needs to be done to help victims and end impunity for criminals

Vienna, 30 July 2015 – Each year millions of women, men and children are trafficked for profit. They are sexually exploited, made to undertake demanding and often dangerous work in homes, farms and factories across the globe, and find themselves victims of one of the many other forms of abuse such as forced marriage or organ removal. Yet despite the widespread recognition that this is one of today's most exploitative crimes, action is lacking: more needs to be done to dismantle the organized criminal networks behind this, while at the same time it is critical that assistance to victims be stepped up.

Against this background, and with the second annual [World Day against Trafficking in Persons](#) being marked today, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is calling for definitive and marked action to both end the impunity of traffickers, and to drastically scale-up the much needed support being provided to victims.

UNODC's most recent biennial [Global Report on Trafficking in Persons](#) highlights the true extent of the crime: with at least 152 countries of origin and 124 countries of destination affected by trafficking in persons, and over 510 trafficking flows crisscrossing the world, no country is immune. Coupled with this, society's most vulnerable appear to be ever-more targeted by those responsible for this crime: a full 33 per cent of known victims of trafficking are children, a five point increase compared to the 2007-2010 period. With girls making up two out of every three child victims, together with women, they now account for 70 per cent of trafficked persons worldwide.



The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, under the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which came into force a decade ago represents a major step towards tackling this crime. For the first time, this international instrument called for all acts of human trafficking to be criminalized, including trafficking for sexual exploitation, forced labour, organ removal, domestic servitude and other similar practices.

Yet despite this and other encouraging progress, legislation in some countries still does not always comply with the Protocol and fails to cover all forms of trafficking and their victims, leaving billions of people inadequately protected and vulnerable. In some areas this has resulted in extremely low levels of action against traffickers. Within the period covered by the latest Global Report, some 40 per cent of countries reported less than ten convictions per year, while 15 per cent did not record a single conviction. “This illustrates a level of impunity which is unacceptable and highlights the fact that, at the moment, the traffickers are getting away with their crimes”, said Yury Fedotov, UNODC Executive Director. “The world is facing many grave challenges, and our resources are strained. But we cannot allow unscrupulous criminals to exploit these crises and take advantage of desperation and suffering.”

Juxtaposed against the need for heightened action against criminals, there is an equal urgency to provide support services to those directly affected by traffickers.

Speaking on this, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his [statement](#) for the World Day urged support for the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons: a mechanism which works with NGO partners across the globe to help survivors of this crime, providing shelter, basic health services, vocational training and schooling, as well as psychosocial, legal and economic support. “We must also provide meaningful assistance to those in need, including protection and access to justice and remedies. I applaud the donors who have enabled the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons Fund to assist thousands of people. At the same time, I urge greater contributions to help the many millions of other victims of this crime move forward with their lives.”

As part of UNODC’s public outreach for the World Day, the Office coordinates the global campaign #igivehope which aims to raise awareness around the

plight of survivors of trafficking in persons. More on this can be found at www.endht.org.

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United Nations

MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

World Day against Trafficking In Persons

30 July 2015

Around the world, criminals are selling people for profit. Vulnerable women and girls form the majority of human trafficking victims, including those driven into degrading sexual exploitation.

Trafficked persons are often tricked into servitude with the false promise of a well-paid job. Migrants crossing deadly seas and burning deserts to escape conflict, poverty and persecution are also at risk of being trafficked.

Individuals can find themselves alone in a foreign land where they have been stripped of their passports, forced into debt and exploited for labour. Children and young people can find their lives stolen, their education blocked and their dreams dashed. It is an assault on their most basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Criminal trafficking networks thrive in countries where the rule of law is weak and international cooperation is difficult. I call on all countries to fight money laundering and sign and ratify the UN Conventions against corruption and transnational organized crime, including the latter's human trafficking protocol.

We must also provide meaningful assistance to those in need, including protection and access to justice and remedies. I applaud the donors who have enabled the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons Fund to assist thousands of people. At the same time, I urge greater contributions to help the many million other victims of this crime move forward with their lives.

Every country must join together to overcome this transnational threat by supporting and protecting victims while pursuing and prosecuting the criminals. On the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, let us resolve to act as one in the name of justice and dignity for all.

UNODC

STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, YURY FEDOTOV

World Day against Trafficking In Persons

30 July 2015

Many millions of vulnerable women, men and children are being cruelly exploited – coerced into working in factories, fields and brothels or begging on the street; pushed into armed combat or forced marriages; trafficked so their organs can be harvested and sold.

We are living in an era of many crises and troubles, as United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has warned. Record numbers of people are fleeing war and persecution, and the international community is grappling with acute migration challenges in the Mediterranean, the Balkans, in the Andaman Sea, Latin America and Africa.

For human traffickers, these hardships represent business opportunities.

The world is facing many grave challenges, and our resources are strained. But we cannot allow unscrupulous criminals to exploit these crises and take advantage of desperation and suffering.

No place in the world is safe: the latest Global Report on Trafficking in Persons by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime found that the



trafficking victims identified in 124 states were citizens of 152 different countries.

More and more detected victims of trafficking are children, especially girls under the age of 18.

Over the past decade there has been no significant improvement in the overall criminal justice response to this crime. In the period covered by the Global Report, some 40 per cent of countries reported less than ten convictions per year. Some 15 per cent did not record a single conviction.

This illustrates a level of impunity which is unacceptable and highlights the fact that, at the moment, the traffickers are getting away with their crimes.

30 July is United Nations World Day against Trafficking in Persons, established to raise awareness of the plight of human trafficking victims, and promote and protect their rights.

Let us take this opportunity to give hope to trafficking victims, pledge to do our part and help end this terrible crime.

The first step to taking action is taking this crime seriously.

Governments must ratify and effectively implement the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol on trafficking, to protect trafficking victims, promote cooperation between countries and ensure that criminal traffickers, wherever they are, are brought to justice.

I encourage everyone to educate themselves and help others become aware of the problem.

As consumers, employees and business owners, ordinary citizens can advocate for measures to prevent the use of forced labour in operations and supply chains, and eliminate abusive and fraudulent recruitment practices that may lead to trafficking.

Finally, I urge governments, companies and individuals to support the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons:

www.unodc.org/humantraffickingfund.

Financed solely through voluntary contributions, the Trust Fund works with NGO partners across the globe to identify women, children and men who have been exploited by traffickers, and give them the assistance, protection and support they need.

Since 2011, the Trust Fund has helped some 2,000 victims annually, providing shelter, basic health services, vocational training and schooling, as well as psychosocial, legal and economic support.

Join the #igivehope campaign today and show your solidarity with victims of human trafficking: www.unodc.org/endht.
