

# Media Update

1 December 2018

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## United Nations

### International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

02 December 2018

Today 21 million women, men and children around the world are trapped in slavery, including human trafficking, sexual exploitation, child labour, forced marriage, and child soldiers. International Day for the Abolition of Slavery focuses on the eradication of all modern forms of slavery, and coincides with the date of the adoption of the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.

The United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery has assisted tens of thousands of victims of slavery in more than 90 countries. Governments and business are encouraged to contribute to the Fund in support of victims worldwide. With Slavery is not merely a historical relic.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) more than 40 million people worldwide are victims of modern slavery. Although modern slavery is not defined in law, it is used as an umbrella term covering practices such as forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, and human trafficking. Essentially, it refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power.

In addition, more than 150 million children are subject to child labour, accounting for almost one in ten children around the world.

#### **Facts and figures:**

An estimated 40.3 million people are in modern slavery, including 24.9 in forced labour and 15.4 million in forced marriage.

There are 5.4 victims of modern slavery for every 1,000 people in the world.



1 in 4 victims of modern slavery are children.

Out of the 24.9 million people trapped in forced labour, 16 million people are exploited in the private sector such as domestic work, construction or agriculture; 4.8 million people in forced sexual exploitation, and 4 million people in forced labour imposed by state authorities.

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced labour, accounting for 99% of victims in the commercial sex industry, and 58% in other sectors.

ILO has adopted a new legally binding Protocol designed to strengthen global efforts to eliminate forced labour, which entered into force in November 2016.

The 50 for Freedom campaign aims to persuade at least 50 countries to ratify the Forced Labour Protocol by 2018.

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