



STATEMENT OF THE NGO COMMITTEE TO STOP TRAFFICKING
IN PERSONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION
OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM
AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE (2014)

The 2012 ILO report estimates 21 million people are victims of human trafficking enslaved as forced laborers, domestic workers, sexually exploited or child soldiers- situations that they cannot leave without serious consequences.

Sexual exploitation constitutes 79% of “modern slavery” with 95% of those victimized being women and girls. Another 18+% are trafficked for forced labor, also including large numbers of women and girls. Additionally, many women and girls who are trafficked are never identified: they are lost because they are victims of multiple discriminations- gender as well as from the most vulnerable segments of societies- the poor, minority populations, refugees, and migrants. Often people trafficked for one purpose are later trafficked in another form. Trafficking is one of the most insidious forms of violence against women and girls.

Trafficking of women and girls is unique among forms of gender violence because it is fueled by criminal activity. Trafficking, along with illicit arms trading and drugs, are the three most lucrative illicit businesses worldwide. In May the ILO tripled its estimate of the annual profits from forced labor to US \$150 billion annually; 2/3 of which is from commercial sexual exploitation. The ILO further reported that the annual profit per victim of sexual exploitation is US\$ 21,800.

One key area for action to eliminate trafficking is to address demand. Ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, is the essential international framework for fighting trafficking. Nationally, strengthening the implementation of legislation and punishments will reduce the number of perpetrators of violence will reduce demand. The engagement of all stakeholders- States, local authorities, civil society, international organizations, the private sector and individuals- is critical to ending the trafficking of women and girls.

Also, as the root causes and contributing factors of trafficking can be found in countries of origin, transit and destination, bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international initiatives and information exchange are important in addressing commercial sexual exploitation.

Ending human trafficking requires an approach that is holistic, coordinated, multidisciplinary and adequately funded. It needs to encompass poverty reduction, gender equality, human rights and women's empowerment in development, education, labor, and governance.

Prevention is the ultimate goal, but ensuring the human rights of victims and survivors of trafficking and other forms of violence against women, including access to justice and full rehabilitative services, is a moral obligation we must take seriously. The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, provides such assistance and should to be vigorously supported.

The current HeForShe campaign of UN-Women that is engaging men worldwide to speak out for gender equality and women's human rights is an excellent model for moving to a world free of violence against women.

The NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons is a consortium of organizations dedicated to the eradication of human trafficking in all its forms through education, advocacy, research and monitoring compliance with UN protocols, laws and resolutions. See our website www.ngocstip.org