



On International Human Rights Day, NGOCSTIP Cites Importance of a Human Rights-Based Approach to Fighting Human Trafficking

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” The adoption of the UDHR – the first global commitment to the equality of all people regardless of race, color, gender, age, ethnicity, religion or other status – is celebrated every year on December 10.

Civil, political, social, economic or cultural rights are inherent to the dignity of all persons. The denial of one right may impede the enjoyment of others. Thus, human rights are indivisible, interdependent, and interrelated.

Human trafficking is a violation of many fundamental human rights. States and other duty-bearers are responsible for the observance of human rights and compliance with legal norms and standards enshrined in international human rights instruments. States that fail to criminalize trafficking fully or to enforce existing law are failing in their obligation to protect victims of trafficking and to prevent future trafficking.

A human rights-based approach to fighting human trafficking is based on international human rights standards and guided by policies and practices that promote and protect the human rights of all rights holders. Though many legal instruments related to trafficking are not strictly “law” but “soft law,” they aid in formulating policies that protect the rights of trafficking victims.

An essential component of a rights-based approach to combating human trafficking is full participation by communities, civil society, women, minorities, and other affected groups to inform and monitor action.