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GLO.ACT – An African Perspective

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Prosecutor General of Egypt, Justice Nabeel Ahmed Sadek *, Head of the Egyptian Inter-Ministerial Committee, Ambassador Naela Gabr * Representative of the African Prosecutors Association, Deputy Attorney General of Angola, Dr. Pascoal Antonio * Head of the European Union Delegation to the Arab Republic of Egypt, Ambassador Ivan Surkoš * Immigration Attaché at the Embassy of Italy to the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mr. Fabrizio Malavasi * Regional Representative of UNODC for Middle East and North Africa, Ms. Cristina Albertin, Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen...

Good Morning

I am truly delighted and honored to be part of this significant and important conference, partly because I am an African woman wanting to make a difference to the continent (no matter how small), but also because I was the GLO.ACT Project Coordinator till June 2018 and when asked, was more than happy to support the delivery of this conference and give a snapshot of the work of GLO.ACT.

So, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present at this AFRICA – EUROPE Prosecutors Conference on International Judicial Cooperation on Investigation and Prosecution of Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling.

My presentation is titled GLO.ACT – An African Perspective and is structured as follows: I will provide a brief overview of GLO.ACT and the participating countries. I will then touch on examples of facilitating cooperation that have been supported by GLO.ACT and how a network of people specialised in TIP and SOM can make a difference in cases.

GLO.ACT is a 4 year project and it stands for the Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants. It is an €11 million joint initiative by the European Union and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) being implemented in partnership with the International

Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). GLO.ACT has reached thirteen countries across Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America with an overall objective of preventing and addressing Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and the Smuggling of Migrants (SOM). GLO.ACT works with the 13 countries to plan and implement strategic national counter-trafficking and counter smuggling efforts through a prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships approach. We believe such an approach is best suited when addressing not only weaknesses in any criminal justice system but also when ensuring that adequate assistance and support programmes are put in place for victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants. The value of our partners IOM and UNICEF are crucial in this regard. All 13 countries have made real progress implementing GLO.ACT and continue to hold regular coordination meetings with national institutions and implementing partners, ensuring that strategic points for project delivery have been discussed with government officials from the participating countries, the EU delegations, UNODC, IOM, UNICEF, and civil society. We have made a conscious effort to identify some best practices examples when implementing the project across the globe – for example cooperation mechanisms. The global nature of the project does indeed mean that we are building a ‘community of practice’ that can learn from each other.

In Africa, GLO.ACT operates in five countries - Egypt, Morocco, Mali, Niger and South Africa.

Egypt: Source, transit, and destination for TIP and SOM.

Morocco: Source country for SOM. It is also a transit country or destination for migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere unable to proceed to Europe.

Mali: Source and transit country for SOM and TIP and to some extent destination for TIP and SOM.

Niger: Primarily source and transit for country for TIP and SOM. A high percentage of migrants from West Africa en route to Europe via Libya travel through Niger

South Africa: Primary destination for TIP and SOM from Asia (China, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) and rest of Africa. Also source and transit country for TIP and SOM towards Europe and North America.

12 UNODC National Project Officers are based in field offices across 12 countries. For this conference, we are delighted to have Banele Kunene from

South Africa, Laouali Sadissou from Niger, Moulaye Arby from Mali, Sara Bentefrit from Morocco and our host Faisal Hegazy from Egypt. The GLO.ACT national staff in many respects should be seen as highly valued assets for project delivery, very much owning the success of the project to date together with the government authorities that they closely engage with on a regular basis. Having GLO.ACT funded National Project Officers in each participating country has been hugely beneficial to project implementation in terms of localization, ownership and sustainability of the project. This management structure is considered a best practice. I will now give examples of regional cooperation where engagement with government authorities from different countries has been successful.

In **South Africa** - UNODC and the Africa Prosecutors Association (APA) supported three litigation surgeries on trafficking in persons. The main aim of these litigation surgeries are to build a healthy body of jurisprudence on TIP in the region and, consequently, to increase the number of convictions obtained in the region. What sets these seminars apart from regular seminars on TIP are that they are inherently practical because they deal with actual cases. The GLO.ACT supported workshop enabled prosecutors from South, East and North Africa discuss actual TIP cases that they were working on. Discussions focussed on the prosecution strategy, whether or not a TIP charge can be made, how to prepare such a charge, evidential challenges cases may present and the leading of a witness during the trial itself. The prosecutors also discussed borderline cases and how to best prove the element of TIP in court. The next surgery is next week (September 2018) in Livingstone/South Africa and our colleague Banele is here and he will be happy to provide further information.

In **Mali, Niger and Morocco** - A sub-regional workshop in April 2018 brought together representatives of the national authorities of Mali, Morocco and Niger responsible for combating the SOM. These three countries are particularly impacted by this crime, which, in recent years, has not only increased but has also become more complex.

Niger represents a crossroads for irregular migration and TIP and its position as a key transit country is unquestioned. Laouali is also here and can provide further information.

Mali is also a country of origin and transit for migrants, characterized by significant population movements within its borders and beyond its borders.

Morocco, a country of origin, transit and destination, is part of the migration route to Europe with only 15 km separating the shores of Morocco with those of Spain. Sara, who is new to the team is also here and can provide further information.

Upon conclusion of the sub-regional meeting between Mali, Niger and Morocco a set of recommendations were finalised, one of which was to prepare a tripartite judicial cooperation project between Morocco, Niger and Mali, based on the model of the tripartite convention between Niger, Mali and Chad.

UNODC recently hosted a workshop promoting regional cooperation for members of the West African Network of Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organised Crime ([WACAP](#)). Held in Vienna, the two-day event brought together over 20 participants from eight West African countries: Mali, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana, the Gambia, Nigeria and Senegal. You will hear more about WACAP in another presentation by my colleague from UNODC HQ Marion Marion Ehalt in the session on *The Role of International, Regional and National Bodies in Cooperation, Coordination and Sharing Information*.

In 2011, the first Ibero-American network of Public Prosecutors on Trafficking in Persons was set up in Latin America. This network, comprises of prosecutors representing 23 Latin American countries as well as Spain, works as a platform that has enabled prosecutors over the last few year to exchange information on TIP cases, promote joint investigations and facilitate operational results. GLO.ACT together with UNODC Brazil, UNODC Colombia as well as the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) facilitated the third meeting of the Ibero-American Network of Prosecutors on TIP and SOM. At the end of the meeting 17 prosecutors representing countries from Latin America and Spain signed a declaration and guidelines of action, expressing their commitment to strengthening regional cooperation on the identification and prosecution of TIP and SOM cases.

These are just some examples where cooperation has worked in the prosecution of TIP and SOM cases.

In Egypt, the Prosecutor General office has been a strategic partner of UNODC since the start of the implementation in October 2017. In 2017 GLO.ACT conducted 2 training workshops for 46 prosecutors on the investigation and prosecution of SOM and TIP cases and 119 prosecutors in 2018. A 2 year plan was subsequently made for training workshops targeting 600 prosecutors. This intervention has created a rise in awareness and knowledge on the TIP and SOM phenomena including the importance of digital investigations. Next month GLO.ACT will support one Training of Trainers for 12 Chief Prosecutors on TIP and SOM in addition to another 11 training workshops on TIP and advanced investigative techniques. This approach helps create sustainability and institutionalization within national structures. For example, The TIP and SOM modules are now included at the Prosecution Academy for new prosecutors.

In recognising issues and challenges such as the lack of data, lack of legislation, limited understanding of the concepts of TIP and SOM we also continually hear the saying – **It takes a network to defeat a network.**

Prosecutors are key criminal justice actors who test the effectiveness of legislation in courts and are also a very influential in legislative reform, as they are able to conduct evidence-based advocacy for improvement of legislation.

You will soon hear from my colleague Mr Papadimitrou who will talk about tools to enhance international cooperation. But worth a mention is that the promotion of international and regional cooperation is critical to obtaining information and evidence necessary to investigate and prosecute cross-border crimes such as TIP and SOM.

As I come to the conclusion of my presentation, I want to draw your attention to the first sentence of the conference concept note which resonated with my personal experience and it says: *' Situations of armed conflict or instability, lack of work opportunities and highly strained economies in the African continent force people to migrate to improve their lives'*

If I may, I want to relate a personal experience - More than 45 years ago, I was a child living in a country going through conflict. I was surrounded by adults and children in fear of losing their lives, people trying to run away to a place of safety.

There was no water, no electricity, no food, schools were closed and as I hid under the bed with my brothers and sisters, I remember asking myself - Who knows we are here? Who will rescue us? Those questions, which ran through my head over 45 years ago, are still relevant today. Will anyone **act to protect us**? The question now is - has anything changed?

When there is conflict, people will try to move to a place of safety. In conflict situations, criminals not only take advantage of the disorder and chaos they also take advantage of people's fear of being attacked or harmed. ...they take advantage of people's vulnerability and exploit them.

In conclusion, I would like to say - A society will be judged by how it treats its people. Everyone should live in a place where there is **peace**, where they feel safe and have **equal** access to everything from education to jobs and healthcare. There is a global commitment to create a better world where everyone can live in peace and prosperity. Its called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, prosperity, and peace and justice. We should work towards reducing inequality within and between countries and on peace, justice and strong institutions.

A special thanks to representatives of the Egyptian authorities, the European Union, the government of Italy, UN colleagues and distinguished participants who have travelled from all over Africa and from Europe.

Finally, I especially want to express my sincere gratitude to Cristina, Fasial, Simone and UNODC colleagues in Cairo for the token of recognition for the work under GLO.ACT and which I share with the UNODC GLO.ACT colleagues who are located across the globe and at UNODC HQ Vienna.

Thank you.