

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice 2018

Human Trafficking is a Harsh Reality Crime Prevention Strategies Against Human Trafficking The Experience of Colombia

Organised by the Government of Colombia and UNODC Colombia

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16 May 2018/1:10-2:00pm
Vienna-Austria

Good afternoon and thanks to the distinguished panellists and to the audience for the opportunity to deliver a short speech at this important side event on *Crime Prevention Strategies, the experience of Colombia* and to an event that recognises that human trafficking is indeed a harsh reality.

As a basis for my remarks, please let me quote two definitions:

The first is **Article 9** of the **Trafficking in Persons Protocol** which is about *Prevention of trafficking in persons* and remains the only and first international definition of human trafficking. Article 9 states that *States Parties shall endeavour to undertake measures such as research, information and mass media campaigns and social and economic initiatives to prevent and combat trafficking in persons.*

The second definition is on **Crime Prevention** and is from the Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime, Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/13. It states that *'Crime Prevention comprises strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes occurring, and their potential harmful effects on individuals and society, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes.'*

Human trafficking has been moving up the political agenda, thanks to the attention it has received, not just at the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice but in the Security Council, the General Assembly, from Special Rapporteurs and Representatives, the engagement of United Nations entities, international, regional and non-governmental organizations, and awareness-raising efforts. The issue has also caught the attention of the public, businesses, civil society, the media, and celebrities who are naturally appalled by this crime and want to do something about it. The growing number of States Parties to the Trafficking in Persons Protocol (173 countries to date) is a clear expression of political will of Member States. It is indeed a harsh reality.

I sit here in my capacity as the GLO.ACT Project Coordinator. For those of you who don't know GLO.ACT – is derived from the word Global Action and it is the Global Action Against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, a four year joint initiative between the EU and UNODC being implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). GLO.ACT is being delivered in 13 strategically selected countries across Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America, focussing on assistance to

governmental authorities, civil society organizations, victims of trafficking and smuggled migrants. In Latin America, activities are being delivered in Colombia and Brazil. GLO.ACT works with the 13 selected countries ensuring that a prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership approach is adopted.

To date, GLO.ACT has delivered more than 120 activities across the globe and has led or supported awareness raising campaigns in countries on both Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants. I will mention only three examples:

- The government of **Brazil** is currently developing information and promotional material to be rolled out in the run up the World Day Against Trafficking on 30 July 2018;
- **Colombia** – The #NotReal campaign and my colleague Carlos will say something about that.
- The government of **Niger** supported a national awareness raising campaign and national conference and held three national debates on trafficking in persons and
- In the **Kyrgyz Republic** – A nationwide awareness raising campaign was devoted to the World Day against Trafficking in Persons (30 July). For the first time a nationwide awareness raising campaign called the “100 days against trafficking in persons” was delivered jointly between 31 July to 20 November 2017 by local government authorities in seven regions of the country and in partnership with over 15 civil society organizations. The campaign was captured in a film and together with a report, will showcase results of the campaign, its impact including information of media coverage as well as campaign participants.

But let me conclude by saying that we all need to be aware of certain assumptions on awareness raising interventions. These assumptions are

- That Crime Prevention will increase people’s awareness of TIP and hence lead to a reduction in risky behaviour.
- That reducing TIP in one geographic location or among one criminal group alone will reduce the level of trafficking overall (rather than displace it to another location or criminal group)
- That Knowledge and skills learned in training workshops will directly translate into effective practical action in response to TIP

It is important to be aware of these assumptions because we should understand what impact awareness raising interventions can and cannot have. In short, prevention of trafficking is interlinked with all other responses to addressing trafficking and therefore must be undertaken in a concerted and holistic way which acknowledges the complexity of trafficking in persons.

To mark the 11 th EU Anti Trafficking Day last year, GLO.ACT organized an exhibition entitled "**Hear their voices. Act to protect.**" The exhibition featured testimonies of victims of human trafficking and were obtained from countries around the world. **Hear their voices. Act to protect** is simple message but one with substance. We must listen to the voices of victims so that we can better inform programming, improve and strengthen our response and, most importantly, meet our obligations to victims. So **Have a heart for Victims of Trafficking. Hear their Voices. Act to Protect.**

Thank You to the Government of Colombia for the spirit of collaboration, to my own colleagues from UNODC and also to you ladies and gentlemen.