

# **TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND GIRLS: MEETING THE CHALLENGE TOGETHER**

**International Conference  
ECOSOC Chamber  
United Nations, New York  
5 March 2007**

## **CONCEPT PAPER**

### **1. Background**

The international conference on trafficking in women and girls is organised as a part of the thematic informal debate of the General Assembly on gender equality and empowerment of women. The conference will focus on the ways of improving the coordination of efforts – at the national, regional and global levels – against trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as strengthening gender-sensitive approaches in all anti-trafficking efforts. The conference will coincide with the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women which this year will focus on discrimination and violence against the girl child.

In 2000 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The Protocol entered into force on 25 December 2003, and to date has 117 signatories and 111 parties. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the guardian and custodian of that protocol. The protocol provides the definition of a crime of “trafficking in persons” and legal tools to combat human trafficking. The plight of trafficked women and children was highlighted as women and children are most vulnerable to trafficking and comprise vast majority of victims.

In 2006 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution 61/144 “Trafficking in women and girls” initiated by the delegation of the Philippines. It deals with different aspects of trafficking in women and girls and stresses the important role of a strong gender approach towards rights-based strategies in combating this crime.

Growing public awareness of the need to deal effectively with the crime of human trafficking and intensification of national and international counter-trafficking efforts need to be complemented with a sound coordination framework which would bring together the potential and capabilities of all interested partners in a concerted and effective way. The United Nations is best positioned to act as a key focal coordination point in the global campaign against human trafficking.

In its resolution 2006/27 the UN Economic and Social Council decided that the United Nations offices, funds and programmes along with other international organisations should meet and discuss the ways of enhancing cooperation on trafficking in persons, eliminating gaps and overlaps in the activities in this area.

In 2006 the United Nations General Assembly adopted its resolution 61/180 “Improving coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons” initiated by the delegation of Belarus. The resolution stresses the need to foster a global partnership against trafficking in persons and toward this end invites Member States to consider the advisability of a United Nations strategy or plan of action on preventing trafficking in persons, prosecuting traffickers and protecting and assisting victims of trafficking.

The resolution also establishes the inter-agency coordination group on trafficking in persons. It spells out its modalities and entrusts the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime with coordinating the activities of the group.

## 2. Objectives

- to analyse the current state and degree of coordination of efforts of national governments, international organisations and civil society to fight trafficking in persons;
- to identify gaps and obstacles on the way to an coordinated and coherent response by the international community and elaborate measures and consider further actions to improve coordination of efforts;
- to discuss the ways of ensuring holistic and comprehensive response of the international community to the challenge of trafficking in women and girls, including through new partnerships and improved coordination of efforts;
- advocate for gender-based and gender-sensitive anti-trafficking measures as an indispensable approach to rights-based anti-trafficking strategies;
- to consider a plan of possible further actions of the United Nations in this regard

## 3. Participants

The conference is organised by the Permanent Missions of Belarus and the Philippines to the United Nations, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Vital Voices Global Partnership, in partnership with UNICEF, IOM, Interpol, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues and International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences and other partners.

All Member States, international organisations, media and NGOs interested and active in the efforts to fight trafficking in women and girls are kindly invited to participate in the conference.

## 4. Tentative programme

1. Morning session (Social and Economic Council Chamber, 10 am – 1 pm)

**Panel discussion: Trafficking in women and girls: towards a comprehensive, coordinated and rights-based response**

- the importance of rights-based and gender-sensitive approaches to all anti-trafficking efforts;

- addressing comprehensively the chain of trafficking in women and girls (supply, transit and demand);
- the role of national and international partnerships in prevention of trafficking in women and girls, protection of its victims and prosecution of its perpetrators;
- the impact of improved coordination of anti-trafficking efforts of governments, international organisations, civil society and media on fighting the trade in women and girls.

2. Afternoon session (Social and Economic Council Chamber, 3 pm - 6 pm)

- Screening of a documentary: National efforts in combating trafficking in women and girls (the experience of Belarus)
- Presentation: United Nations anti-trafficking roadmap: towards an effective coordination mechanism (UNODC)
- Open debate: Role of the United Nations in improving the coordination of actions against trafficking in women and girls: approaches and perspectives

## 5. Expected outcome

Key lessons are identified with a view to assist further efforts of Member States, UN agencies and NGOs to elaborate the system-wide coordinated United Nations plan of actions against human trafficking. A summary of the International Conference will be prepared.

## 6. Contacts

### Permanent Mission of Belarus to the United Nations:

Mr. Uladzimir Gerus, Counsellor  
Mr. Andrei Metelitsa, First Secretary

136 East 67<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10021

Tel. +1 212 772 2354

Tel. +1 212 734 1689

Fax. +1 212 734 4810

e-mail: [gerusv@mail.ru](mailto:gerusv@mail.ru)

e-mail: [andrei\\_metelitsa@hotmail.com](mailto:andrei_metelitsa@hotmail.com)

### United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Ms. Lucie Hrbkova  
Programme Officer

One United Nations Plaza  
DC1-0613 New York, NY 10017

Tel. +1 212 963 5634

Fax. +1 212 963 4185

e-mail: [hrbkova@un.org](mailto:hrbkova@un.org)

### Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations:

Ms. Marie Yvette Banzon-Abalos,  
Second Secretary

556 Fifth Avenue, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10036

Tel. +1 212 764 1300, ext. 23

Fax. +1 212 840 8602

e-mail: [mybanzon@dfa.gov.ph](mailto:mybanzon@dfa.gov.ph)

### Vital Voices Global Partnership

Ms. [Wenchi Yu Perkins](#)  
Director of Human Rights

1150 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite  
600 Washington, DC 20036

Tel: 202-861-2825 x 3015

Fax: 202-861-4290

e-mail: [WenchiYuPerkins@VitalVoices.org](mailto:WenchiYuPerkins@VitalVoices.org)