

Enhancing Effective and Victim-Centred Criminal Justice Responses to Trafficking in Persons in Rwanda—Training on Investigation and Prosecution of Trafficking in Persons Cases in Rwanda

KIGALI – On 20 - 22 December 2017, participants and UNODC experts had lively discussions and exchanges about how to best address Trafficking in Persons cases in Rwanda and follow a victim-centred approach. UNODC together with the Government of Rwanda and in cooperation with the IOM, hosted a 3-day Training of Trainers Workshop with the goal of enhancing the investigation and prosecution of Trafficking in Persons cases whilst simultaneously ensuring a victim-centred approach.

Within the framework of the *UNODC Global Programme against Trafficking (2008 – 2018)* and *Regional Programme for Eastern Africa on Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in Eastern Africa (2016 – 2021)*, the event was held at the Golden Tulip La Palisse Hotel in Nyamata with financial support of the U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. The event brought together 26 experts from the Rwanda National Police, Rwanda Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration, and National Public Prosecution Authority including Witness/Victims Support Unit.

The meeting was opened by Mrs. Providence Umurungi, Head of International Justice and Judicial Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Justice, together with Mr. Denis Test, Political Officer of the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda. Welcoming words from the Regional Representative of UNODC Regional Office for Eastern Africa, Mr. Amado de Andrés, were read on behalf of UNODC. Mrs. Umurungi thanked the UNODC for hosting the meeting and for supporting the Government of Rwanda in strengthening its criminal justice system to counter human trafficking. She also mentioned that “Human Trafficking is a new trend of transnational organized crimes that the world is facing today, and Rwanda is not left behind by this phenomenon”, and further noted that the training will greatly assist its officials in operationalising the anti-trafficking law in which the enactment is currently in progress. In turn, Mr. Test emphasised the importance of addressing an improved criminal justice response in Trafficking in Persons cases since this crime robs persons of their personal freedom and dignity. In addition, UNODC stated that Trafficking in Persons continues to pose serious threats to Eastern Africa and beyond, which requires more coordinated approach and strategy among law enforcement agencies, such as immigration, workplace inspectors, police, and judiciary to counter human trafficking more forcefully. As such, more cooperation, more determination to arrest, detain and prosecute the guilty perpetrators is required to fight the crime. Effective criminal justice responses to this complex crime is crucial and therefore UNODC, as guardian of UNTOC and its supplementary Protocols, supports Member States to create and strengthen national capacity to counter human trafficking by providing technical advice and capacity building assistance.

During the 3-day multidisciplinary and multi-sectorial training, law enforcement and immigration officers, prosecutors and witness/victim support officers learned about the complexity of investigations and prosecutions of possible situations of Trafficking in Persons while ensuring an approach focused on providing assistance and assistance to potential victims. In accordance with the *United Nations Anti-Trafficking Manual for Criminal Justice Practitioners*, the training programme included the following modules: *International Legal Frameworks and Definition of Trafficking in Persons; Indicators of Trafficking in Persons; Control Methods used against Victims of Trafficking; Psychological Reactions of Victims of Trafficking; Interviewing Victims of Trafficking and Child Victims;*

Victims' Needs in Criminal Justice Proceedings; Protection and Assisting Trafficking Victims-Witnesses; Risk Assessment in Trafficking Investigations; Trafficking Crime Scenes and Identifying Evidence; International Cooperation in Trafficking Investigations; Use of Interpreters; Compensation for Victims; and Sentencing Considerations in Trafficking Cases.

The training was facilitated by Derek Marsh, UNODC international expert, Pascale Reinke-Schreiber, Associate Expert at the UNODC Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section and Siji Song, Associate Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer from the UNODC Regional Office for Eastern Africa, through hands-on exercises and case studies on criminal investigations, and knowledge sharing. At the end of the training, participants were prepared to support their respective institutions in the application of the Palermo Protocol to counter human trafficking in Rwanda. In particular, the participants' interest in and understanding of a victim-centred approach will serve as a good basis for more effectively addressing Trafficking in Persons cases in Rwanda.

Pictures:









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