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United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



COUNTERING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

BRIEFING NOTE

Background and purpose

Trafficking in persons is a serious crime that affects every country in the world. Conflicts that arise in countries or other geographical areas can exacerbate vulnerability to trafficking, as well as its prevalence and severity. As State and non-State structures weaken, and as people turn to negative coping strategies in order to survive, not only does the risk of falling victim to trafficking increase, but so too does the risk of perpetrating it against others. At the same time, conflict also increases the demand for goods and services provided by exploited persons and creates new demands for exploitative combat and support roles. United Nations entities and other international actors active in settings affected by conflict have a crucial role to play in preventing and countering trafficking in persons.

The present briefing note summarizes the *Thematic Paper on Countering Trafficking in Persons in Conflict Situations* (UNODC, 2018), which was drafted for the purpose of supporting United Nations entities in their efforts to integrate the subject of trafficking in persons into their work relating to conflict or post-conflict situations, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2331 (2016).

Definition and elements of trafficking in persons

Trafficking in persons is addressed in the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing

the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Trafficking in Persons Protocol). The Protocol provides a comprehensive framework for cooperation between States parties and sets out minimum standards for victim protection to complement the wider framework of international law, including international human rights law. The Protocol requires States parties to criminalize the offence of trafficking as defined in its article 3 (a). That definition comprises three elements:

- (a) An “act” (recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons);
- (b) A “means” by which that act is committed (threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person);
- (c) A “purpose” of exploitation, regardless of what type.

The “means” element is not a requisite for the definition of trafficking in persons when the victim is a child; any act committed for an exploitative purpose is sufficient to establish the trafficking of a child as an offence.

Even though the forms of exploitation that occur in settings affected by conflict may also occur in other contexts, conditions of conflict are often more likely to engender such exploitation or to exacerbate its prevalence and severity. Some forms of exploitation, identified through research on exploitative practices in settings affected by conflict,

have emerged as specific to the context of conflict, including but not limited to the following:

- Sexual exploitation of women and girls by members of armed and terrorist groups
- Use of trafficked children as soldiers
- Removal of organs to treat wounded fighters or finance war
- Enslavement as a tactic of terrorism, including its use to suppress ethnic minorities

Consent of the victim to exploitation is irrelevant in cases where any of the means have been used in relation to an adult victim, and is always irrelevant where the victim is a child.

Linkages between trafficking in persons, human rights abuses and other phenomena

Many United Nations actors do not have a specific mandate to address trafficking in persons. However, there may be linkages between trafficking in persons and other crimes or situations that they do have a mandate to

address. A better understanding of trafficking and its intersection with these other phenomena can support the integration of responses to trafficking in persons into existing mandates.

Smuggling of migrants is defined in article 3 of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Smuggling of Migrants Protocol), as “the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.” Trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants are often confused, although they are distinct crimes comprising unique elements.

In practice, what looks like a situation of smuggling of migrants may prove on closer examination to be a situation of trafficking in persons. For instance, a person may believe that he or she has paid a smuggler in order to reach safety or to find decent work elsewhere, but instead ends up in a situation of exploitation as the smuggler also traffics him or her, or passes him or her onto someone else for that purpose.

SIX KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

- 1. Trafficking does not necessarily involve a person being taken across a border.** A person can be trafficked within a single country or region.
- 2. There is no single profile of a victim of trafficking.** Victims of trafficking can be rich or poor, men, women, children, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex, migrants in regular or irregular situations or asylum seekers.
- 3. There is no single profile of a human trafficker.** Traffickers can be members of organized criminal groups, or friends or family members of the victim.
- 4. Trafficking can be for any exploitative purpose,** including for sexual, labour, criminal, combat or other exploitative purposes.
- 5. Not all people who are exploited are victims of trafficking.** Persons who are exploited are only considered victims of trafficking if acts and means have been used to exploit them (or only acts, in the case of children).
- 6. A person can consent to being exploited, but still be considered as a victim of trafficking.** The use of “means” to obtain a person’s consent makes the consent irrelevant; in cases where the victim is a child, consent is always irrelevant.

Conflict exacerbates the smuggling of migrants, as people in situations of conflict are increasingly forced to turn to smugglers for safe, alternative channels by which to flee from conflict and seek safety or asylum. Those who seek to join armed or terrorist groups may also engage the services of smugglers to facilitate their movement into conflict areas.

Atrocity crimes comprise war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. These are serious international crimes that States are obliged to prevent and that fall within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. Certain acts committed in the context of trafficking may potentially reach a level of gravity characteristic of atrocity crimes.

War crimes can be understood as violations of international humanitarian law for which perpetrators bear individual criminal responsibility under international law. Certain acts or offences associated with trafficking in the context of armed conflict may constitute war crimes.

Crimes against humanity include acts of murder, extermination, enslavement, deportation or forcible transfer, imprisonment or severe deprivation of physical liberty, torture, rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution,

forced pregnancy and other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity. Trafficking in persons, where it is committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population, may amount to a crime against humanity.

Genocide is a crime committed against members of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group who have been targeted because of their membership in such a group. Some acts associated with conflict-related trafficking in persons (such as the sexual enslavement of members of particular ethnic minority groups) may in some extreme situations constitute genocide.

Conflict-related sexual violence includes rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, forced sterilization, forced marriage, forced temporary marriage and any other form of sexual violence against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict. That link may be evident in the profile of the perpetrator, the profile of the victim, a climate of impunity precipitated by a collapse of rule of law or the State, cross-border consequences and/or violations of provisions of a ceasefire agreement. Conflict-related sexual violence may be used as a tactic of war or

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS VS. SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS: DIFFERENCES

- **Geographical.** Trafficking may occur entirely within a single country, whereas smuggling involves crossing international borders.
- **Purpose.** Trafficking is perpetrated for exploitation, whereas smuggling is perpetrated for profit (termed “financial or material benefit”).
- **Consent.** Victims of trafficking may consent to their exploitation, but consent is irrelevant if one of the means has been used (and in all cases where the victim is a child, as means need not be established). Consent is not a defining element of the crime of smuggling; in practice, smuggled migrants may consent to being smuggled but may retract their consent at a later stage, yet still be forced onwards.
- **Exploitation.** Exploitation is the purpose (intention) of trafficking, but is not an element of the smuggling offence. Smugglers often exploit migrants, in which case the smuggling offence is aggravated.
- **Profit.** Profit is not a defining element of trafficking, but traffickers almost always profit from the exploitation of their victims. Profit (financial or material benefit) is the required element and sole purpose of smuggling a person across an international border.
- **Victimhood.** The victim of trafficking is an individual person, whereas the victim of smuggling is the State, at the moment its border is unlawfully crossed in the course of the smuggling. However, smuggled migrants may be victims of other crimes at the hands of smugglers, including violent crimes.
- **Perpetrator.** Traffickers may be members of organized crime groups, the victim’s own family members or friends, or others whose intent is to exploit the victim. Smugglers may be members of organized crime groups, the migrant’s own family members or friends, or others, but are only considered smugglers when they act for financial or material benefit.

terrorism, and can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity or an act of genocide.

Conflict-related sexual violence may occur in the context of human trafficking or entail trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation. For instance, internally displaced refugee women and girls in areas controlled by armed or terrorist groups are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, including in the context of sexual slavery. Local populations may be trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation by armed and non-armed groups. Acts of sexual abuse against men and boys can also increase in conditions of conflict.

Six grave violations against children in armed conflict have been identified in a number of Security Council resolutions and include the killing and maiming of children, the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups, rape and other forms of sexual violence against children, attacks against schools or hospitals, abduction of children and denial of humanitarian access for children. Except for denial of humanitarian access, these violations trigger the listing of parties to armed conflicts in the annexes to the annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict. Furthermore, grave violations fall under the monitoring and reporting mechanism on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict. Trafficking in persons is not one of the six grave violations, but acts constituting grave violations may also amount to human trafficking.

Terrorism is not comprehensively defined in international law but can be understood as comprising acts intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to civilians for the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or international organization to do or not do something. In some situations, terrorist acts may have a strong link to trafficking in persons; the forms of exploitation specified in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol are non-exhaustive, meaning that the definition can capture situations in which people are trafficked for the purpose of being exploited to carry out terrorist activities.

Where terrorist groups finance their activities through profits derived from trafficking in persons, that trafficking offence also constitutes a terrorism-related offence under the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. Examples of such activities may include trafficking in persons for the purposes of ransoming them, selling persons for the purposes of sexual exploitation, reaping the benefits of forced labour or exploiting children for begging. Irrespective of whether or not trafficking is used to fund terrorism, the link between trafficking and terrorism often manifests itself in brutal forms in settings affected by conflict, including the use of children in combat roles, the sexual enslavement of women and children, and their forced marriage to armed combatants.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN "GRAVE VIOLATIONS" AND TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN

- **Killing and maiming of children** can occur as a result of children being trafficked into armed conflicts as combatants, human shields, suicide bombers, or in supportive roles.
- **Recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups** can constitute trafficking in persons, being an act (recruitment) carried out for the purpose of exploitation (use in armed conflict).
- **Rape and other forms of sexual violence against children** can result when children are trafficked for the purpose of forced, temporary or child marriage, sexual slavery or other forms of sexual exploitation.
- **Attacks against schools or hospitals** can occur in the context of trafficking when the objective is to abduct and exploit children.
- **Abduction of children** can constitute trafficking where abduction is found to include exploitation, whether for sexual, combat, terrorist or other purposes.
- **Denial of humanitarian access for children** may involve trafficking, for instance, where a child is denied humanitarian access because he or she is in a trafficking situation.

Integrating the fight against trafficking in persons into conflict-related work

A number of United Nations entities that are active on the ground in settings affected by conflict encounter situations of trafficking and are therefore well-placed to confront them. The following interrelated and cross-cutting measures are offered in support of their efforts to integrate counter-trafficking responses into their work.

Research and information-gathering

Effective research and the collection and analysis of information are essential to formulating evidence-based prevention and protection responses to trafficking in persons, as well as to bringing perpetrators to justice.

United Nations entities and other actors, including non-governmental organizations active in settings affected by conflict, can support research and information-gathering by ensuring that phenomena related to trafficking, including conflict-related sexual violence, gender-based violence and grave violations against children, are flagged as relevant to counter-trafficking efforts. Examples of existing mechanisms that provide support in this way are the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence, which are used to collect data on trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix, which captures data related to trafficking in persons and exploitation in emergencies in order to identify populations of concern, including potential and actual victims of trafficking during crises, including conflicts.

To support better information collection, the understanding of what constitutes trafficking in persons should be harmonized on the basis of the definition in article 3 of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. In settings affected by conflict, disaggregating data on victims and perpetrators by age, gender, ethnicity and other relevant characteristics can lead to a better understanding of risk factors. Further analysis may also address how religious, political, ethnic, economic, cultural and social factors influence traffickers' choices as to which victims to target, the means to use to traffic them and the forms of exploitation to subject them to.

Existing conflict-related assessment tools such as the matrix: early-warning indicators of conflict-related sexual violence (2011), the early-warning indicators of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the *Framework of analysis for atrocity crimes* of the Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect could be enhanced to facilitate the gathering of information in support of the assessment of trafficking risks through the flagging of existing components of potential relevance and the addition of trafficking-related components.

Information that is relevant to trafficking in persons in settings affected by conflict should be securely and efficiently shared with those United Nations entities and State and non-State actors that can effectively use it to address trafficking. It is imperative that any sharing of data or other information be based on robust ethical principles and data protection standards in order to reduce the risk of violating privacy rights.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IV.6)

Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking: Commentary (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.10.XIV.1)

World Health Organization, *WHO Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Researching, Documenting and Monitoring Sexual Violence in Emergencies* (Geneva, 2007)

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Gender and Early Warning Systems: An Introduction* (Warsaw, 2009)

Matrix: early-warning indicators of conflict related sexual violence (2011)



Prevention of trafficking in persons in settings affected by conflict

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out a holistic framework for preventing both trafficking in persons and conflict. For prevention to be effective, anti-trafficking responses must be generated long before the onset of conflict. Even if cases of trafficking have not yet been confirmed, actual or potential risks should be identified and addressed. For instance, counter-trafficking experts and multidisciplinary teams could be deployed to identify the risks faced by those forced to flee conflict, often within large-scale movements of people, and those trapped in it.

Prevention also requires that measures be put in place to address vulnerability by building resilience through livelihood and educational opportunities, ensuring food security, and taking measures to address sex and gender-based violence and forms of discrimination that can lead to the use of negative coping mechanisms. Measures to reduce the vulnerability of those fleeing conflict include providing safe and regular pathways for crossing borders and ensuring the proper birth and marriage registration of non-nationals, including internally displaced persons in camps.

Prevention in settings affected by conflict also requires measures to reduce the demand for exploitative labour and services, particularly as conflict disrupts or depletes the regular workforce. The increased presence of military personnel, including predominantly male armed forces, can fuel demand for sexually exploitative services. Addressing demand as a root cause of exploitation requires strong

evidence of the factors that fuel demand as a basis on which to formulate strategies that are calibrated to specific conflict and post-conflict settings.

Prevention measures can also include raising awareness of the risks of trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Messages must be targeted and actionable; people receive no benefit from being told that smuggling situations can descend into trafficking when they are in situations in which they have no choice but to use the services of smugglers to flee conflict. People at risk of being trafficked into conflict situations, including radicalized youth, may benefit from counter-messages conveyed by means of the same social media tools that traffickers use to recruit them. Anti-radicalization messages from religious leaders and warnings about risks from former victims of radicalization may provide valuable information to vulnerable people.

Trafficking-related training tools that are publically available online can be adapted and integrated into existing training and capacity-building programmes aimed at United Nations personnel deployed in areas affected by conflict.

Protection and assistance

Any response to trafficking must be victim-centred, meaning that the safety and well-being of victims is paramount. United Nations agencies and other actors have a role to play in supporting States in their efforts to fulfil their obligations to protect and assist victims of trafficking. Protection and assistance obligations are not diminished

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1)

Addressing Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Times of Crises: Evidence and Recommendations for Further Action to Protect Vulnerable and Mobile Populations (IOM, 2015)

Toolkit to Combat Trafficking in Persons (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.V.14)

Women, Girls, Boys and Men: Different Needs—Equal Opportunities. Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2006)

United Nations *Peacekeeping Resource Hub*, peacekeeping training resources (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations) (see <http://research.un.org/en/peacekeeping-community/training>)

Stop Abuse: Human Trafficking Resource Package (United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, 2004)



by the onset of conflict; under the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and other applicable international law, victims have the same rights to protection and assistance in conflict and post-conflict situations as they have otherwise. However, in reality, conflict may drastically reduce a State's capacity to fulfil its protection and assistance obligations, which underscores the important role the United Nations and other actors can play in filling gaps in the provision of protection and assistance.

At the outset, mapping exercises can be carried out to identify which State and non-State actors are able to provide direct protection and assistance services to victims or potential victims of trafficking, factoring in any national strategies, plans of action and referral mechanisms already

in place at the local or national level and assessing whether and how their implementation has changed as a result of the conflict.

Victims of trafficking are unlikely to identify themselves as having been trafficked, owing to shame and an often well-founded fear of stigmatization, fear of retaliation by traffickers, fear of authorities or fear of deportation or detention, or because they do not understand their situation. Therefore, the use of trafficking indicators can be helpful for identifying individual victims. Law enforcement personnel, peacekeepers, humanitarian workers and others who engage directly with vulnerable individuals or who may encounter victims or potential victims of trafficking should be provided with indicators of trafficking in

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

National Referral Mechanisms: Joining Efforts to Protect the Rights of Trafficked Persons—A Practical Handbook (OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2004)

Matrix: early warning indicators of conflict-related sexual violence (2011)

Anti-Human Trafficking Manual for Criminal Justice Practitioners: Indicators of Trafficking in Persons (UNODC, 2008)

"Trafficking in persons and refugee status", ICAT Issue Brief No. 3 (2017)

"Operational indicators of trafficking in human beings" (International Labour Organization, 2009)

"Policy guide on identifying victims of trafficking" (Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, 2015)

"Guidelines on International Protection No. 7: the application of 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees to victims of trafficking and persons or at risk of being trafficked" (HCR/GIP/06/07)

Addressing Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Times of Crises: Evidence and Recommendations for Further Action to Protect Vulnerable and Mobile Populations (IOM, 2015)

Policy and Legislative Recommendations Towards the Effective Implementation of the Non-Punishment Provision with regard to Victims of Trafficking (OSCE, 2013)

"Principles and practical guidance on the protection of the human rights of migrants in vulnerable situations" (A/HRC/34/31)

The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking (IOM, 2007)

Toolkit to Combat Trafficking in Persons (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.08.V.14)

Guidelines for the Development of a Transnational Referral Mechanism for Trafficked Persons in Europe: TRM-EU (Department for Equal Opportunities—Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Italy; International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 2010)



persons. Such indicators can be provided on small cards that personnel can carry with them.

Indicators are inconclusive on their own; their purpose is to raise a flag to non-specialists indicating that an individual *may* be a victim of trafficking, whereupon the individual can be referred to a specialist who has been trained to verify whether a person is a victim of trafficking or not and to ensure that the person receives the appropriate services. Indicators are most effective when they are tailored to specific contexts.

In a victim-centred approach, the referral of victims should not be made conditional on their participation in criminal justice processes or in any particular programme or activity. Nor should their access to assistance and protection be limited on the basis of their immigration or other status. In determining where an individual should be referred, actors should bear in mind that victims or potential victims of trafficking may be eligible for international protection as a refugee under the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and/or under regional refugee-related instruments, or may otherwise be eligible for permission to remain on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

A key component of protecting and assisting victims of trafficking is ensuring that they are not criminalized or otherwise punished for acts they have committed as a direct result of being trafficked, regardless of the form the trafficking has taken. Similarly, victims should not be stigmatized. Male and female victims of sexual forms of exploitation and children born in situations of exploitation can be particularly stigmatized. People trafficked by armed or terrorist groups may be mistrusted after they escape or are released from captivity, or may even be subject to prosecution on the sole basis of their perceived

association with the criminals. These concerns are acute in conflict-related trafficking; they hamper the effective identification of victims and deter them from seeking assistance. Security Council resolution 2331 (2016) clarifies that victims of trafficking in persons should be classified as victims of terrorism; the role that this classification can play in mitigating stigmatization should be fully explored.

Investigation and prosecution

Notwithstanding the almost universal ratification of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and widespread enactment of legislation to criminalize trafficking in persons in accordance with it, the level of prosecution of trafficking remains low throughout the world. From the perspective of a trafficker, it is a low-risk, high-profit crime, even in countries not affected by conflict. This underscores the need to strengthen the rule of law, build criminal justice capacity and ensure that protection of and assistance to victims or potential victims is not linked to the outcome of criminal justice proceedings.

Strengthening investigation and prosecution requires that the understanding of what constitutes trafficking in persons be harmonized with international law and that measures to confront trafficking comply with international standards. It also requires that United Nations agencies and other actors active in areas affected by conflict have a clear understanding of the different types of crime they may encounter that could amount to, or be related to, trafficking in persons.

Bringing perpetrators to justice requires that actors that are in a position to do so, such as peacekeeping operations mandated to monitor, assist in investigations into and

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Needs Assessment Toolkit on the Criminal Justice Response to Human Trafficking (UNODC, 2010)

International Framework for Action to Implement the Trafficking in Persons Protocol (UNODC, 2009)

UNODC Human Trafficking Knowledge Portal (www.unodc.org)

Anti-Human Trafficking Manual for Criminal Justice Practitioners (UNODC, 2009)

Evidential Issues in Trafficking in Persons Cases: Case Digest (UNODC, 2017)

UNODC global e-learning module on human trafficking (www.unodc.org/elearning/)



report on violations and abuses of human rights, gather evidence of trafficking in persons in conflict situations so that opportunities to bring perpetrators to justice are not missed. Relevant information should therefore be provided to those who carry out investigations and prosecutions. Financial bodies involved in combating illicit financial flows have a role to play in “following the money” in order to identify and disrupt trafficking-related financial flows to, through, from and within areas affected by conflict.

Victim testimony often constitutes the main or even the only evidence in prosecutions of trafficking. Therefore, non-State actors who work with victims have a key role to play in providing assistance and empowering them to support criminal justice processes, if they so choose. Risks to victims can dramatically increase when they participate in criminal justice procedures against traffickers, underscoring the need for effective witness protection measures.

Beyond the criminal justice framework, other mechanisms may also be leveraged to bring traffickers in persons to account. For instance, where trafficking reaches the level of an atrocity crime, it may fall within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. Sanctions regimes established in Security Council resolutions that allow for asset freezing, travel bans and arms embargos directed at individuals involved in planning, directing or committing acts that constitute human rights abuses or violations could apply to traffickers in some circumstances. Similarly, when designation criteria include involvement in acts that constitute human rights violations and abuses such as trafficking in persons, monitoring groups, teams and panels of experts supporting the work of relevant sanctions committees may collect information of potentially crucial importance for the investigation of traffickers. The opportunities afforded by such mechanisms underscore the need to consider the range of tools available in conflict-related trafficking situations for disrupting and bringing traffickers to justice and facilitating victims’ access to justice.

Cooperation and coordination

Prevention of trafficking, protection of its victims and prosecution of its perpetrators cannot be achieved without effective cooperation between State and non-State stakeholders. The Organized Crime Convention and the Trafficking in Persons Protocol support international cooperation in criminal matters between States parties,

including informal police-to-police cooperation and formal cooperation through mutual legal assistance and extradition. Coordination among United Nations and other non-State entities, in particular with State actors, is essential for ensuring that efforts are complementary and not duplicative.

The complexity of trafficking in persons within, from and to areas affected by conflict makes the diversification of partnerships an urgent priority. To ensure that a range of expertise is effectively channelled, partnerships are needed between State and non-State actors, including international and non-governmental organizations and civil society actors.

In addition, other non-traditional actors outside of the trafficking-related sector must be creatively engaged. The very social media and communications technologies used by traffickers to perpetrate their crimes must also be harnessed as a means of preventing and stopping such crimes.

It is also essential that individuals and groups representing communities affected by trafficking be engaged in combating it, including religious and traditional leaders, faith-based organizations, non-governmental and civil society organizations, academia and community members. In its resolution 2331 (2016), the Security Council emphasized the importance of engaging religious and traditional leaders, paying particular attention to amplifying the voices of women and girls alongside men and boys. In that connection, lessons can be learned from the strategic results framework on women and peace and security, which is aimed at including women and girls in crisis response efforts. Lessons can also be learned from the Secretary-General’s approach to combating sexual exploitation and abuse by encouraging victims to make their voices heard. Such approaches need not be limited to cases of sexual exploitation and abuse; they should also be applied in cases of trafficking in persons, regardless of the form the exploitation takes. Those affected as perpetrators of trafficking may also have a preventative role to play.

States, United Nations entities and other actors must use existing coordination platforms in ways that are mutually supportive and that strengthen rather than detract from effective and efficient cooperation in addressing trafficking in persons in settings affected by conflict.

Among the existing coordination platforms are those described on the following page.

Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT)

This is a United Nations system-wide policy forum and coordination mechanism among United Nations agencies and other relevant international organizations, established pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/27 and reinforced in General Assembly resolution 61/180. The Assembly subsequently adopted the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which called for the strengthening of ICAT to improve coordination and cooperation among relevant United Nations bodies, including in the context of the implementation of the Global Plan of Action. UNODC is the designated coordinator of ICAT.

Composition of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons

Chair

Rotates annually among ICAT Working Group members, which include the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Members

Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat (DPA), United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), ICMPD, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the

Responsibility to Protect, OSCE, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNHCR, UNICEF, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), UNODC, UN Women and the World Bank

Other partners

Council of Europe

Task Team on Anti-trafficking in Humanitarian Action of the Global Protection Cluster

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee and its Global Protection Cluster coordinate much of the international community's humanitarian assistance by drawing together "clusters" of United Nations agencies and non-United Nations organizations. The Task Team on Anti-trafficking in Humanitarian Action, established in 2017, works to strengthen anti-trafficking interventions in humanitarian responses and to provide recommendations and guidance on how to best integrate such interventions systematically in cluster mechanisms.

Composition of the Task Team on Anti-trafficking in Humanitarian Action

Chairs

IOM, UNHCR and Heartland Alliance International

Members

Participation is open to humanitarian and non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, special rapporteurs and other international organizations

Other partners

Experts, donors and/or Governments may be invited as observers to provide technical input or discuss relevant issues

In addition to the above, other cooperation platforms relevant to trafficking in persons or related exploitation are emerging, including the Alliance 8.7 Action Group on Conflict and Humanitarian Settings.

In short, the complex manifestations of trafficking in persons in conflict situations and the broadening range of

actors involved in perpetrating this serious crime and other crimes related to it, underline the need for both diversification of the actors engaged in mounting responses to it and their urgent collaboration in identifying and protecting victims and bringing perpetrators to justice.



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