

Concept Note

High Level Event

Launch of New UNODC Toolkit on the Investigation and Prosecution of Trafficking in Persons for Organ Removal

October 25th, 2022, 01:15pm – 02:45pm (EDT)

United Nations Headquarters, CR-6, New York

The issue: trafficking in persons for organ removal

The international community has been increasingly shining the light on trafficking in persons for organ removal and organ trafficking, two of the most heinous forms of transnational organized crime which are unfortunately growing in scope. Trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal (TIP for OR) is a type of trafficking that exploits victims by removing their organs in order to sell them on the transplant market. TIP for OR is affecting an increasing number of States whose citizens become donors, recipients, or facilitators of the crime.

UNODC's flagship 2020 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons indicated an increasing prevalence of reported cases of trafficking for organ removal, although existing barriers to reporting suggest that the full scale of this phenomenon is not yet known. The widening gap between the supply of available organs and the number of patients waiting for a transplant, coupled with the unprecedented level of economic hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, have increased the risks of exploiting vulnerable persons by criminal groups who engage in this form of trafficking and illicit organ trade.

The handful of prosecuted cases worldwide have revealed a high complexity and unique characteristics of this form of exploitation. Understanding how the crime is commissioned and how to identify deviations from the procedures of legal transplantations are crucial elements of its successful prosecution.

What UNODC does to address this: new Toolkit

Within the framework of the EU funded flagship programme [GLO.ACT](#), UNODC has developed a comprehensive and innovative toolkit on the investigation and prosecution of trafficking for organ removal which is being introduced in this event. The toolkit consists of a virtual reality crime scene investigation tool which allows law enforcement to better identify and collect evidence from medical surgeries and clinical settings, a comprehensive A-Z investigation and prosecution manual and a victim interview protocol.

The toolkit will allow criminal investigators, prosecutors and law enforcement officials to fully understand the methodology for establishing a complex case, the methods of detecting the crime using specialized investigative techniques, what evidence should be gathered and how, and the most effective ways of proving human trafficking cases, including the evidence needed to establish the elements of the crime. Recognizing that TIP for OR is also a violation of human and health rights, this toolkit incorporates a victim-centered as well as a gender-based approach to minimize re-traumatization while empowering victims to pursue redress through the criminal justice system, and a rights-based framework to ensure that comprehensive measures are in place to adequately protect and assist trafficking victims.



UNODC is the guardian of the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol and leads at the global level in supporting Member States in its implementation. UNODC has been delivering technical and legislative assistance to support criminal justice responses to trafficking in persons for organ removal for many years. Expert Group Meetings were convened in 2011 and 2013, followed by the publication of the [Toolkit for the Assessment of Trafficking in Persons for Organ Removal](#) in 2015.

UNODC, along with WHO and OHCHR, were jointly tasked in General Assembly resolutions in [2017](#), [2018](#) and [2020](#) with the development of capacity building programmes as well as guidance for criminal justice professionals on how to address trafficking for organ removal and organ trafficking.

Together with WHO, OHCHR and OSCE, UNODC promotes the importance of multi-agency investigations and prosecutions and of including NGOs in the response to this crime, so that victims are earlier identified, assisted and protected.

High-Level Launch Event

This High-Level Launch event will take place at the margins of the negotiations of a recurring resolution on trafficking in persons for organ removal at the Third Committee, on 25 October 2022, from 1.15pm until 2.45pm.

Participants may register as part of national delegations, international organizations, independent experts or civil society more broadly.

High level segment – 50 mins:

Keynote Opening Statement (Video): Ms. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General

- Ms. Ghada Waly, Executive Director, UNODC
- Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General, WHO (video statement)
- H.E. Mr. Mohammed Hussein Bahr Al-Uloom, Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations
- H.E. Mr. Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations (TBC)
- H.E. Ms. Carla Maria Rodríguez Mancia, Permanent Representative of Guatemala to the United Nations
- H.E. Mr. Agustín Santos Maraver, Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations
- H.E. Mr. Silvio Gonzato, Ambassador, Deputy Head of Delegation of the European Union

Technical segment – 20 mins:

- Ms. Aimée Comrie, Coordinator, GLO.ACT, Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section, UNODC
- Mr. Efstratios Chatzixiros, Adviser, Transplantation Human Organs-Tissues-Cells, WHO
- Representative, the Transplantation Society (TBC)

Moderator: Ms. Delphine Schantz, Representative, UNODC Liaison Office in New York

Q&A – 20 mins

