



# Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

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**Review of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto: Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children**

## **Activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to promote and support the implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime**

### **Report of the Secretariat**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The purpose of the present report is to inform the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, at its tenth session, about the activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to promote and support the implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, since the ninth session of the Conference, in October 2018.

2. The Trafficking in Persons Protocol has a total of 178 parties. Since the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, five additional States have acceded to the Protocol: Palau and Bangladesh became parties in 2019, followed by Brunei Darussalam, Nepal and the Comoros in 2020.

3. UNODC implements a comprehensive strategy to combat trafficking in persons, promoting and supporting the implementation of the Protocol through normative and policy work, knowledge development, inter-agency cooperation and coordination, as well as technical cooperation. Technical cooperation activities include providing legislative assistance to States, developing national strategies and coordination, research and data collection on trafficking in persons, strengthening States' criminal justice responses, promoting international cooperation, advancing crime prevention and awareness-raising and enhancing protection and support for victims.

\* [CTOC/COP/2020/1](#).



4. Since October 2018, UNODC, through its Global Programme against Trafficking in Persons, has trained 2,692 criminal justice practitioners, government officials and civil society representatives (935 female and 1,466 male, plus 291 persons at events for which no gender breakdown was available). The Global Programme undertook targeted technical cooperation activities in 26 countries,<sup>1</sup> with a total of 63 countries represented in national or regional activities of UNODC focused either on trafficking in persons alone or on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. In 2019, under the Global Programme, the Transforming Alerts into Criminal Justice Responses to Combat Trafficking in Persons within Migration Flows (TRACK4TIP) regional initiative was launched in eight countries across South America and the Caribbean<sup>2</sup> to enhance the criminal justice response to human trafficking among flows of Venezuelan migrants in the region. Through its Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT), UNODC carried out more than 100 activities in 16 countries, focused either on trafficking in persons or on both trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. Those activities included training to build the capacities of practitioners and officials and the development of tailor-made curricula in cooperation with national judicial training academies.

## II. Activities to assist States in the implementation of the Protocol

### A. Normative and policy work, knowledge development and inter-agency cooperation and coordination

5. UNODC continued to provide guidance and knowledge-based support to intergovernmental bodies and processes, United Nations agencies and regional intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in promoting and implementing the objectives of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and fostering related synergies and partnerships.

#### 1. Supporting intergovernmental bodies

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6. To support the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons at its ninth meeting, held in Vienna from 9 to 11 September 2019, UNODC drafted background papers on crime prevention measures in trafficking in persons, including good practices and gaps and challenges in responding to trafficking in persons (CTOC/COP/WG.4/2019/2), and on the roles of diplomatic and consular officials or liaison officers in diplomatic and consular missions in addressing human trafficking (CTOC/COP/WG.4/2019/3).

7. In support of the Working Group at its tenth meeting, scheduled to be held in Vienna on 10 and 11 September 2020, UNODC has prepared background papers on appropriate criminal justice responses to victims who have been compelled to commit offences as a result of their being trafficked (CTOC/COP/WG.4/2020/2) and best practices in joint investigation and specialized prosecution (CTOC/COP/WG.4/2020/3).

8. UNODC also supported the development by the Working Group of a questionnaire for the review of the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, which was harmonized with the questionnaires addressing the Organized

<sup>1</sup> Algeria, Angola, Aruba, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Colombia, Congo, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Fiji, Guinea, India, Malawi, Mali, Monaco, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Republic of Moldova, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and Zambia.

<sup>2</sup> Aruba, Brazil, Colombia, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago.

Crime Convention and its other Protocols, in accordance with Conference resolutions 8/2 and 9/1.

9. In this regard, UNODC serviced and provided substantive support for the meetings of the open-ended intergovernmental expert group established in accordance with Conference resolution 9/1, which were held in Vienna from 9 to 11 October 2019 and from 13 to 15 July 2020, and for the informal consultations held on 18 and 19 February 2020 and in virtual format on 22 and 27 April 2020. During those meetings, States parties substantively considered the self-assessment questionnaire for the review of the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, as well as its harmonization with the self-assessment questionnaires on the Organized Crime Convention and its other Protocols, in accordance with Conference resolutions 8/2 and 9/1.

#### *Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*

10. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its twenty-eighth session, held from 20 to 24 May 2019, recommended to the Economic and Social Council a draft resolution for adoption by the General Assembly on countering child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse online, in which, among other things, Member States were called upon to ratify the Organized Crime Convention and the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, taking into account the role of those instruments in the fight against trafficking in children, including for the purpose of sexual exploitation.<sup>3</sup>

11. To promote the Protocol and share promising implementation practices, UNODC co-organized or contributed to several expert briefings in the margins of the session, including the high-level event entitled “EU-UNODC cooperation: preventing and addressing trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling”, held on 20 May 2019; “Addressing hate crimes against refugees and immigrants in Europe and Asia-Pacific”, held on 22 May; “The role of technology in facilitating and addressing sex trafficking”, held on 22 May; and “The missing link: how universities are contributing to transforming practices to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling”, held on 23 May.

12. The twenty-ninth session of the Commission, scheduled to be held from 18 to 22 May 2020, was postponed as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

#### *United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice*

13. The Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, scheduled to be held in Kyoto, Japan, from 20 to 27 April 2020, was postponed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. UNODC, however, prepared a relevant background paper on current crime trends, recent developments and emerging solutions, in particular new technologies as means for and tools against crime (A/CONF.234/11), to support the thematic discussions. The paper elaborates, inter alia, on how technology, including information and communications technology, is increasingly used by traffickers to recruit and exploit victims and by law enforcement to investigate trafficking crimes.

#### *General Assembly*

14. In the reporting period, UNODC provided substantive support to Member States in discussions leading to the development and implementation of General Assembly resolutions relating to trafficking in persons and to the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

15. At its seventy-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution [73/195](#), by which it endorsed the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

<sup>3</sup> See General Assembly resolution [74/174](#), adopted on 18 December 2019.

Objective 10 of the Global Compact includes commitments by Member States to take legislative and other measures to prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration. Member States also committed to taking into consideration recommendations from the UNODC *Toolkit to Combat Trafficking in Persons* and other relevant UNODC documents when developing and implementing national and regional policies and measures relating to trafficking in persons.<sup>4</sup> UNODC actively contributed to the process that led to the adoption of the Global Compact, in particular by providing substantive input on topics related to trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. UNODC also became a member of the Executive Committee of the United Nations Network on Migration, charged by the Secretary-General with assisting States in the implementation of the Global Compact.

16. Also at its seventy-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution [73/189](#), entitled “Strengthening and promoting effective measures and international cooperation on organ donation and transplantation to prevent and combat trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal and trafficking in human organs”. In 2020, UNODC led the drafting of a report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the resolution ([A/75/115](#)), to be submitted to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. The report provides background information on trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal, as well as on trafficking in human organs, and summarizes the related efforts of United Nations entities concerning technical assistance, research and policy development.

17. During the same session, the General Assembly also adopted resolution [73/146](#), on trafficking in women and girls. In the resolution, the Assembly called upon States to ratify the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, as well as other relevant international instruments; to cooperate, including by sharing knowledge, technical expertise and best practices; to intensify their efforts to prevent and address, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters the trafficking of women and girls for all forms of exploitation; to strengthen measures aimed at achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls; and to take into consideration the challenges presented by new methods of recruiting victims of human trafficking, such as the misuse of the Internet by human traffickers, in particular for recruiting children.

18. At its seventy-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution [74/176](#), on improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons. In that resolution, the Assembly welcomed the efforts of UNODC, in cooperation with the United Nations system and relevant international organizations, especially within the framework of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, in coordinating policy responses and in assisting Member States in tackling persistent and emerging trends in the field of trafficking in persons. The Assembly also called upon Member States to, inter alia, address factors that contributed to vulnerability to trafficking in persons in countries of origin, transit and destination; to build private-public partnerships to support prevention efforts; and to prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons in the context of international migration.

#### *Security Council*

19. In October 2018, the Security Council adopted resolution [2437 \(2018\)](#) concerning the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons as well as the inspection and seizure of vessels off the coast of Libya. In that resolution, the Council condemned all acts of migrant smuggling and human trafficking into, through and from the Libyan territory and off the coast of Libya. Subsequently, in October 2019, the Council adopted resolution [2491 \(2019\)](#), in which it reaffirmed the need to put an end to the ongoing proliferation of, and endangerment of lives by, the smuggling of migrants and trafficking of persons in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Libya, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council on the implementation of the resolution. UNODC contributed to the drafting of two reports of the

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<sup>4</sup> General Assembly resolution [73/195](#), annex, para. 26 (b).

Secretary-General on the implementation of those resolutions, focusing on international efforts to combat smuggling and trafficking in the region, including data collection and capacity-building activities.

20. In July 2019, the Security Council adopted resolution [2482 \(2019\)](#), in which it called upon Member States to establish serious criminal offences sufficient to prosecute and penalize in a manner duly reflecting the seriousness of the offence of trafficking in persons; to investigate, disrupt and dismantle organized criminal networks involved in trafficking in persons in accordance with national legislation, including anti-money-laundering, anti-corruption and anti-bribery laws and, where appropriate, counter-terrorism laws; and to increase capacity to conduct proactive financial investigations to identify and disrupt trafficking in persons and identify potential linkages with terrorism. In the resolution, the Council further called upon Member States to ensure that all forms of trafficking in persons, including when it is committed in situations of armed conflict or by armed and terrorist groups for the purpose of financing terrorism or to serve any strategic goals of terrorist groups, are addressed, and to consider establishing jurisdiction to end the impunity of offenders.

21. In 2019, in response to a specific situation analysis and Security Council resolutions [2331 \(2016\)](#) and [2388 \(2017\)](#), UNODC, in partnership with the Integrated Training Service of the Department of Peace Operations and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), developed and deployed a training module on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants for United Nations police officers deployed in MINUSMA. The training has resulted in strengthened capacity of United Nations police personnel deployed in MINUSMA to identify and respond to cases of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, as demonstrated by increased detection of such cases and enhanced support for local law enforcement in their anti-trafficking operations.

#### *Other intergovernmental processes*

22. UNODC supported the efforts of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to elaborate a general recommendation on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration. In particular, UNODC, in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), supported the organization of a regional meeting that was held in Vienna in January 2020 and brought together experts from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, representing approximately 20 international and non-governmental organizations, to contribute input and viewpoints feeding into the draft general recommendation. UNODC continued to assist OHCHR and the Committee in organizing other regional events in Asia, Africa and South America to further develop the general recommendation. UNODC also coordinated an internal review and provided comments to the Committee in the form of a formal submission in May 2020.<sup>5</sup>

## **2. Participation in inter-agency and regional coordination and cooperation mechanisms**

23. UNODC collaborates closely with other intergovernmental organizations, both within and outside the United Nations system, and is active at both the international and regional levels. The Office has signed several memorandums of understanding with organizations with key mandates and expertise in preventing and combating trafficking in persons. The Office also extensively engages with relevant civil society organizations and academia to advance anti-trafficking strategies. Moreover, UNODC has contributed its expertise to several international and regional forums, including the Vienna Migration Conference, organized by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development in November 2019; the nineteenth and twentieth conferences of

<sup>5</sup> Available at [www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/TraffickingGlobalMigration/UNOrganisations/UNODC-DTA\\_on\\_General\\_Recommendation\\_Annex1.docx](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/TraffickingGlobalMigration/UNOrganisations/UNODC-DTA_on_General_Recommendation_Annex1.docx).

the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, organized by OSCE in April 2019 and July 2020, respectively; the Forum on Business and Human Rights in November 2019; and the Alliance 8.7 Global Coordination Group meetings held in November 2019 and May 2020.

*Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons*

24. Following the first meeting of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons at the level of principals of the relevant United Nations agencies and organizations, held in London in May 2018,<sup>6</sup> UNODC continued to act as permanent coordinator of and secretariat to the Group. Progress included a significant expansion of the breadth and depth of the engagement of the Group, which now comprises 27 entities. In the reporting period, new members included the Council of Europe, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children, the International Telecommunication Union, the Council of the Baltic Sea States and the Organization of American States, furthering the geographical and regional reach of inter-agency work against trafficking in persons.

25. In 2019 and 2020, UNODC facilitated the first co-chairing arrangement of the Coordination Group between a United Nations entity and a regional organization, namely, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and OSCE. The Group enhanced policy coherence across diversified and specialized international organizations and supported States, civil society and practitioners in mobilizing multi-stakeholder responses, with the Group's extensive network and coverage being instrumental in creating synergies among entities, including at the country level.

26. During the reporting period, the Coordination Group increased its outputs and activities through the adoption of a biennial work plan administered by its secretariat, which is led by UNODC. Examples include guidance for Member States and practitioners on persistent and emerging trends in trafficking in persons, such as the nexus between technology and trafficking, as well as on the implementation of the principle of non-punishment of victims of trafficking and on trafficking for forced labour. Related policy briefs were published in July 2019, March 2020 and June 2020, and advocacy and outreach events were held in the margins of intergovernmental processes, such as the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2019 and the high-level segment of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly in September 2019.<sup>7</sup>

27. In addition, the Coordination Group initiated a policy dialogue to advance public and private sector responses to trafficking in supply chains through sustainable procurement. On 9 September 2019, a multi-stakeholder panel of national experts and practitioners briefed State representatives in the margins of the meeting of the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons. In February 2020, the Group conducted, in cooperation with the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking, a policy discussion on addressing trafficking in persons in supply chains in the margins of the forty-third session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The discussion also covered the role of public-private partnerships. In response to the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/195, entitled "Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons" (A/74/127), the Group continued to facilitate opportunities to enhance mitigation strategies against

<sup>6</sup> See General Assembly resolution 72/195. For further details on the meeting at the level of principals, see <https://icat.network/events/first-high-level-meeting-icat-promotes-better-coordination-end-human-trafficking>.

<sup>7</sup> To increase the distribution and dissemination of its policy recommendations and tools, the Coordination Group also released periodic reports and a fact sheet outlining its mandate, work and composition, as well as the first publicly available Chairs' Annual Report covering the main achievements and developments under OSCE and UN-Women as Co-Chairs in 2019. All products of the Group are easily accessible on its website and are made available in multiple languages. See the Group's publications catalogue at [https://icat.network/sites/default/files/publications/documents/ICAT%20publications%20catalogue\\_%20May2020\\_1.pdf](https://icat.network/sites/default/files/publications/documents/ICAT%20publications%20catalogue_%20May2020_1.pdf).



trafficking in persons in supply chains across international and regional organizations, to minimize the risk that their vendors or suppliers might engage in trafficking in persons for the purpose of labour exploitation, as well as other types of exploitation, in line with Security Council resolutions 2331 (2016) and 2388 (2017).

28. In line with its mandate, the Coordination Group continued to contribute to relevant intergovernmental processes. In 2019, the Group provided a joint submission<sup>8</sup> to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the draft general recommendation on trafficking in women and girls in the context of global migration, as well as comments<sup>9</sup> in 2020 on the first draft, emphasizing the importance of criminal justice responses and of addressing the demand for goods or services that are produced or provided by trafficked persons. In June 2020, at the request of the European Union, the Group developed a joint contribution to a targeted consultation for the new European Union strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings.

29. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, UNODC has engaged the Coordination Group in assessing the multiple dimensions of the impact of the pandemic on trafficking in persons to formulate positions and initiate targeted responses. Through a dedicated call to action, the Group secretariat has mapped, clustered and listed a selection of key resources, which will be continuously updated. In May 2020, the Group secretariat also co-organized an expert webinar to discuss technology applications to address trafficking in persons and the sexual exploitation of children online in times of COVID-19, and provided guidance to United Nations officials and personnel, including at the country level, thus contributing to the coherence of efforts and action on the ground.

30. In its resolution 74/176, adopted in December 2019, the General Assembly welcomed the first meeting of the Coordination Group at the level of principals and requested UNODC, as coordinator of the Group, to continue to convene such meetings on a regular basis. In 2020, the Group began preparations for a second meeting at the level of principals, to be convened in November 2020, which aims to take stock of the Group's latest policy work and to discuss a medium-term strategy marking the twentieth anniversary of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, as well as sustainable funding strategies.

#### *United Nations Network on Migration*

31. In the reporting period, UNODC engaged as a member of the Executive Committee of the United Nations Network on Migration, along with the International Labour Organization, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), OHCHR, the Department of Social and Economic Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund. In December 2019, UNODC participated in the annual meeting of the Network in Geneva to take stock of the first year since the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration and took part in the consultation on the regional reviews of the implementation of the Global Compact to discuss strategies in support of the process of reviewing implementation, starting in early 2020 and coordinated by the five Economic Commissions with the support of the broader Network.

32. At the regional level, UNODC is part of the United Nations Networks on Migration established at the regional and national levels, including in Latin America, West and Central Africa, East and Southern Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, South Asia and South-East Asia, as well as the issue-based coalition on large

<sup>8</sup> Available at <https://icat.network/sites/default/files/publications/documents/ICAT%20submission%20to%20CEAW.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Available at [www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/GRTrafficking/ICAT.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/GRTrafficking/ICAT.pdf).

movements of people, displacement and resilience for Europe and Central Asia, and regularly attended the meetings of its working group on mixed migration.

33. UNODC has further contributed to the establishment and supported the activities of more than 15 national and regional migration networks, including issue-based coalitions, working closely alongside government counterparts towards the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration and its review process.

*Cooperation with regional organizations and processes*

34. In Europe, UNODC collaborates closely with OSCE, the European Union and the Council of Europe. UNODC is a member of the Alliance Expert Coordination Team, led by OSCE, and actively participates in its annual meetings, as well as the related annual conference of the OSCE Alliance against Trafficking in Persons.

35. In Latin America, UNODC is participating in the protection cluster for Response for Venezuelans, the regional coordination platform for migrants and refugees from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, led regionally by IOM and UNHCR. UNODC contributed to the inclusion of actions on the prosecution of trafficking and smuggling in the recently updated regional response plan for refugees and migrants from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to respond to challenges faced by migrants and refugees because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

36. In the Asia-Pacific region, UNODC continued to contribute to the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. Along with the other 48 members, UNODC actively participated in high-level policy dialogue and practical capacity-building activities, including through the Regional Support Office, its working groups and the Task Force on Planning and Preparedness. In addition, UNODC participated in the regional consultations of the Global Forum on Migration and Development in June and July 2020.

37. In support of the Group of Five for the Sahel, UNODC organized in Burkina Faso, from 29 to 31 July 2019, a regional meeting of the G-5 Sahel Security Cooperation Platform on information-sharing related to cases of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. Recommendations were formulated on data collection and sharing at the national and regional levels. The high-level meeting brought together national Platform stakeholders, including representatives of national police forces and of national central bureaux and regional bureaux of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). Since the COVID-19 outbreak, UNODC has been organizing online training events for virtual assistance to the Platform, aimed at supporting the collection of intelligence information on the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons. The first webinar was delivered in April 2020.

38. In West Africa, as the permanent secretariat of the follow-up mechanism for the Niamey joint declaration of 16 March 2018 on combating the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, UNODC organized and provided technical support in March 2019 for the first regional conference to establish the permanent monitoring mechanism of the joint declaration in Dakar. The meeting brought together focal persons from African and European States signatories to the joint declaration: Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Gambia, Germany, Guinea, Italy, Mali, Mauritania, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Spain and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The European Union was also represented as a multilateral partner. UNODC presented a matrix of activities developed by Member States to prevent and counter trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants at the national, regional and international levels. UNODC also presented a table of indicators and targets to measure the progress made towards the achievement of the recommendations outlined in the Niamey joint declaration.

39. In October 2019, UNODC facilitated the organization of the second regional conference of directors general and high commanders of internal security forces and senior justice officials on the permanent monitoring mechanism of the Niamey joint declaration, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. On that occasion, senior officials from



States signatories to the joint declaration discussed developments in the fight against trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants and made new recommendations to effectively combat those crimes. The high-level meeting provided the opportunity for UNODC to present its liaison magistrate initiative, including results, lessons learned and challenges. The initiative is contributing to enhanced international judicial cooperation between European and West African countries to fight trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants, and more specifically to streamlining procedures to facilitate the provision of mutual legal assistance among Member States.

### 3. Development of knowledge, normative and policy guidance and tools

40. UNODC continued to produce standard-setting, specialized materials for practitioners that provide guidance on how to detect, investigate and prosecute cases of trafficking in persons, as well as on how to provide protection and assistance to victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants.

41. In 2020, UNODC finalized revisions of the *Model Law against Trafficking in Persons* and of the legislative guide on the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, two of the core guidance documents developed to support Member States in better addressing trafficking in persons and fulfilling their obligations under the Protocol. Those exercises were the result of a consultative process with anti-trafficking experts that was facilitated by UNODC and brought together experiences from different geographical and legislative contexts. A related issue paper on the international legal definition of trafficking in persons was published at the end of 2018. At the time of reporting, work continued on the development of a handbook on international legal cooperation on trafficking in persons.

42. UNODC continued to expand the Human Trafficking Knowledge Portal, powered by the Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime (SHERLOC) portal. The Knowledge Portal comprises three databases: a case law database, containing, as of June 2020, 1,525 cases from 113 jurisdictions; a database of legislation, containing, as of June 2020, 553 pieces of legislation from 142 countries; and a bibliographic database containing 125 entries. The Knowledge Portal serves as a practitioners' tool for police investigators, prosecutors and judges; a monitoring tool for government policymakers; an awareness-raising tool for the public and the media; and an information tool for researchers and all those responding to trafficking in persons. Following the publication of *Evidential Issues in Trafficking in Persons Cases: Case Digest* in October 2016, translations into French, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese and Montenegrin were finalized, and a translation into Thai has been started. Furthermore, UNODC developed a mock trial methodology and supplementary materials to tailor the *Case Digest* for use in technical assistance activities. UNODC also fostered partnerships with Member States, international organizations, academic institutions, civil society and international law firms to further expand the Knowledge Portal.

43. In the context of the Education for Justice initiative, under the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration, UNODC developed a series of educational tools to empower educators to teach the next generation about topics related to preventing crime and promoting the rule of law. Those materials were developed for the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education and can be either used directly or adapted to national contexts. At the primary level, the work of UNODC focused on promoting and teaching values such as acceptance, integrity, respect and fairness. A series of animated videos and comic and colouring books called "The Zorbs" was developed to support children's understanding of exploitation, including of human trafficking. For secondary education, UNODC has developed a video and teacher's guide aimed at critically engaging students aged 13 to 18 in understanding the meaning and impact of trafficking in persons. In addition, a comic book series entitled "San Servolo" has been developed with a view to making the topic of trafficking in persons accessible and engaging, as has a board game called "Enredados" to educate students about different aspects of trafficking in persons, such as vulnerabilities and working together with authorities. At the tertiary level, UNODC

has partnered with more than 100 academics and developed nine peer-reviewed modules on trafficking in persons (five devoted exclusively to trafficking in persons and four combined with the smuggling of migrants), accompanied by a teaching guide. A series of three videos has been developed, as supporting teaching materials, on introducing trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants, human rights and gender. Finally, two additional modules that bring regional perspectives into those issues, one in Spanish for Latin America and one in French for francophone Africa, have been developed to adjust the material to regional contexts.

44. UNODC is further expanding the knowledge base for responses to trafficking in persons. Examples include the development of a study on the concept of “harbouring” to support a clarified understanding of the international legal definition of trafficking in persons, as called for by the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons. The study will provide an overview of States’ practices and offer policy guidance for further consideration by Member States and practitioners. In addition, UNODC is conducting a case analysis on female offenders of trafficking for sexual exploitation who had been previously exploited, in which the jurisprudential treatment of such offenders is being examined.

45. In April 2020, UNODC published a brief<sup>10</sup> on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on trafficking in persons based on rapid stocktaking by a community of practice consisting of national, regional and international anti-trafficking experts, academics and non-governmental organizations. The findings were presented in numerous webinars with several stakeholders globally. The Office subsequently published an analysis<sup>11</sup> in which it noted that COVID-19 travel and movement restrictions had not stopped the movement of people fleeing conflict, human rights abuses, violence and dangerous living conditions, while the economic consequences of the pandemic were likely to lead to an increase in trafficking flows from the most affected countries to more affluent destinations.

46. UNODC continued to publish biennial editions of the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, which provides an overview of trafficking patterns and flows at the global, regional and national levels. The fourth edition was published in January 2019. The report is based on data collected by means of a questionnaire sent to Member States every year, and their replies include officially recorded information on cases of trafficking, detected victims and detected offenders in their respective countries.

## **B. Promoting and supporting the implementation of the Protocol through technical cooperation**

47. With regard to technical cooperation in countering trafficking in persons, UNODC provided, in response to requests from Member States, expertise in the following key areas: (a) legislative assistance; (b) criminal justice responses and international cooperation; (c) data collection and research; (d) prevention and awareness-raising; and (e) victim protection and support. UNODC conducted activities to support Member States in preventing and combating trafficking in persons, including mentoring and tailor-made technical cooperation, through its headquarters and field offices across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean.

### **1. Legislative assistance and development of national strategies and coordination**

48. UNODC continued to provide Member States with tailor-made, specialized legislative assistance to develop effective national legislation in line with the requirements of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and to ensure its full

<sup>10</sup> Available at [www.unodc.org/documents/Advocacy-Section/HTMSS\\_Thematic\\_Brief\\_on\\_COVID-19.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/Advocacy-Section/HTMSS_Thematic_Brief_on_COVID-19.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> [www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/covid/Covid-related-impact-on-SoM-TIP-web3.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/covid/Covid-related-impact-on-SoM-TIP-web3.pdf).

implementation. In addition, UNODC carried out assessments of legislative needs, supported the drafting of legislation and provided policy advice to facilitate the effective implementation of the Protocol.

49. In 2018 and 2019, UNODC contributed to the revision of legislation on trafficking in persons in Ethiopia. This entailed support during two drafting sessions, in June and December 2018, organized in the framework of the UNODC Regional Programme for Eastern Africa 2016–2021 and the Better Migration Management programme, funded by the European Union, and with the support of the Global Programme against Trafficking in Persons. The effort resulted in the adoption by Ethiopia, on 1 April 2020, of the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons Proclamation No. 1178/2020.

50. UNODC provided legislative assistance to Mali and Senegal to draft new laws on trafficking in persons, which are currently under official adoption processes in both countries. Moreover, UNODC supported the development of national action plans for Mali and the Central African Republic, as well as the establishment of a national coordinating committee in the Central African Republic.

51. Throughout 2019, UNODC supported the development of amendments to the anti-human trafficking law in Zambia. In partnership with the Zambia Law Development Commission, UNODC convened a legislative review meeting and a legislative drafting workshop in June and October 2019, respectively. The findings and proposals of the stakeholders consulted were compiled and validated in December 2019, and the Commission presented the report and draft legislative amendments to the Ministry of Home Affairs of Zambia in April 2020.

52. On 5 May 2019, UNODC organized a one-day consultative workshop in the Sudan on legislative reform with regard to trafficking, in coordination with the National Committee for Combating Human Trafficking and the Sudanese Centre for Democracy and Development, a non-governmental organization. The consultation included an analysis of the national and international legal frameworks and a comparative analysis of the 2014 anti-human trafficking law of the Sudan and regional and international instruments.

53. Following the participation of two government officials from the Ministry of Justice of South Sudan in a regional pre-accession seminar in Vienna in September 2018, UNODC organized a national pre-accession workshop in May 2019 on the Organized Crime Convention and its Protocols for 30 South Sudanese senior officials from various ministries.

54. UNODC supported Libya and Algeria by organizing national legislative workshops in March and June 2019, respectively. The Office has continued to provide substantive analysis as the Libyan draft law and implementing regulations continue to take shape.

55. UNODC also supported the process of amending the anti-trafficking legislation in India by holding two legislative consultations and providing detailed recommendations and suggestions in view of the ongoing revision of the 2018 anti-human trafficking bill, with a view to making it more comprehensive, gender-sensitive, victim-centred and human rights-based.

56. In May 2019, UNODC facilitated a binational meeting between the Permanent Multisectoral Commission against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants of Peru and the Plurinational Council against Trafficking and Smuggling of Persons of the Plurinational State of Bolivia. At that meeting, the 2017–2018 binational road map was reviewed and the one for the period 2019–2020 approved.<sup>12</sup>

57. UNODC continued to provide legislative assistance to Colombia and the Dominican Republic. In the Dominican Republic, UNODC facilitated broad

<sup>12</sup> See [www.unodc.org/bolivia/es/La-UNODC-apoyo-la-realizacion-de-la-Reunion-Binacional-de-Peru-y-Bolivia-contra-la-trata-de-personas.html](http://www.unodc.org/bolivia/es/La-UNODC-apoyo-la-realizacion-de-la-Reunion-Binacional-de-Peru-y-Bolivia-contra-la-trata-de-personas.html).

consultations involving national institutions, international agencies and civil society for inputs to support the drafting of a new trafficking law, with a first draft currently being consolidated by the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During the reporting period, UNODC supported the elaboration in Colombia of technical guidelines for the assistance of child trafficking victims and the dissemination of those guidelines in priority areas. UNODC continues to support the process of establishing a national referral mechanism in Colombia for cases of trafficking in persons for purposes of forced labour, coordinating efforts with labour inspectors from the Ministry of Labour and the Office of the Attorney General.

58. In Pakistan, in the framework of GLO.ACT in Asia and the Middle East, UNODC conducted extensive advocacy work by regularly engaging senators and members of the National Assembly, which culminated in the passing of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2018. The Act safeguards the rights of victims of human trafficking and empowers law enforcement agencies to effectively prosecute organized criminal groups that perpetuate and benefit from the crime. Under the new legislation, drafted by the Federal Investigation Agency with the assistance of UNODC, long prison sentences and substantial fines for traffickers, smugglers and their accomplices can be imposed.

59. In Malaysia, UNODC is currently providing input on the development of the country's third national action plan against trafficking in persons, for the period 2021–2025.

## **2. Strengthening criminal justice responses**

60. UNODC also continued to provide training for criminal justice practitioners in Libya, aiming to strengthen the capacities of the country's law enforcement officers and prosecutors to combat trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. To that end, a three-day workshop was held in Tunisia in February 2019 for 19 Libyan law enforcement officers and prosecutors.

61. UNODC continued to provide capacity-building for Sudanese authorities to tackle trafficking in persons. For instance, from 17 to 21 March 2019, in cooperation with the Judicial and Legal Sciences Institute, the first pilot mock trial training programme was conducted, with a view to building the capacity of police officers, prosecutors and defence lawyers to conduct investigations and criminal trials. The programme provided participants with an opportunity to learn the principles of competent witness examination, victim interviewing and offender interrogation.

62. Mock trial training methodologies based on real case scenarios and interactive simulation exercises have been delivered in a number of States across North Africa, including an exercise in July 2019 that brought together 29 participants from across Morocco, representing investigative police, public prosecutors and judges, as well as a five-day workshop in Algeria in February 2020 focusing on transnational cases and a national workshop for Egyptian criminal justice officials in March 2020.

63. During the reporting period, UNODC also delivered capacity-building activities and training to law enforcement authorities and judicial authorities in Algeria, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, the Niger, Senegal and South Sudan, including to enhance the detection and investigation skills of law enforcement officers on trafficking in persons.

64. In February 2020, UNODC supported a police operation to dismantle a trafficking network operating in the eastern part of Côte d'Ivoire. Before the operation, UNODC delivered a one-day preparatory training event for 32 law enforcement agents on the investigation of trafficking in persons, including on securing evidence, identifying and supporting victims and planning an operation. The field operation was carried out from 4 to 8 February 2020 and involved 49 officers from various law enforcement agencies (the transnational crime unit and local security forces), as well as social services and non-governmental organizations. As a

result, 153 potential victims were identified, including 15 women (2 Ivorians and 13 Nigerians) who had been trafficked for sexual exploitation and 138 children (9 girls and 129 boys) who were victims of forced labour, domestic servitude and other forms of exploitation. Two presumed traffickers (1 Nigerian woman and 1 Ivorian man) were arrested by the police. Further to the police operation, guidelines and standard operating procedures were designed by UNODC for the law enforcement authorities in Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Mali, the Niger and Senegal. The guidelines will allow law enforcement authorities to request support from UNODC in preparing and holding operational meetings and/or technical workshops.

65. In Malawi, UNODC supported the rescue of hundreds of trafficking victims. The Office established two inter-agency coordination bodies that identified 228 victims (including 46 victims identified by the Phalombe District Committee against Trafficking in Persons and 128 victims by the Mchinji District Committee against Trafficking in Persons). In March 2020, the Ministry of Homeland Security communicated to UNODC that Malawi would replicate those coordinating structures in the other 29 districts of the country.

66. Moreover, UNODC partnered with judicial and police training bodies in India and Sri Lanka to train nearly 100 judicial officers and 50 criminal justice officials using a mock trial methodology developed by the Office. In India, in collaboration with Chandigarh Judicial Academy, training was delivered to more than 50 judicial officers and 50 anti-human trafficking criminal justice actors from Rajasthan, including prosecutors and police officers from the Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority and the Rajasthan Police Academy. The training was delivered using a case-based courtroom simulation exercise to deliberate a case, developed on the basis of a real trafficking in persons case in India under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code and other relevant legislation. In Sri Lanka, UNODC partnered with the Judges Institute to deliver mock trial training to 36 judges (31 male, 5 female) using a case simulation scenario developed on the basis of a thoroughly analysed real trafficking in persons case file from Sri Lanka. As a result of the assistance provided by UNODC, the Judges Institute has expressed strong interest in further cooperation to embed this method into its training curricula.

67. In Malaysia, UNODC supported the creation of a joint trafficking in persons investigation task force established by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The mandate of the task force was extended for another three years in January 2019. Law enforcement authorities were trained in investigating trafficking in persons through a victim-centred and human rights-based approach.

68. Finally, in March 2019, UNODC supported the Plurinational State of Bolivia in strengthening the investigation and prosecution of the crime of trafficking in persons using a mock trial methodology to train national authorities as part of a training-of-trainers initiative. The event was attended by 105 officials from a multisectoral representation of relevant national institutions.

### **3. Promoting international cooperation**

69. UNODC provided technical assistance and facilitated the negotiation and elaboration of bilateral judicial agreements, namely, on extradition, the transfer of sentenced persons and mutual legal assistance, between Italy and Mali and Italy and the Niger, to strengthen international cooperation on transnational crime, including on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. The two rounds of negotiations took place in Rome from 26 February to 1 March and from 2 to 5 July 2019.

70. Moreover, under the liaison magistrate initiative, UNODC is supporting the deployment of two Nigerian liaison magistrates – one to Italy and one to Spain – to strengthen international judicial cooperation between West African countries and European countries in cases of trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants and other related crimes. The liaison magistrates act as an interface between the national central authorities of the deploying country and the host country, on the basis of article 18 of the Organized Crime Convention. By establishing a direct line of communication

between two central authorities, the liaison magistrates facilitate the mutual exchange of information and the transmission of requests for mutual legal assistance, provide legal advice and solicit prompt follow-up on cases. To date, the liaison magistrates have worked on 44 cases, with 35 rogatory and mutual legal assistance requests sent, multiple investigations opened and a suspect arrested in December 2019. Under the initiative, a liaison magistrate from the Niger is expected to be deployed in Italy in the fourth quarter of 2020.

71. In February 2020, UNODC, in cooperation with the Human Rights Department of the League of Arab States, organized a regional workshop in Cairo on national and regional efforts to combat trafficking in persons in the Arab region. The workshop was attended by 53 high-level officials and senior experts from 16 Arab Member States, as well as from regional and United Nations organizations and civil society organizations.

72. In November 2019, UNODC supported the organization of a regional forum for knowledge exchange and cooperation among national coordinating bodies to combat trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants along the central and western Mediterranean migration routes to enhance cooperation and coordination among national coordinating committees of different African countries, including through the exchange of knowledge, information and best practices.

73. In April 2019, UNODC organized a subregional meeting in Morocco of 28 government officials from Mali, Morocco and the Niger to enhance international judiciary and law enforcement cooperation on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants and to promote the establishment of information exchange agreements. Also in Morocco, UNODC organized a regional training workshop on international cooperation and mutual legal assistance in October 2019 to strengthen the skills and capacities of participating criminal justice officials from Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco to effectively collaborate in preventing and combating trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants and to discuss challenges related to international cooperation.

74. In the Americas, UNODC continues to support the Ibero-American Network of Specialized Prosecutors against Trafficking in Persons. In particular, UNODC supported the organization of a meeting from 19 to 21 February 2020 in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Plurinational State of Bolivia, to improve the understanding of criminal phenomena in the region through the exchange of substantive information. As result of the meeting, a working group was created within the Network in 2020 in order to enhance the criminal justice response to trafficking in persons in the context of mixed migration. UNODC was invited to facilitate the operation of the working group through technical assistance provided under the Office's regional initiative against trafficking in persons, known as Transforming Alerts into Criminal Justice Responses to Combat Trafficking in Persons within Migration Flows (TRACK4TIP).

#### **4. Data collection and research**

75. In the Sudan, UNODC continued to strengthen data collection and analysis efforts. For instance, from 4 to 6 February 2019, the Office organized a training workshop on data collection, analysis and reporting on trafficking in persons for relevant Sudanese authorities, in cooperation with the Judicial and Legal Sciences Institute. Training topics included the importance of flagging the source providing the information, the role of the focal points and ensuring the transparency of information by providing metadata. The participants also learned how to use the trafficking in persons cases investigated and reported by local authorities for the questionnaire and how to convert them into a database.

76. In the Niger, UNODC provided technical assistance for the design, development and implementation of a national system for collecting data and statistics on trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. A first workshop on data-collection tools and methodologies was held in June 2019. Since January 2020, UNODC has been supporting the country's National Agency for the Fight against



Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants through regular meetings with national and non-governmental actors, with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of data collection. A first consultation workshop on the main variables and indicators to be included in a national data-collection tool will take place in August 2020.

77. Through GLO.ACT in Asia and the Middle East, UNODC conducted a two-day training workshop in December 2019 on data collection, management, research and analytical skills for the Federal Investigation Agency and the Punjab police in Lahore, Pakistan. The Federal Investigation Agency, under its internal restructuring programme, had set up several anti-human trafficking cells earlier in 2019. The workshop provided an opportunity to support new staff working in those cells and to ensure that data are collected and analysed in a standardized manner.

## **5. Crime prevention and awareness-raising**

78. Within the framework of the Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking, and in line with the theme of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons in 2019, “Trafficking in persons: call your Government to action”, UNODC assisted several countries of West Africa in raising awareness of trafficking in persons by organizing events for that purpose.

79. In Colombia, UNODC provided technical and financial support to the national prevention campaign #EsoEsCuento (#NotReal), led by the Office of the Attorney General, which has brought about a 166 per cent increase in the identification of cases in the areas where the campaign was conducted.

80. In Kyrgyzstan, UNODC, in the framework of GLO.ACT, partnered with the Government to carry out the “100 days against trafficking in persons” campaign for a second year. The campaign is led by youth leaders and youth organizations with the support of State agencies, focusing on building relationships between local government authorities and civil society. Based on the success of that approach, the GLO.ACT team in Pakistan adopted a similar model when planning a nationwide public awareness-raising campaign. The campaign has not only become a UNODC best practice, but also resulted in the adoption of a communication strategy by the Government of Kyrgyzstan.

## **6. Protection and support of victims**

81. In Malawi, police officers trained by UNODC rescued Nepalese victims in Lilongwe and Blantyre, carried out related investigations and coordinated with UNODC and social protection services to provide adequate assistance and support to the victims. In February 2019, the Malawi Police Service rescued three Nepalese women in Lilongwe who had allegedly been trafficked by Indian nationals. In November 2019, the Malawi Police Service also rescued six Nepalese men in Blantyre following an alert from the Anti-Human Trafficking Bureau of the Nepal Police. After the rescue, the police first responders applied the standard operating procedures and the national referral mechanism that had been launched with the support of UNODC in July 2019, to coordinate their action with social services and bring the presumed victims to safety in shelters before they returned home to Nepal. The operation was an example of well-coordinated action between police, prosecutors, social services and UNODC.

82. In June 2019, UNODC supported a national workshop on the development of a national referral mechanism in Algeria by providing a feasibility assessment and an outline of necessary requirements to establish such a mechanism to identify, support, protect and promote the rights of victims of trafficking.

83. In Egypt, in March 2020, UNODC collaborated with the National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons to organize a knowledge exchange workshop on the protection of victims of human trafficking and smuggled migrants. The workshop allowed for an exchange of

practical experience of different countries with advanced national referral mechanisms, including Bahrain, Greece and Jordan.

84. In Nepal, in the framework of GLO.ACT in Asia and the Middle East, and in partnership with the Office of the Attorney General, UNODC organized a two-day consultation, followed by a two-day drafting session, to develop victim identification guidelines and national referral mechanisms to counter trafficking in persons. Representatives from the Government, civil society organizations and law enforcement agencies all participated in the consultation. The guidelines were drafted on the basis of existing international standards and leveraged the expertise of UNODC in many recommendations. A detailed questionnaire to identify victims of trafficking has been developed for border guards, investigators, prosecutors, immigration authorities, relevant ministries and civil society and will be further disseminated as an annex to the guidelines.

85. In March and April 2019, UNODC, through GLO.ACT in Asia and the Middle East, organized five workshops in Pakistan on trafficking in persons, with a particular focus on victim identification, protection and assistance. The workshops aimed to ensure coordination and cooperation among law enforcement, social services and civil society in addressing human trafficking. A total of 105 participants attended the workshops, which were held in Lahore, Islamabad and Peshawar.

86. Since January 2020, UNODC has been implementing a project to support Jordan and Lebanon in enhancing the identification and referral of victims of trafficking in persons among refugees and internally displaced persons. The aim is to strengthen the resilience not only of potential victims, but also of host communities, through better coordination among criminal justice officials, other anti-trafficking actors and those in charge of humanitarian responses. Interventions under the project are scheduled to take place in September and October 2020.

### **III. Conclusions**

87. In promoting the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, in particular by providing technical assistance to Member States and fostering inter-agency cooperation, UNODC has consistently sought the active participation of relevant stakeholders at the international, regional and national levels.

88. Despite the progress made, trafficking in persons remains a pressing global problem, victimizing people and affecting all regions. UNODC will continue its efforts to promote and support the implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, including with due consideration of the current concerns related to COVID-19, and to work jointly with Member States and international organizations, civil society and victims towards increasing the effectiveness of the fight against trafficking in persons in all its forms.