

National Statement of the United States

Trafficking in Persons Working Group 2023

We want to acknowledge the murder of two U.S. law enforcement agents in our state of Florida who were attempting to dismantle a global enterprise engaged in the sexual exploitation of children. Both agents were recognized for their strong work against child abuse and educating students about sex crimes. As we are here to discuss global anti-trafficking policy in the multilateral arena, we should recognize the real risks faced by practitioners around the world and appreciate their contributions.

The vast majority of law enforcement, like these two FBI agents, and public sector officials fulfil their duties with integrity and dedication, however, a minority abuse their entrusted power for personal gain.

This corruption facilitates human trafficking and directly hinders and undermines our efforts to combat these crimes. For example, corruption can interfere with victim identification, put victims' lives at risk, slow investigations and subvert judicial processes. I would like to highlight a number of recommendations to address corruption:

States Parties must underscore the importance of effectively implementing international obligations under the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in the development and execution of national anti-trafficking policies and programs.

States Parties should establish comprehensive and robust anti-money laundering laws and provide training and assistance to governments and financial institutions to enhance anti-corruption and anti-money laundering efforts that are in line with legislation, treating trafficking in persons as a predicate offence to money laundering, in line with the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

States Parties must include corruption and link anti-corruption efforts with those designed to tackle transnational organized crime when addressing the core drivers and facilitators of trafficking in persons.

States Parties should provide support and protection for civil society, survivor, and media representatives reporting on corrupt practices related to trafficking and incorporate measures to address this crime and impunity in anti-trafficking strategies.

States Parties should leverage a multi-stakeholder approach to anti-trafficking policies and programs that includes the expertise and recommendations from trafficking victims and survivor leaders.

States Parties should strengthen the existing international anti-corruption architecture and reinforce the approach of corruption as a global problem that also facilitates trafficking in

persons by addressing the transnational aspects of corruption through human and financial resourcing, foreign assistance, and robust public-private partnerships which include multilateral organizations, banking institutions, civil society, and media actors, with a view to eliminate safe havens for corrupt actors and their criminal proceeds.

To conclude, I would like to share a way we can continue this discussion at the upcoming U.S.-hosted Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption. This year, the United States is pleased to join UNODC in co-hosting a side event that will look at the hidden connections between corruption and human trafficking.