



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
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Statement

By

Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Before

**Working Group on Trafficking in Persons
(Vienna, 9-10 October 2021)**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

- *On the second agenda: Successful strategies for addressing the use of technology to facilitate trafficking in persons and to prevent and investigate trafficking in person*

I would like to begin by thanking the Chair and the Secretariat for their commendable work in preparing and organizing the eleventh session of the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons; which is proven to be a proper framework for strengthening international cooperation and addressing the challenges in implementing the relevant provisions.

Madam Chair,

Trafficking in persons is undeniably one of the most heinous and cruelest of crimes. This status has been recognized and reiterated since early days. However, new and evolving technologies have changed the whole game, for both the law enforcement agencies and for the criminal groups. This is quite sufficient to merit a shift in our approach, requiring us to be more vigilant and up-to-speed than ever.

We acknowledge the background paper prepared by the Secretariat on this agenda. It is fascinating and also reassuring to know that technology can be used to put a stop to, or at least detect and help the investigation of, the shockingly devastating cases of TIP that tragically happen every day.

Though for us, the question is not the capabilities of such means, but the access to them, because of the catastrophic intended consequences of the Unilateral coercive measures imposed by a certain state, contrary to the fundamental principles of international law, which still impair allocation of our resources to fight, and hamper any access to new and modern technological means that were devised for this very reason. Astonishingly enough, that same state continues to label other states, accusing them of having weak conduct in combatting TIP. Such an unacceptable behaviour only derives from political motive and disagreements.

Being in the front line, our law enforcement and practitioners are bravely doing what some do with a state-of-the-art technical equipment, with access to limited means and without any necessary international support. They are going above and beyond, considering the new developments in the region.

This goes without saying that fighting a crime that is transnational in nature, by taking full advantage of new and evolving technologies, should not be a privilege. It has to be the priority of us all, if we truly plan to dismantle the organized groups across the world.

So, while appreciating the extensive literature on the benefits and also threats of new technologies, we believe, to increase the outreach of the activities and objectives of this working group, a unified operational response has to be devised, which requires equal access to modern technology or any other means necessary to fight trafficking in persons.

Nonetheless, the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its commitment to the fight against TIP and considers the role of the United Nations bodies, specifically UNODC, determining in facilitating international cooperation and providing tailor-made, accessible and effective technical assistance, which can play a crucial role in fighting this crime.

Thank you, Madam. Chair.