

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE FOR THE WORLD DAY AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN
PERSONS

“Leave no child behind in the fight against human trafficking”

30 July 2024

Human trafficking is a horrific crime that targets the most vulnerable in our societies.

On this World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, we focus on the most vulnerable among us – children.

Children account for one-third of trafficking victims, suffering unspeakable abuse – whether they are forced into labour, sold off as brides, recruited as soldiers, or coerced into criminal activities. Rising inequalities and globalization have fuelled complex trafficking networks that challenge traditional legal frameworks, creating new forms of slavery. Online platforms further expose children to sexual exploitation and gender-based violence and allow traffickers to exploit victims across borders.

The physical and psychological scars of these crimes persist long into adulthood, robbing them of their innocence, futures and fundamental rights. We must strengthen protection responses – including child-sensitive justice mechanisms, raise awareness, support unaccompanied children on the move, provide care for survivors, and tackle the root causes of exploitation by helping vulnerable families.

I call upon governments, civil society, and the private sector, including tech companies, to intensify their efforts and collaboration so that no child is victimized and no trafficker goes unpunished.

On this day, let us renew our commitment for a future where every child is safe and free.
