

Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative at High Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the Appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons on May 14, 2013

Mr. President,

I thank you for organizing this important meeting. I also thank the UN Secretary General, the President of the General Assembly, the Executive Director of UNODC and other speakers for their important contributions on the subject of combating trafficking in persons.



Mr. President,

The United Nations has articulated a clear vision on this subject by launching the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons in August 2010.

The Plan mandated the international community to address the problem of human trafficking in a holistic and comprehensive manner. This has to be implemented through integrated, balanced, coherent, result-oriented and people-centric policies.

The 4 Ps, of Preventing, Protecting, Prosecuting and Partnership, is a new clarion call in this fight, which needs to be adhered to and implemented.

The new element of Partnership is crucial. It recognizes effective partnerships with civil society, NGOs and private sector as an integral part of this fight.

The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012 brought out by the UNODC is the first such attempt to present a global overview of trends and challenges in trafficking of persons.

Notwithstanding the information gaps that still persist, the findings of the report are a grim reminder of the growing global scale of trafficking of persons, and of the complexities involved in dealing with this issue.

According to the report, women and children remain particularly vulnerable to trafficking, especially with respect to trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour.

While over 130 countries have criminalized trafficking, progress in conviction remains limited.

These findings underline the basic fact that while national efforts to eliminate trafficking are essential, it is also critical to have greater cohesion in the international community's efforts to prevent, prosecute and punish those involved in trafficking in persons, especially through organized crime. Capacity building, as the report notes, is a significant challenge to be addressed.

Mr. President,

India is firmly committed towards a world free of human trafficking. We live in one of the most densely populated regions of the world. India has ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, in May 2011. Our commitment is reflected in various national laws and policies.

At the level of policy implementation, we have developed strategies which are holistic, participative and inclusive and are not restricted to direct intervention against trafficking alone. We are adopting a victim-centric approach to these issues.

Anti-Trafficking Nodal Cells have been set up both at the Central and the provincial levels. We are working with the UNODC for strengthening law enforcement responses in India against trafficking in persons.

A comprehensive scheme for prevention of trafficking, rescue, rehabilitation, reintegration and repatriation of the victims of commercial sexual exploitation is already in place.

India also seeks to eradicate trafficking through empowering the vulnerable sections of our society, who are its potential victims. This is also one of the core objectives of this Global Plan.

Mr. President,

The international community, including the UN, must contribute and help States that seek financial and technical assistance in their efforts at capacity building and in putting in place appropriate administrative and legal frameworks. These are institutional reforms which are imperative to combat this challenge.

The UNODC has an important role to play in enhancing training and capacity building to strengthen law enforcement responses.

We are concerned that despite deeper international cooperation, the growing global trend of trafficking in persons has not been arrested. We need to redouble our efforts to fighting this scourge. India stands ready to work with the international community in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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