

CSW67 High Level Side Event: Human Trafficking—Using Technology and the Roadmap to End It 9 March, 2023

Despite laws, national strategies, and lots of efforts to stop human trafficking, we're still not getting the job done! Estimates from ILO and IOM indicate that forced labour and trafficking is a growing industry, exploiting 27.6 million children, women and men. In 2014, ILO estimated it to be an annual \$150 billion illicit industry and indications are that this figure has probably grown too. The main strategy has been the 3 Ps—prosecution, protection and prevention of victimization. It's by recognizing that the programs must include the root cause from the perpetrators' perspective—ie., money, that we believe will be productive in reducing the illicit profiteering and prevalence of victims. And yet, none of the programs throughout the world measure results by considering if both illicit profiteering and prevalence of victims are diminished as a result.

The High Level Side Event covered how efforts are expanding to consider programs that bankrupt the business of human trafficking and expand the strategy by the 3 Ds—detection, demand and display.

Speakers:



Ambassador H. E. Dr. Paul Beresford-Hill, Permanent Mission of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the UN in New York- H.E. Ambassador Paul Beresford-Hill opened the event by highlighting the need for societies and countries to be prepared and equipped to better harness technology in their responses to human trafficking. He further said that while technology is frequently used by traffickers to identify and exploit victims, it can also be used positively to combat trafficking through aiding investigations, enhancing prosecutions, and providing services to victims. He relayed information regarding work to obtain insights and provide assistance to Ukrainians fleeing the war. ***“Early in the conflict, we were able to set up a PUSH communication system that spread throughout mobile devices carried by those coming from Ukraine to bordering countries. This included key information and practical suggestions to prevent refugees from ending up as prey to criminal networks.”***



Dr. Najat Maalla M'jid, United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children (SRSG-VAC)-- provided targeted strategies that her mandate employs to further accurate measurement of victimization and illicit profiteering in regard to the trafficking of children. Both through her office's country visits and in providing support to Member States as they prepare for their Voluntary National Reviews, the SRSG-VAC encourages and ensures that trafficking of children is included in national and local development policies, plans and processes. Dr. M'jid stated that her outreach to Member States emphasized such policies, legislation and program focus not only on the "supply" side but that they also address demand, including requiring businesses to undertake "child rights due diligence" in their supply chains. Further, the ongoing work of the SRVAC, including her annual report to the Human Rights Council, highlights child online safety, with an emphasis on safeguarding against threats in digital space and strengthening criminal justice responses to online crimes.



Ugochi Daniels, International Organization for Migration- Deputy Director General— In 2023, IOM co-chairs, along with the Office of the Secretary General's Special Representative on Violence against Children, the Interagency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT). The international work group sets standards and provides thematic guidance on data and research, with human trafficking as its priority.

Most of the work done heretofore by IOM has been in understanding the prevalence of human trafficking and has been based on detected victims. Deputy Director General Daniels indicated that, " **The link needs to be made to measuring illicit profiteering from victims and identification of the sectors or industries of most concern in order to inform counter-trafficking programming and policies.**" Administrative data routinely collected by various frontline stakeholders could be the best and perhaps only source for this information. Together with UNODC, IOM has developed the first classification standards and guidance for the production, safe management, and analysis of administrative data on trafficking in persons, currently awaiting rollout.

Following its 2030 Counter-Trafficking Agenda, IOM strives to attain tangible change in reducing the prevalence of and harm from human trafficking and establish a cutting-edge evidence base on what works in counter-trafficking and why. This is crucial to strengthening IOM’s understanding of victims’ vulnerability in combating human trafficking. Building on this work, jointly with ILO and UNODC, IOM has been developing a global measurement framework for estimating the prevalence of trafficking. The resulting methodology, guidelines, and tools are intended to support Member States and other stakeholders in conducting prevalence estimates that would generate data that are comparable across countries and regions.



Beate Andrees, International Labour Organization- Special

Representative to and Director of the ILO Office to the United Nations—ILO’s model of collaboration with both workers and employers offers an unique opportunity to examine the supply chain issues and implement methods to end labor trafficking. Further, its work with organizations such as IOM and Walk Free on developing global estimates enable it to measure results on both the illicit profiteering and the prevalence indicators in a consistent manner. By way of example, ILO actively engaged with the fishing and shrimp industry, both employers and workers, in Thailand, to eliminate widespread trafficking. To do this they worked with the banking industry to enable direct electronic deposit of wages and engaged labour representatives to conduct audits on fishing boats and factories. Result: **“The number of illegal boats has dropped to almost zero.”**

Ms. Andrees also indicated that reducing illicit profiteering is not a simple task, and that it requires a coordinated and multi-stakeholder approach that involves governments, law enforcement agencies, employers, workers, and civil society organizations. ILO can play a crucial role in supporting Member States by providing technical assistance, capacity building, and advocacy on forced labour and human trafficking issues. They can also help governments to develop and implement effective anti-trafficking policies and programs that are in line with international labour standards and human rights principles. ILO is willing to work with government and other stakeholders. As she stated, **“let’s get the job done!”**



Deborah O'Hara Rusckowski, Permanent Mission of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the UN in New York-Special Advisor to the Ambassador Permanent Mission of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the UN in New York—discussed the importance of preventing victimization, especially as it applies to unplanned migration. She described the joint effort of the Order of Malta and GSO in responding to the human trafficking threats faced by many displaced Ukrainians by developing the push communications referred to in H.E. Ambassador Paul Beresford-Hill's opening remarks. Based on insights garnered from the refugees, it was apparent that criminal networks embedded at various points along the route, offered comfort and assistance to those fleeing. This method is deployed in many situations regarding mass migrations in times of turmoil and stress. The criminals then place the victims into servitude, with financial penalties and often physical harm. Alerting refugees to be on the lookout for those offering comfort or assistance, provides the individual with a "red flag" warning to self-prevent victimization.

The Sovereign Order of Malta works within the UN and its member states to promote anti-trafficking programs. In its report on "The Global Strategic Operatives for the Eradication of Human Trafficking: Recognizing and Responding to Trafficking in Persons in the Healthcare Setting" it outlines the role healthcare professionals can play in providing information regarding services available to the victim. It is also noted that many times, this visit may be the first opportunity of detection that trafficking has taken place. Ms. Rusckowski indicated **"that 88% of victims seek medical care/treatment while being trafficked."**



Kevin Hyland, Former UK Anti-Slavery Commissioner and currently serving as Global Strategy Director for the Santa Marta Group— In his former roles in law enforcement and as the first UK Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Mr. Hyland had the opportunity to develop policy on anti-trafficking based on implementation experience. Currently the work of the Santa Marta Group seeks to engage law enforcement, businesses and governments in a 6 point strategy to end both labor trafficking and sexual exploitation and abuse of all, including children. This strategy relies on the ability to work with governments and businesses to not only adhere to international instruments and treat workers with dignity and full human rights but also to detect and prevent labour trafficking in their purchasing, selling, procurement and

all elements of their business and financial activities. Further it recognizes that identifying profits that are in receipt from exploitation is essential to make this crime unattractive and one that does not pay, especially if these profits are seized and used to provide victims with reparation and compensation.

Mr. Hyland identified that there is a proliferation of online activities that are currently used by crime networks and individuals to sexually abuse and exploit victims, including children. One of the main strategies of the Santa Marta Group is to hold tech companies responsible for safety and governance. **“Abuse of children is not a right—it’s a crime!”**



Valiant Richey, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe--OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings -- Mr. Richey presented a four-point systematic strategy to effectively combat human trafficking. **“Trafficking is part of our reality and only systemic change will effectively end it.”**

- 1) Stop buying goods and services produced by human trafficking or forced labor victims. Corporations and governments must establish and enforce policies and laws to eliminate the use of goods and services produced through human trafficking in the marketplace.
- 2) Buying sex fuels trafficking and creates a demand, a market force that traffickers will meet with a supply that generates nearly \$100 billion annually. Men need to confront the reality of what paid sexual encounters are – payment to set aside *lack of consent*.
- 3) Effective elimination of trafficking profits from the financial services industry requires taking steps to properly verify financial documents that go through their systems. Good, effective instruments to detect funds originating from trafficking exist, but institutional financial analysts must use them.
- 4) The single most important ingredient for tackling human trafficking in any organization is the engagement of senior leadership. Senior leaders need to promote within their organizations procedures and systems that will address stopping human trafficking at its core and roots.



Heather Fischer, Thomson Reuters--Senior Advisor for Human Rights Crimes—discussed the work that is being done regarding supply chain and forced labor.

“Today, it’s increasingly clear that tackling forced labor, and knowing what goes on in international supply chains, requires collective action across the private and public sectors, and it’s important for companies to act now to help be part of the solution.” Through the work with private companies and government partners, they are helping to prevent goods made with trafficked labor from entering the United States by raising awareness with management, utilizing best practices for operations and conducting independent audits **of results**.

Ms. Fischer indicated that forced labor in products or goods is not just a human rights issue, it is also an economic issue. Countries that use forced labor undermines our own economies. Thomson Reuters is partnering with Ernst & Young to offer joint solutions to meet growing customer need for supply chain transparency and policy tracking. These Business and Human Rights accountability tools help customers identify, manage, and mitigate Business and Human Rights accountability-related supply chain risks such as forced labor in a continuous way.

On another note, Ms. Fischer shared some data regarding the risks facing Ukrainian refugees, especially women and girls. They conducted an in-depth analysis of internet patterns during the first weeks of the conflict to examine whether Ukrainian refugees were at risk of trafficking in human beings and the role of online demand fueling this risk. The analysis “found clear signals that human traffickers are preying on refugees escaping the conflict, and that the demand for online sexual services is fueling the criminal profitability of exploitation.”

- The term “Ukrainian porn” saw a 600% increase in internet interest in Spain;
- Increases of up to 300% in global online interest in a range of sexually derogatory search terms related to Ukrainian women;
- The pattern continues with surges in the UK, Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, France and Switzerland;
- Views of pornographic videos claiming to show Ukrainian refugees exploded in the last six months, totaling a quarter of a million views as of late January, 2023.

And on the topic of nonconsensual intimate images, Thomson Reuters data indicated:

- There are 3,000 websites where abusers upload and view nonconsensual intimate images, predominantly of women and girls;
- 1 in 8 Americans have been victims of nonconsensual pornography;
- In the U.K., the rate of image-based abuse doubled from 2019 to 2020, affecting 15% of Britons age 18-45.



Rosalee Keech, Moderator and President of CSTIP, United Nations Observer for ECPAT-USA-- Worldwide, millions are spent on current prevention programs that provide education or assistance to “at risk communities” and vulnerable populations such as child migrants. These programs are not enough to stop people desperate to feed their families or escape from harm. Implementing programs that [bankrupt the business of human trafficking](#)—



preventing the illicit profiteering and eliminating demand--are needed if we are serious about ending human trafficking. For the truth is that if all 27.6 million victims were rescued today, tomorrow there is a whole new set of victims as traffickers would simply scramble to find new prey in order to meet the demand and reap the profits.

“Human trafficking is an immense and costly problem to solve. We need to focus on [those programs that are working to end the illicit profiteering and the prevalence of victims](#). It will not be solved by one program, one technique or exclusively by law enforcement. It will only be solved if each sector does its job and focuses on the 3 Ps and the 3Ds—Detection, Demand and Display.”



CSTIP Member Co-sponsors:

