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Crime prevention and criminal justice

Letter dated 27 June 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you herewith the statement of the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking on the occasion of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, which is observed annually on 30 July in connection with paragraph 5 of resolution [68/192](#) (see annex).

I would appreciate it if you could kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 107.

(Signed) Valentin **Rybakov**



Annex to the letter dated 27 June 2024 from the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking on the occasion of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons

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

On the occasion of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons the Group of Friends reiterates its unwavering commitment to combat human trafficking in all its forms.

Guided by the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, as well as by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and by other relevant international treaties, we recognize that the protection of children from trafficking is not only a moral imperative but a fundamental task of every nation.

Trafficking in children is a grave human rights violation, which strips young individuals of their innocence, rights and potential.

The global data in this regard is unsettling: 35% of all detected victims of human trafficking are children, who are involved in all prevalent forms of exploitation, including forced labour, sexual exploitation, forced criminal activity, involvement in armed conflict, trafficking for illegal adoption and for organ removal. It is equally concerning that children are subject to physical or extreme violence at a rate almost two times higher than adults.

In order to properly address this grave situation, we acknowledge the need for enhanced international cooperation and coordination. This involves robust partnerships among Member States, international organizations, civil society, private sector and financial institutions to effectively combat this scourge. Our collective efforts must focus on comprehensive, multidisciplinary strategies that address prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnerships, which are the main pillars of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons

We recognize the central role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in informing and coordinating the global fight against trafficking in persons, as well as in providing much needed technical assistance to the UN Member States.

We also recognize the important role of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons in fostering harmonization and cooperation in the global fight against trafficking in persons, within the existing mandates of its members and partners, and welcome its recent Call for Accelerated Action by 2025 to Prevent and End Child Trafficking.

We urge governments to prioritize the needs and rights of child victims of trafficking, ensuring they receive comprehensive support and protection. This includes access to justice, rehabilitation, and reintegration services that are tailored to their specific situations to enable a victim-centred, age- and gender-sensitive approach, that takes into consideration disability and trauma and that addresses the specific needs of children and considers their best interests in all measures and decisions. We also stress the importance of providing specialized training for law enforcement, judicial authorities and social workers to effectively identify, assist, and protect child victims.

Furthermore, we recognize the significant role that technology plays in both facilitating and combating trafficking in persons. As traffickers increasingly exploit digital platforms to recruit, groom and control victims, we must enhance our efforts to utilize technology in tracking, investigating and prosecuting traffickers. We encourage the development of innovative technological solutions and stronger collaboration with tech companies to protect children online.

The Group of Friends calls on the donor community, international organizations and academia to invest in research into patterns of diverse forms of trafficking in children, including their mixed forms. This information will be essential in devising effective measures and strategies to protect all children from trafficking.

Finally, we call on all Member States and stakeholders to join us in our efforts to leave no child behind in the fight against human trafficking. Let us continue to strengthen our resolve, enhance our cooperation, and act decisively to protect the most vulnerable among us. Together, we can and must end the trafficking in children. Let this day serve as a reminder of our shared responsibility and our collective power to create a safer, more just world for all children.

Members of the Group of Friends

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