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## Sixty-ninth session

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### Advancement of women

## Trafficking in women and girls

### Report of the Secretary-General

#### *Summary*

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [67/145](#), the present report provides information on measures taken by Member States and activities carried out within the United Nations system to address trafficking in women and girls. The report draws conclusions and makes specific recommendations for future action.

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\* [A/69/150](#).



## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [67/145](#), on trafficking in women and girls, the General Assembly urged Governments to devise, enforce and strengthen effective measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in women and girls. The Assembly called upon Governments to, inter alia: address the factors that increase the vulnerability of women and girls to being trafficked; criminalize all forms of trafficking in persons; strengthen prevention and awareness-raising action; support and protect victims/survivors of trafficking; encourage the media and business sectors to cooperate in efforts to eliminate trafficking; and enhance information-sharing and data collection capacity.

2. The General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-ninth session a report that compiled information on interventions and strategies, as well as gaps, in addressing the problem of trafficking in persons. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request and is based on, inter alia, information received from Member States, entities of the United Nations system and other organizations. It covers the period since the issuance of the previous report ([A/67/170](#)).

## II. Background

3. Trafficking is still a crime in which the majority of victims are women and girls and the majority of traffickers are men. The most recent *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, produced by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in December 2012, provides an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at the global, regional and national levels and is based on trafficking cases detected mainly between 2007 and 2010. With regard to women and girls, the report highlights the fact that women account for 55-60 per cent of all trafficking victims detected globally and women and girls together account for some 75 per cent. Moreover, the trafficking of children appears to be increasing, as 27 per cent of all victims are children and, of every three child victims, two are girls and one is a boy. With regard to traffickers, the report notes that while traffickers tend to be adult males and nationals of the country in which they operate, more women and foreign nationals are involved in trafficking in persons than in most other crimes. Women traffickers are often involved in the trafficking of girls and tend to be used for low-ranking activities that have a higher risk of detection.

4. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has provided its 2012<sup>1</sup> and 2013<sup>2</sup> case data on human trafficking, which also demonstrate that the majority of victims continue to be women and girls. In 2012, IOM provided assistance to 6,499 trafficked individuals. More than half (58 per cent) of those individuals were female. Forty-five per cent of them were assisted by IOM after having been trafficked for the purpose of forced labour, 20 per cent for sexual exploitation, 10 per cent for other or unknown reasons (with slavery-like conditions often reported) and 18 per cent for domestic servitude. In 2013, IOM assisted 6,463 trafficked individuals, most of whom (81 per cent) were adults, with the rest (19 per cent)

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<sup>1</sup> IOM Migrant Assistance Division, *Annual Review 2012*.

<sup>2</sup> IOM Migrant Assistance Division, *2013 Case Data on Human Trafficking: Global Figures and Trends* (yet to be published).

being children. More than half (57 per cent) of them were female. More than 65 per cent of them were assisted after having been trafficked for the purpose of forced labour, 14 per cent for sexual exploitation, 10 per cent for other or unknown reasons (with slavery-like conditions often reported) and 7 per cent for domestic servitude. The majority had been trafficked across borders.

5. Responses to trafficking tend to continue to focus on approaches that place greater priority on the prosecution and conviction of the suspects than on support for victims/survivors, despite the fact that the number of prosecutions and convictions in this area remains low<sup>3</sup> and the judicial system is often reliant on victims for testimony. As noted in a policy paper released by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, victim testimony is less reliable and less likely to be forthcoming in environments where victim protection is not the key priority.<sup>4</sup> Without the provision of adequate support by specialized and comprehensive services, irrespective of whether victims/survivors agree to participate in criminal proceedings, there is unlikely to be significant change in this area.

6. Prevention efforts are still very much focused on education and awareness-raising campaigns. In the light of the 2012 report of the International Labour Organization (ILO) entitled “ILO global estimate of forced labour: results and methodology”, which estimates the number of people in forced labour at nearly 21 million, it is clear that current initiatives are not sufficient to prevent trafficking. The root causes of and risk factors for trafficking, which are many and interrelated, including poverty, gender inequality and lack of viable employment opportunities and of laws and regulations on labour standards to ensure that workers are not exploited, must be addressed if this problem is to be dealt with effectively. On this basis, particular groups of women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination are even more vulnerable to trafficking. Increasingly, the lack of legal options for migration for people seeking employment in other countries is also a significant risk factor. As noted in an analytical paper prepared by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons on developments since the adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, specifically on the issue of migration and the lack of opportunities in countries of origin, those who lack appropriate employment or educational opportunities at home see migration as a natural and necessary step to achieving their potential as individuals, or ensuring the survival or prosperity of their families.

### III. Global legal and policy development

#### Resolutions, recommendations and global discussions

7. United Nations intergovernmental and expert bodies continued to adopt resolutions and recommendations to address human trafficking, including in particular trafficking in women and girls. At its sixty-eighth session, the General Assembly adopted its resolution [68/192](#), on improving coordination of efforts against trafficking

<sup>3</sup> See United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012*.

<sup>4</sup> See Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, “The international legal frameworks concerning trafficking in persons” (2012).

in persons. In addition, at the same session a high-level meeting of the General Assembly was held on the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (13 and 14 May 2013).

8. Other United Nations intergovernmental bodies also continue to adopt legally binding agreements, resolutions and conclusions relating to trafficking. Most recently, on 14 June 2014 the annual International Labour Conference adopted a legally binding protocol to ILO Convention No. 29, concerning forced or compulsory labour. The protocol addresses the gaps and strengthens the body of instruments with regard to forced labour, including child labour, trafficking in persons and related human rights violations. In addition, specific reference to trafficking in women and girls is made in the agreed conclusions from the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as in multiple resolutions and discussions of the Human Rights Council.<sup>5</sup>

9. At its thirteenth to eighteenth sessions, the Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review made 536 recommendations relating to trafficking in persons, especially women and children. Those recommendations were addressed to 77 of the 84 States under review. The recommendations stressed the need for States to intensify their efforts to combat and prevent trafficking and to provide victims/survivors with protection and support. The Working Group recommended that States evaluate and monitor the measures they had undertaken to assess their effectiveness; address the root causes of trafficking; strengthen their efforts to prosecute and punish all perpetrators, including public officials; develop their capacities to address trafficking; and take into account the Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) when developing or implementing measures.

10. The human rights treaty bodies established under the core human rights treaties continued to address the issue of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, in their concluding observations on the reports submitted by States parties. The various committees<sup>6</sup> addressed trafficking in several recommendations, including by calling upon States parties to: strengthen efforts to combat trafficking in persons, in particular women and children, through the implementation of national strategic plans; systematically collect age- and sex-disaggregated data on trafficking in persons; accelerate the adoption of, harmonize and/or strengthen the implementation of anti-trafficking legislation as well as formulate and implement national action plans with a results-oriented approach; conduct awareness-raising campaigns, including for women who wish to leave the country, on labour migration and the risks and consequences of trafficking in women and girls; provide mandatory training to all government officials and social workers on the application of anti-trafficking legislation and on their role in preventing and combating trafficking; establish and provide training to law enforcement officials on gender-sensitive mechanisms and standardized policies aimed at the early identification, referral and support, as well as the protection from re-trafficking or re-outrage, of

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<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Council resolutions 21/20 and 23/5.

<sup>6</sup> The Committee against Torture, the Committee on Migrant Workers, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

victims of trafficking, including internally displaced, refugee and asylum-seeking women; ensure that women and girls are not penalized for crimes committed while they were victims of trafficking, and that they have access to quality medical care, legal and psychological counselling, adequate housing, education, training and income-generating opportunities, as well as legal remedies, residence permit procedures, free legal aid and witness protection programmes, regardless of their capacity or willingness to cooperate in the legal proceedings against traffickers; take preventive measures aimed at addressing the root causes of trafficking, without stigmatizing the victims; and conduct comparative studies on trafficking to identify and address its root causes and potential links with bonded labour, domestic servitude and child marriage.

11. Specific measures have also been recommended with respect to the trafficking of children. For girls in particular, the recommendations include the allocation of specific human, technical and financial resources for the investigation of trafficking for forced marriage and/or servitude.

12. Special rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council continued to issue recommendations on trafficking in persons, especially women and children. The Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, continued to examine the impact of anti-trafficking measures on the human rights of victims of trafficking with a view to proposing adequate responses to challenges such as the prevention of revictimization. In her thematic report to the General Assembly in 2013 ([A/68/256](#)), the Special Rapporteur focused on trafficking in persons for the removal of organs and provided recommendations on rights-based responses to addressing trafficking in organs and other emerging forms. In her thematic report to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-sixth session, in 2014, on challenges in developing rights-based responses to trafficking ([A/HRC/26/37](#)), the Special Rapporteur focused on such issues as clarifying the parameters of international legal definitions, addressing the root causes of trafficking and identifying ways in which the mandate can further contribute to the global movement against human trafficking.

13. In her thematic report to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-fifth session, in 2014 ([A/HRC/25/48](#)), the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography noted an increase in child trafficking as a proportion of all human trafficking and stressed that this increase had been greater for girls. In her report to the Council at its twenty-second session, in 2013 ([A/HRC/22/54](#)), the Special Rapporteur focused on the increase in the sexual exploitation of children in the travel and tourism industry, driven by the overall growth of tourism. The report highlighted underreporting and the impunity of offenders as major challenges in combating this phenomenon.

14. The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, also produced two thematic reports during the reporting period. In the first, on servile marriages, issued in 2012 ([A/HRC/21/41](#)), she reaffirmed that under international law, child, forced and early marriages were slavery-like practices. The report supported the conclusions of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights aspects of the victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children (see [A/HRC/4/23](#), para. 38). The 2013 thematic report of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery ([A/HRC/24/43](#)) focused on the challenges and lessons learned in combating such forms of slavery.

## IV. Measures reported by Member States and United Nations entities to implement resolution 67/145

15. As at 9 June 2014, 28 Member States<sup>7</sup> and 10 United Nations entities and intergovernmental organizations<sup>8</sup> had responded to the Secretary-General's request for information. The reported efforts and measures taken to combat trafficking in women and girls responded to the key elements of resolution 67/145 outlined below.

### A. International instruments, legislation and the justice system

16. International law obligates and guides States with respect to the adoption of anti-trafficking laws and policies, and States' adherence to such treaties is indicative of their commitment to action. Of those countries that submitted information for the present report, the majority reported that they were parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, supplementing the Convention (Australia, Cuba, Cyprus, Georgia, Italy, Kuwait, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Pakistan, Paraguay, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine). Currently, 179 Member States are parties and 147 are signatories to the Convention and 159 are parties and 117 are signatories to the Protocol. Some States reported that they were also parties to other related protocols such as the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the Convention (Georgia and Kuwait), while others reported they were parties to other international instruments relevant to combating trafficking in women and girls, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and/or the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Cuba, Cyprus, Georgia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Pakistan, Paraguay and Switzerland).

17. Some States also reported they were parties to various international labour conventions (Cyprus, Georgia, Luxembourg, Pakistan, the Philippines and Switzerland).

18. The adoption of effective legislation at the national level is critical for effective action against trafficking in women and girls. Without such action, those responsible for trafficking and its consequences will continue to act with impunity. In the majority of reporting States, the laws relating to offences of trafficking and the associated forms of exploitation (e.g., sexual exploitation, forced labour and organ removal) are specified in their penal codes (Cuba, Denmark, Georgia, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Pakistan, Romania, the Russian Federation, Spain and Switzerland).

<sup>7</sup> As at 27 June 2014, replies had been received from 22 Member States (Australia, Canada, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland). The contributions of 6 other Member States (Cyprus, Georgia, Kuwait, Madagascar, Pakistan and Ukraine), which were received after the deadline for the previous report (A/67/209), are also considered in the present report.

<sup>8</sup> The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Organization for Migration.

19. Other States have specific legislation in place that criminalizes trafficking and related offences (Australia, Cyprus, Italy, Mexico, Paraguay, the Philippines and Ukraine) or are considering such legislation (Kuwait and Singapore). Having recently revised their legislation on trafficking, some States have expanded the definition of exploitation. In the case of the Philippines, this definition includes the recruitment of Filipino women to marry foreigners and the recruitment of children to engage in armed activities abroad. In the case of other countries, it includes a range of slavery-like practices, including forced marriage and/or forced labour (Australia, Cyprus and Spain). Some States have exempted victims from prosecution for offences that may have been committed in the course of their being trafficked and exploited, such as illegal migration (Cyprus, Georgia, Pakistan and Singapore). Legislation in many States includes specific offences or references with respect to aggravating circumstances such as related abuses of children or situations in which the perpetrator is a public official (Cyprus, Mexico, Pakistan and Romania). Many have special protections in place for particularly vulnerable groups or, in the case of Cuba, mandate disclosure on the part of any public official regarding suspected trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children.

20. In addition to criminalizing trafficking within the framework of penal law, an increasing number of countries have established legal provisions for victim/survivor protection and support, including legal assistance, temporary and/or residency permits and reflection periods, and protection for witnesses during criminal proceedings (Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Georgia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Poland, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine). Some States also highlighted the provision of civil and criminal remedies, victim compensation and/or reparation orders for victims/survivors of human trafficking (Australia, Georgia, Latvia and Switzerland).

21. The enforcement of trafficking laws continues to be a challenge for many States, given the still low numbers of prosecutions. The Philippines, however, reported an increase in the number of convictions from a combined total of 29 for the period 2005-2010 to 89 for the period from July 2010 to January 2014. If they are to be effective, the relevant trafficking laws must be strongly enforced and cases prosecuted in a timely manner. This means that the justice system must be equipped and trained adequately to deal with these matters. Some countries have established special police and/or prosecution units and/or specific police action plans on trafficking at the national and/or provincial level (Australia, Cyprus, Denmark, Singapore, Spain and Switzerland), while Slovenia referred to the development of joint investigation teams in South-eastern Europe. While training programmes and materials on human trafficking, including guidelines on investigation and prosecution for police and prosecutors and training for members of the judiciary, have been developed in nearly all of the reporting countries, the effective enforcement and application of laws for trafficking requires a more specialized approach on the part of the criminal justice system.

22. The United Nations system has supported the work of States in developing laws and improving law enforcement and criminal justice system responses to trafficking. Many United Nations entities have contributed to the development of legislation in various countries to address trafficking (the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) and incorporating human rights principles into judicial decisions on gender-based violence (OHCHR). Others have produced specific tools for law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges (the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime).

## **B. National action plans, strategies and coordination mechanisms**

23. National anti-trafficking strategies, action plans, policies, guidelines or programmes that are aimed at enhancing coordination among relevant national sectors and stakeholders and contain specific measures on trafficking in women and/or children are still common among Member States (Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Finland, Georgia, Mexico, Latvia, Lithuania, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Singapore, Slovenia and Switzerland). Some States have committed to national plans that have yet to be finalized (Italy and Madagascar). Others reported that they were developing or working from their second or later versions of national action plans (Australia, Denmark, Georgia, the Philippines, Slovenia and Spain). Those States that reported having undertaken formal or regular assessments of their action plans did not specify which measures had been successful or otherwise, but Denmark reported that an external evaluation of its third national action plan would soon be finalized, and Slovenia reported that progress on the implementation of its national action plan was reflected in annual reports of its interdepartmental working group on combating trafficking in persons.

24. National plans and strategies commonly include measures necessary for systematic anti-trafficking work, including: developing/amending laws; effectively investigating and prosecuting trafficking; victim identification and support; data collection and research; capacity-building for professionals dealing with trafficking victims/survivors; awareness-raising; and promoting cooperation among all actors addressing human trafficking. Approaches to trafficking in national plans may vary to a large extent, depending on whether States are countries of origin, transit or destination. Countries of origin may focus on the factors that make women and girls vulnerable to trafficking, and others, such as countries of destination, may focus on the identification and rights of victims. For example, there is an increasing focus on forced labour in industry and the rights of migrant workers in some States (Australia, Canada and Finland), on safe migration in others (Poland and Romania) and on addressing the particular vulnerability of migrant workers to human trafficking in another (the Philippines). With the exception of a small number of Member States (Australia, Japan, Mexico and the Philippines), few identified human rights as the basis for national action to combat trafficking in women and girls, although OHCHR continues to work with Member States and advocate the application of a human-rights-based approach to responding to trafficking.

25. Additionally, if national plans and strategies are to be implemented effectively and the impact of various activities and actions is to be assessed adequately, States must dedicate adequate funds and resources to those measures. Of States reporting during the period under review, however, only a few provided information on the allocation of funds for the implementation of national action plans and programmes (Australia, Canada, Italy and Lithuania). In the cases of those States that did report on the allocation of funds, it was not always clear to which measures the funding had been allocated.

26. National mechanisms for improving coordination among all actors involved in the development and implementation of laws and policies are important in combating trafficking. In the majority of reporting States, such mechanisms include task forces, management or administrative boards, technical commissions, monitoring or ministerial committees and interdepartmental working groups (Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Georgia, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg,



Madagascar, the Philippines, Romania, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine). Certain countries (the Philippines and Romania) have created provincial and/or local coordination and response bodies. Independent oversight of the national approach to trafficking in each State is also important for an effective response to trafficking. Some States have appointed a national rapporteur to carry out this function (Finland, Luxembourg and Slovenia).

### **C. Bilateral, regional and international agreements and cooperation**

27. Owing to the significant transnational and cross-border nature of trafficking, particularly trafficking in women and girls, bilateral, regional and international cooperation is critical to combating and eliminating this crime. Some States reported efforts to strengthen cooperation at the international level through participation in a range of internationally coordinated projects or programmes. For example, Switzerland reported on its contribution to an initiative, with the participation of 12 States parties to the Convention and supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, for more effective implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol by overseeing the development of two documents aimed at providing guidance to Member States on problematic concepts reflected in the Protocol.

28. At the regional level, many Member States demonstrated strong commitment to cooperation and collaboration on trafficking. Some States reported on their ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the implementation of its accompanying directives (Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland). Many countries that are signatories or parties to the European Convention have also aligned their domestic laws with the various directives. The Russian Federation highlighted regional cooperation among countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States through the plan on the prevention of human trafficking for the period 2014-2018. OHCHR highlighted the work undertaken by the Alliance Expert Coordination Team of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which organized a number of international and regional events on the issue of trafficking. Paraguay highlighted cooperation among countries of the Organization of American States and the work being undertaken under the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women.

29. In contributing to regional coordination efforts some countries reported having hosted, co-hosted or participated in regional, subregional or multilateral technical expert meetings, task forces or initiatives on trafficking in persons (Australia, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Mexico, the Philippines and Switzerland). Australia reported having worked with countries in its region to update laws on trafficking or implement action plans. Many countries have also concluded bilateral cooperation agreements/partnerships or meetings to end trafficking in persons (Cuba, Denmark, Georgia, Japan, Lithuania, the Philippines, Romania and Switzerland). During the reporting period, there was increased reporting on cooperation with non-governmental organizations and civil society (Australia, Canada, Finland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mexico, Romania and Singapore).

30. Some countries referred to specific assistance programmes or projects that they had funded, or for which funding had been received, to combat trafficking or

strengthen international capacity in the fight against trafficking (Australia, Denmark, Kuwait, Paraguay, Romania and Spain). A United Nations entity also reported having worked to support international, regional and bilateral cooperation (OHCHR).

#### **D. Prevention measures and awareness-raising**

31. Education, training and awareness-raising programmes aimed at improving knowledge and awareness of human trafficking and its risks are the most common measures being implemented by the majority of reporting States in relation to prevention. For example, Georgia has included a mandatory course on trafficking for all law students in the curriculum at the State University in Tbilisi. Other activities include the publication of communications in electronic and print media; the production of films and radio and television programmes; the creation of interactive websites; and discussions on the prevention of human trafficking as part of school and university curricula. Many of the activities are carried out in multiple languages and in cooperation with partners, including non-governmental organizations, international and regional organizations, national human rights institutions and members of the media and the business sector.

32. Information campaigns have been developed targeting specific groups such as children and young people (Luxembourg), women who may be vulnerable to trafficking under the guise of marriage (the Philippines), indigenous/aboriginal communities (Canada) and the tourism sector (Cuba and Spain).

33. In preventing trafficking, it is also important to address the factors that make people, particularly women and girls, vulnerable to trafficking. Very few of the reporting States highlighted efforts to address such factors as poverty, unemployment, gender equality and the economic empowerment of women and girls in their own countries. Both Finland and Georgia reported that efforts to prevent inequality, social exclusion and poverty (including by reducing unemployment) and address discrimination against women were key priorities in their government programmes. Georgia also reported that it was focusing on enhancing the quality of education to facilitate employment. Pakistan reported that it had increased services to address poverty, and the Philippines noted the vulnerability of migrant workers to human trafficking as among the primary problems resulting from migration. Australia, Poland and Slovenia have focused their efforts on increasing awareness among migrant and foreign workers of their rights in relation to the workplace in order to prevent discrimination and exploitation. The majority of the submissions of reporting States were still focused on their efforts to criminalize trafficking and their approaches to providing victims of trafficking, particularly women and girls, with protection and support services following their victimization.

34. United Nations entities also supported or conducted prevention and awareness-raising initiatives by supporting high-level dialogues and international conferences (the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) and supporting national campaigns to eradicate trafficking (the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). Many also played a prominent role in the preparations and activities for the first World Day against Trafficking in Persons, celebrated on 30 July 2014 (including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, IOM, OHCHR and UNESCO). Again, however,

the efforts reported were not directed at addressing the specific root causes of or risk factors for trafficking. This appears to remain a significant gap and challenge in the overall response to trafficking in women and girls.

35. In humanitarian situations, the levels of insecurity, as well as the breakdown in family and community structures and other safety nets, increase the exposure of women and girls in particular to all forms of violence, including trafficking. Only Georgia and Pakistan acknowledged the additional vulnerability of women and girls in humanitarian situations. Georgia reported that it had been training its military, peacekeeping and humanitarian personnel deployed in conflict, post-conflict and other emergency situations since 2007 to ensure that they did not promote, facilitate or exploit trafficking in women and girls in those environments. Pakistan highlighted that its National Disaster Management Authority, together with relevant authorities at the provincial level, had worked with international organizations to provide services that had decreased the vulnerability of women and girls to trafficking, although specific details about those services were not provided. The United Nations system has also been working in partnership with countries at the national and regional levels to enhance the protection of refugee and displaced women and girls (UNDP Iraq). Given the fragile security environments in many countries and the devastating consequences of conflict and natural disasters in many regions, more prevention efforts will be required to ensure that women and girls who are affected by these situations do not become vulnerable to traffickers.

## **E. Capacity-building**

36. All professionals who respond to trafficking in women and girls need to have the capacity to deal with trafficking in a gender-sensitive and effective manner. Nearly all States reported that they had provided training programmes and produced and issued guidelines and manuals on trafficking in women and girls and, in some cases, on the human rights of women and children. These were frequently geared towards government officials, in particular immigration and diplomatic personnel, police officers, prosecutors, judicial personnel, border officials, social and health workers, teachers, workplace/labour inspectors, staff in detention facilities, military and peacekeeping personnel, transport personnel and others who might come into contact with women and girls who had been trafficked. The scope of such training included the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators and the identification and protection of and support for victims/survivors. Luxembourg reported its requirement for ongoing training by magistrates, and Germany has developed standards for the training of relevant professionals. Notably, between 2011 and 2013 the Philippines conducted 13,463 police-community relations training seminars on trafficking in persons and 32,306 information drives or dialogues nationwide to increase community awareness and seek cooperation in addressing the issue.

37. During the reporting period, United Nations entities (UNICEF, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)) also conducted training or held capacity-building events on trafficking in cooperation with other organizations and institutions and Member States. UNICEF, for example, undertook capacity-building with police, prosecutors and judges in 73 countries, and UN-Women helped to increase the capacity of the Government and civil society to develop strategies for preventing trafficking in women and girls in India.

## **F. Protection and services for victims/survivors**

38. Victims of trafficking must be correctly identified so that they can be provided with appropriate protection and support. In some cases, women and girls are not identified as victims of trafficking, but are detained and deported as illegal migrants. While the identification of victims remains challenging for States, various countries have increased their efforts in this area. Both Cyprus and Paraguay have developed comprehensive manuals and protocols to assist officials in the identification of victims and in addressing the complexities involved in this process.

39. In an increasing number of countries, protection and support services are available for victims/survivors of trafficking, in many cases specifically women or children. Such services may include medical, psychological, legal and social/financial assistance, as well as witness protection and shelters, which are often run in cooperation with non-governmental organizations and with the financial support of States (Australia, Canada, Georgia, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Singapore and Ukraine). In order to facilitate access to services, some States have developed national referral mechanisms and/or hotlines for victims/survivors or their families (Georgia, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Philippines and Poland). Paraguay has established a specific structure within the Government to ensure that all victims, without discrimination, are identified and protected and receive assistance. Some States have also developed specialized responses, support services or centres for children who are victims/survivors of trafficking and/or abuse (Lithuania, Pakistan and Romania). Italy reported on the development of good practice at the local level, where survivors of trafficking have been trained as cultural mediators to support other victims. While the majority of States reported that services were available for victims/survivors, only some of them (Australia, Canada, Georgia, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Slovenia and Spain) provided information on either the accessibility of such services to victims/survivors or the funding allocated for such services. Spain reported the development of an information guide on available services for victims of trafficking. Romania reported that a draft law was being considered in that country aimed at regulating the granting of public funds to support non-governmental organizations, which was currently being done through the national coordination mechanism. Georgia has created a State fund for the protection of and assistance to victims/survivors of trafficking through legislation.

40. Some countries reported having undertaken programmes for the rehabilitation, reintegration and return of victims/survivors, in cooperation with IOM and/or non-governmental organizations, in order to ensure sensitive and victim-centred responses, including assistance in the identification of victims (Georgia, Italy and Paraguay).

41. A majority of reporting States referred to the provision of temporary and/or permanent residency permits. With some exceptions (Canada, Georgia and Italy), the provision of temporary or extended stay was contingent on the victims/survivors' cooperation with law enforcement and their participation in prosecution, although the provision of immediate protection support and assistance was not. This remains an ongoing challenge to the development of a victim-centred and rights-based response to trafficking in human beings.

42. Some United Nations entities also contribute directly or indirectly to the delivery of direct protection and support services to victims/survivors of trafficking, through technical assistance provided to various countries (UNDP Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region and UNICEF).

43. Other means by which the United Nations system contributes to the protection of and support for individuals is the provision of funds to non-governmental organizations to enhance direct service delivery. The two main trust funds managed and coordinated by the United Nations to provide such grants are the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, administered by OHCHR, and the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, administered by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. In 2012, 40 per cent of the grants of the fund administered by OHCHR were awarded to civil society organizations for projects focused on assisting victims/survivors of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation, forced labour and the worst forms of child labour. In 2013, 50 per cent of the grants were awarded to civil society organizations for projects related to trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation and forced labour in the five regions of the world. A majority of the victims assisted included women and children.

44. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reports that in 2011, the trust fund that it administers granted funding to 11 non-governmental organizations for a period of three years, and that in 2014 those grantees have started to implement the final year of that funding. A second call for proposals will take place later this year after an independent evaluation has delivered its findings on this first grant-making cycle.

## **G. The role of the business sector and media providers**

45. States recognize the important role that the private sector can play in combating and preventing trafficking in women and girls, as well as the need to intensify collaboration, particularly with the tourism industry and Internet service providers. In some cases, the business community creates and adopts self-regulatory mechanisms, such as codes of conduct, to prevent and combat trafficking. Australia is working with business to examine ways to address human trafficking and related exploitation, such as forced labour, in the supply chain for both imported and domestically produced goods.

46. Media and other business sector providers are important partners in raising awareness and disseminating information. Switzerland reported having worked with the private sector on awareness-raising campaigns. Training for media representatives is conducted periodically in many countries to ensure sensitive and accurate reporting about trafficking and victims/survivors. Other countries, including Singapore, referred to their support for conferences organized by United Nations entities and awareness-raising efforts with the business community such as the “Business against Trafficking in Persons” conference, organized by UN-Women and the Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics. While States acknowledged the importance of working with the business sector and the media, further and more focused efforts on the part of States are required.

## H. Data collection and research

47. Research and the availability and exchange of data are essential for the development and implementation of better legislation and policies as well as other targeted measures, including services for victims/survivors. In addition to the fact that the number of cases that come to the attention of the police, courts or service providers is small, the methodologies for the collection of such data differ and estimates of the number of victims/survivors vary, making it difficult to share information and approach the problem in a more systematic way. In his recent report on improving the quality and availability of statistics on crime and criminal justice for policy development (E/CN.15/2014/10), presented at the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Secretary-General pointed out the need for further development of methodological tools for the measurement of crime, including trafficking in persons.

48. Some States reported efforts to initiate, enhance or diversify the collection and analysis of data on trafficking in persons in order to gain a better understanding of the prevalence of trafficking as well as the extent of the gaps in knowledge and understanding of the issue. This was undertaken through research programmes, training or formal studies, sometimes in cooperation with research institutes (Australia, Singapore and Switzerland). Many States reported having collected some forms of data, some of which were disaggregated by sex and/or age (Denmark and Georgia), but the collection had been focused mainly on administrative data from the criminal justice system (Denmark, Spain and Switzerland), although some States had included data from victim services (Australia, Luxembourg and Slovenia) and other governmental departments such as those responsible for social services (the Philippines).

49. Fewer countries reported having collected a broader range of data such as on the identified causes of trafficking in women and children, the nationalities of victims/survivors, and the identified forms of exploitation. Paraguay and Italy have developed national databases on trafficking in human beings focusing on the assistance provided to victims and, in the case of Paraguay, including information on how the victim was identified and the context of the victimization, data relevant to trafficking, and data relevant to detection. Italy reported that its database facilitated the monitoring, on a real-time basis, of the number of victims assisted at the national level as well as the identification of new trends or changes in trafficking patterns. Since 2012, Romania has been producing an annual report on the situation of trafficking in that country, based on data collected on identified victims, and Denmark has developed a set of indicators against which to collect data. The Philippines acknowledged the challenges of integrating data from all relevant entities and the need to harmonize this information to ensure that the appropriate assistance and interventions could be provided to victims.

50. Some States highlighted promising steps to strengthen the knowledge base on trafficking in women and girls in their own jurisdictions. Canada, for example, has developed a baseline report on domestic human trafficking for sexual exploitation that provides insight into the nature and extent of such trafficking in that country and identifies the current gaps and challenges in its response.

51. United Nations bodies and organizations also contribute to the overall bank of knowledge on trafficking through the collection of data and research, undertaken to

better understand and improve responses to trafficking. They do so in a number of ways, including by supporting studies and research (the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and UNDP Nepal), compiling and maintaining or coordinating the global trafficking statistics and databases (the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, ILO and IOM) and developing databases on the jurisprudence of human rights mechanisms (OHCHR) or human trafficking judicial outcomes (the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). In addition to the development of the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the human trafficking case law database of the Office reached an important milestone this year, as it now includes detailed information on more than 1,000 trafficking cases from 83 countries, the lessons learned from which are crucial in assisting law enforcement and justice practitioners around the world, given the low number of prosecutions and convictions.

## **V. United Nations efforts to achieve greater coordination and capacity development to support national efforts**

52. Intergovernmental and expert bodies continue to develop new or advance existing efforts to better coordinate national and international efforts to combat trafficking. For example, the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, facilitated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, carried out a number of activities during the reporting period to support Member States in combating trafficking, including by assisting countries in implementing the relevant conventions and protocols and the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

53. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons<sup>9</sup> continued to hold meetings and carry out its work to improve cooperation and coordination between United Nations entities and other international organizations to facilitate a holistic approach to preventing and combating trafficking in persons. During the reporting period, the Group formalized its governance structure by adopting terms of reference, institutionalizing its rotating chairmanship and its working group, composed of six member organizations as its decision-making body, and formulating a workplan, which will guide its programme of work on an annual basis as from 2014. In 2013, it published a paper entitled “The international legal frameworks concerning trafficking in persons”, which is the first in a series of policy papers developed jointly by its member organizations, discussing key issues, as identified and agreed upon by them, that represent a critical challenge for the international community in the fight against trafficking in persons in the coming decade.

54. At the regional level, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, together with IOM, co-chairs the Asia Pacific Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration including Human Trafficking to ensure a coordinated response to migration and human trafficking in that region. Neither the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons nor the regional-level coordination mechanism referred to any specific work on trafficking in women and girls.

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<sup>9</sup> The Group is coordinated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, but is currently chaired by IOM and was chaired by ILO in 2013.

## VI. Conclusions and recommendations

### Conclusions

55. Fewer States provided submissions during the reporting period, possibly owing to the request made to Member States in September 2013 to undertake national reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to submit those reviews by 1 May 2014.

56. Actions continue to be taken at all levels to prevent and address trafficking in persons, many of which are focused on trafficking in women and children. While States were invited to report on initiatives that responded to trafficking in women and girls, the vast majority did not distinguish between responses relating to girls and those relating to children more broadly, even though more girls than boys are victims of trafficking.

57. Adherence to relevant international instruments continues to increase, and the majority of reporting States have carried out legal reforms to varying degrees. While States are making some efforts aimed at ensuring that existing and new laws are being enforced consistently and effectively and that members of the police force, prosecutors and the judiciary are adequately trained, evidence shows that prosecution rates continue to be low.

58. National action plans and accompanying coordination mechanisms are critical to ensuring that responses to trafficking are systematic and consistent. While nearly all reporting States have developed national action plans and established national coordination bodies to assist in the implementation of plans, during the reporting period very limited information was provided on the outcomes of any evaluations or assessments of national action plans that could be shared more broadly to assist other States in developing promising initiatives and strategies.

59. Many States are parties to varying regional, multilateral and bilateral agreements and arrangements that are critical owing to the transnational and cross-border nature of trafficking and for States to continue to build capacity in responding to trafficking. Many of these arrangements continue to be focused on efforts to apprehend and prosecute traffickers. More efforts could be focused on cooperation for prevention as well as victim support and assistance.

60. While many reporting States have carried out educational programmes, awareness-raising campaigns and other initiatives, there is a need to reinforce efforts and resources in the area of prevention that are focused on addressing the root causes of trafficking, especially in countries of origin. Very limited information in relation to addressing root causes was reported by Member States. This area requires a greater focus in the future, including with respect to the intersections between migration and trafficking in persons.

61. Very few Member States reported on improving the prevention of trafficking in women and girls in humanitarian situations, including in conflict/post-conflict environments, natural disasters and other emergency environments. Given the devastating consequences for women and girls in these circumstances and their heightened vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking, more focus on the part of States is required in this area.



62. Many States continue to find it difficult to identify trafficking victims, although there is a greater focus on building the capacity of officials in this area. Once identified, however, trafficking victims/survivors require timely access to specialized support services. While many countries have established or enhanced support services for trafficking victims/survivors, especially women and children, few States reported that temporary and permanent residence was available to all victims/survivors irrespective of a victim's ability or willingness to assist in criminal proceedings. A rights-based approach to trafficking requires that full support and assistance be provided to all victims of trafficking, irrespective of their willingness to engage in criminal proceedings.

63. With the exception of working with the media and, in some cases, the tourism sector, few States reported collaboration with the private sector, particularly in relation to supply chains in industry or domestic servitude that foster demand for forced labour.

64. Despite increased efforts to improve the knowledge base regarding the scope and nature of trafficking in women and girls, data continue to be unreliable and deficient or focused primarily on outcomes of the criminal justice system. Statistical data need to be comprehensive and to be disaggregated by sex, race, age, ethnicity and other relevant characteristics. More comprehensive data, collected and analysed in a globally consistent and comparable way, allow for the development of improved and more targeted international solutions.

#### **Recommendations**

65. Given that the majority of detected victims/survivors of trafficking are women and girls, all States should ensure that the prevention of and responses to trafficking continue to take into account the specific needs of women and girls, especially in addressing specific forms of exploitation such as sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. The responses of States should be rights-based and, where relevant, address risk factors that increase vulnerability to trafficking, including gender inequality.

66. All States should ensure that specific laws criminalizing all forms of trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, are developed in accordance with the standards set by the Convention and associated Protocols and that sentences and penalties are in line with those for other serious crimes, including enhanced penalties for aggravating circumstances.

67. Laws and policies on labour and migration, as they intersect with trafficking, should also be reviewed and aligned with international standards to ensure that responses to trafficking are comprehensive and based on human rights.

68. Efforts must continue to ensure the effective and gender-sensitive enforcement of anti-trafficking legislation and to hold the perpetrators accountable for their crimes. In addition to systematic training for relevant personnel, States should consider developing specialized responses to trafficking through the creation of specialized police units, prosecution offices, judges and/or courts, as well as specific protection programmes for witnesses and their families, to assist in efforts to increase the number of investigations and prosecutions.

69. States should ensure that they have a national plan that is current, responsive to the particular vulnerability of women and girls and comprehensive in nature. States should also have adequate national coordination mechanisms that are multisectoral and comprise relevant stakeholders and service providers, including non-governmental and civil society organizations where relevant.

70. States should also ensure that their national action plans are adequately funded and are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis in order to identify and assess the impact of their efforts in combating trafficking. States should also consider establishing an independent oversight mechanism such as a national rapporteur to ensure that plans and strategies are effective.

71. States should continue to develop and implement bilateral, multilateral and regional agreements and arrangements to ensure effective action in all areas of combating trafficking in women and girls. Given the transnational nature of trafficking, further multilateral cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination is required to ensure that prevention is prioritized and trafficking responses are comprehensive.

72. In developing and implementing prevention measures, States should take more action to address the factors that make people, especially women and girls, vulnerable to trafficking, particularly in relation to reducing poverty and unemployment and providing access to education. States should also consider awareness-raising targeted to groups that are at increased risk of becoming victims of trafficking.

73. Given the enhanced vulnerability of women and girls in the range of humanitarian situations to trafficking, States should specifically include the prevention of the trafficking of such women and girls in all national, regional and international initiatives.

74. States should continue to enhance the protection of and support for victims/survivors and ensure a rights-based approach to the issue of trafficking in women and girls. Given the importance of the participation of the victims of trafficking in criminal proceedings, States should extend the reflection time for victims; protect victims from prosecution for any legal violations committed in the course of being trafficked; provide temporary or, where necessary, permanent residency to victims, irrespective of their participation in criminal proceedings; and provide appropriate long-term support and rehabilitation to enable victims to reintegrate into society and begin new lives.

75. States should continue to work with media, but also encourage and foster relationships with other private sector organizations, particularly with respect to the adoption of self-regulatory mechanisms and codes of conduct by different industries, and form partnerships with business to address demand in supply chains.

76. States should develop processes to enhance and intensify data collection as well as improve and harmonize the methodologies for monitoring and evaluation. In doing so, States should actively participate in all international efforts to develop methodological tools that assist with the collection and analysis of data for the purpose of improving coordinated international efforts to combat trafficking, particularly trafficking in women and girls.