



Regional Parliamentarians Conference on Combatting Human Trafficking

21-22 March 2017

Bangkok, Thailand

Statement of Commitment

We, Ministers and Parliamentarians from 21 countries of the Asia-Pacific region, inter-governmental organizations and civil society organizations, assembled at the Regional Parliamentarians Conference on Combatting Human Trafficking in Bangkok, Thailand on 21-22 March 2017, hereby adopt this Statement of Commitment.

Preamble:

1. **Reaffirming** the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) and recalling the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), obliging States to prevent and combat trafficking in persons;
2. **Recognizing** the crucial importance of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children which provided for the first time an internationally agreed definition of the crime of trafficking in persons, aimed at preventing trafficking in persons, protecting victims, prosecuting perpetrators, and promoting cooperation among States in order to meet those objectives;
3. **Further recalling** other related commitments, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1963), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the first Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), obliging Member States to agree and prohibit that no one shall be held in slavery and slave-like conditions;
4. **Recalling** other related conventions and instruments, such as the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) of the International Labour Organization, the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Optional Protocols (2002) thereto on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the involvement of children in armed conflict, UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and their Families (1990);
5. **Reaffirming** our commitment to leave no one behind and to the full and effective realization of each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the UN



General Assembly on 25 September 2015, and especially concerned with the fulfilment of goals 5, 8, 10, 16, and 17 with specific targets for the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and children; decent work for all women and men; prohibition and elimination of all forms of child bondage and labour, eradication of forced labour, ending modern slavery and human trafficking in all its forms; implementation of fair and rights-based migration policies;

6. **Taking note** of the thematic debate on human trafficking held by the UN General Assembly in June 2008, which gave Member States a forum for discussion concentrating on prevention, protection and prosecution, and the interactive thematic dialogue on “Taking collective action to end human trafficking,” held by the UN General Assembly in May 2009, which underlined the importance of strengthening collective action by Member States and other stakeholders, including inter-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector and the media;
7. **Further taking note** of the Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2016 (Resolution 71/1), the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants wherein the Head of States, Governments and High Representatives reaffirmed the importance of the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the relevant Protocols; vigorously combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling with a view to their elimination, including through targeted measures to identify victims of human trafficking or those at risk of trafficking;
8. **Recalling** relevant sub-regional and regional mechanisms and initiatives such as the Hanoi Declaration and the Hanoi Plan of Action (1998), which, among others, committed to intensifying individual and collective efforts to address transnational crimes, including trafficking in persons; the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (2002); the Colombo Process (2003); the Association of South East Asian Nations Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons, Particularly Women and Children (2004); Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking (COMMIT) Process (2004); the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (2008); the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons (2017); the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution (2002); the SAARC Convention on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion of Child Welfare in South Asia (2002);
9. **Reaffirming** the commitments made at the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (ICPPD), the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD PoA) adopted in Cairo in 1994, and the Framework of Actions for the follow-up to ICPD PoA Beyond 2014, to prevent all international trafficking in migrants, including for the purpose of prostitution; and calling on governments of countries of origin, transit and destination to adopt effective sanctions against those who organize undocumented migration, exploit undocumented migration or engage in any form of international traffic in women, youth and children;
10. **Asserting** the importance of South-South cooperation, and specifically the importance of our sub-regional inter-governmental bodies: the South Asian Association for Regional



Cooperation (SAARC), the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and Parliamentarians from Central Asia, and other smaller and emerging regional communities;

11. **Recalling** the Kathmandu Declaration of the South Asia Parliamentarians' Meeting to Accelerate Collective Efforts to End Early, Child and Forced Marriage (2016), the Declaration and Recommendations made by the Global Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development toward the G7 Ise-Shima Summit (2016) to reaffirm the commitment to human security for all, and the Statement of Commitment made at the 11th Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Conference (2016) to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and eliminate violence against women and girls;
12. **Recognizing** the importance of the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC) mandate and the Regional Action Plans, and the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Children;

We, hereby, commit to:

13. **End** human trafficking in all its forms;
14. **Review, amend, enact and enforce** legislation on prevention, prosecution, protection, including rehabilitation of survivors, and other measures through accelerated coordination, as necessary, to criminalize trafficking in persons;
15. **Reinforce** the accountability of Member States in addressing human trafficking and in enabling parliamentarians to play a strong advocacy and monitoring role on policy and legal reform, and implementation;
16. **Ensure** a comprehensive approach to trafficking in persons and address the need for people-centered, gender transformative implementation of targeted measures with assurance of human and financial resources and investments, nationally and regionally;
17. **Ensure** the systematic follow-up and review of all commitments we are making today, and inform the National Voluntary Review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of progress made under goals 5, 8, 10, 16, and 17;
18. **Strengthen** the capacity of law enforcement, immigration, education, social welfare, labour and other concerned public services, institutions and officials in the prevention of trafficking in persons and protection of victims, taking into account the role of communities and related community protection mechanisms and the need to respect human rights and child- and gender-sensitive issues;
19. **Create** an enabling environment and opportunities for positive, safe and meaningful participation for civil society organizations and all other stakeholders;



20. **Reaffirm** the importance of improved data collection, particularly by national authorities. Such data should be comprehensive and accurate, timely and reliable, and disaggregated on income, gender, age, race, religion, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics;
21. **Call upon** States that have not done so to consider ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime; the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. We also call upon States that have not done so to consider acceding to the relevant International Labour Organization Conventions and for all countries to give full effect to all its provisions; the UN Third Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communication procedure (2014); the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990);
22. **Provide** access to all basic services, including health and legal services, taking into account the fact that human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation has serious, immediate and long-term consequences on health, including sexual and reproductive health, and ensure access to services for physical, psychological, social recovery and rehabilitation of trafficked persons;
23. **Ensure** a zero-tolerance policy against all those involved in trafficking in persons;
24. **Work towards** ending the immigration detention of children;
25. **Continue** the dialogue and create a process for periodic reviews of the implementation of this Statement of Commitment.

Adopted in Bangkok, Thailand on 22 March 2017 by Ministers and Parliamentarians from 21 countries of the Asia-Pacific Region, inter-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations.