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Crime prevention and criminal justice

Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/195](#), entitled “Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons”, and contains a summary of the efforts of Member States and entities of the United Nations system towards implementing it. The report includes information on the status of ratifications or accessions to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as on efforts made by all stakeholders to further enhance the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution [64/293](#). The report also provides an update on the status and work of the United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children; information on the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018*, published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; an update on the work of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons; and information on awareness-raising campaigns, in particular, the designated World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

* [A/74/50](#).



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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution [72/195](#), entitled “Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons”, the General Assembly called upon Member States to continue their efforts to criminalize trafficking in persons, invited them to promote a human rights-based, gender- and age-sensitive approach in addressing all factors that make people vulnerable to trafficking in persons, and called upon them to increase prevention efforts and investigate, prosecute and penalize traffickers. The Assembly urged Member States and other stakeholders mentioned in the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution [64/293](#), to continue to contribute to the full and effective implementation of the Global Plan of Action, including by means of strengthening cooperation and improving coordination among themselves in achieving that goal. The Global Plan of Action called for coordinated and consistent measures to fight trafficking in persons in the areas of prevention of trafficking in persons, protection of and assistance to victims of trafficking in persons, prosecution of traffickers, and strengthening of partnerships to combat trafficking in persons. The Global Plan of Action also created the United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, tasked the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with biennial reporting on patterns and flows of trafficking in persons, and strengthened the role of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons.

2. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its seventy-fourth session a report on the implementation of resolution [72/195](#). The present report is based, inter alia, on information received from Member States and entities of the United Nations system, as well as member agencies of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. It covers the reporting period since the adoption of the previous resolution [70/179](#), entitled “Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons”, from 17 December 2015 to 15 April 2019.

II. Status of ratification of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and progress by Member States towards criminalizing all forms of trafficking in persons

3. In its resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly urged Member States that had not yet done so to consider ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. During the reporting period, three States ratified the Trafficking in Persons Protocol: Fiji (19 September 2017), Japan (11 July 2017) and Maldives (14 September 2016). The Protocol was also ratified by one non-Member observer State: State of Palestine (29 December 2017).

4. Also in resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly called upon Member States to continue their efforts to criminalize trafficking in persons in all its forms, to condemn those practices and to investigate, prosecute and penalize traffickers and intermediaries. According to the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018*, published by UNODC, as of August 2018, 168 countries of the 181 assessed had legislation in place that criminalized trafficking in persons broadly, in line with the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. Of the 13 remaining countries, nine had anti-trafficking legislation that only criminalized some aspects of the trafficking definition – for example, only trafficking for sexual exploitation, or trafficking in children. Criminal codes in four countries do not include the offence of trafficking in persons. Between August 2016 and August 2018, one country adopted new trafficking legislation, while

five additional countries made amendments to existing legislation, thereby bringing it fully in line with the definition of trafficking contained in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. The report also showed that the global conviction rate for trafficking in persons remained low but was increasing.

5. During the period 2007–2016, the share of countries recording no convictions declined from 15 per cent to 9 per cent. Some countries recorded their first convictions during the period 2014–2016; the number of countries reporting between 11 and 50 convictions per year has increased significantly in recent years.

III. Ensuring the full and effective implementation of the Global Plan of Action

A. Measures reported by Member States, including to prevent and reduce the risk of becoming a victim of trafficking in persons

6. A request for information on national measures to prevent, address and combat trafficking in persons was circulated by UNODC in the form of a note verbale. As at 15 April 2019, the following Member States had replied to that request: Algeria, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Czechia, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Guinea, Hungary, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Myanmar, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Togo, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay.

1. Legislation

7. Member States reported that legislative efforts had been undertaken to ensure that national legislation on trafficking in persons, whether specific laws or articles in the criminal code, were fully in line with the provisions set forth in the international framework. Several Member States highlighted that they had legislated on specific aspects of trafficking in persons, providing for articles that targeted labour exploitation, including administrative procedures to prevent and address it. Member States also reported on having enhanced the protection of children, with a specific focus on pornography and forced begging.

8. The majority of reporting Member States have implemented national action plans to address trafficking in persons, broadly developing along four pillars: the prevention, the protection of the victims, the prosecution of the perpetrators, and partnerships among institutional actors and civil society. The plans are aimed at regulating the functions of different stakeholders while building collaborative networks to succeed in national efforts to eradicate trafficking in persons. In line with their national action plans, some Member States perform data collection and disseminate knowledge through the preparation of annual reports on trafficking. Those tools are mostly used as a means for sharing information with other countries in order to provide for integrated responses at the supranational level.

9. Lastly, Member States stressed the importance of a clear enumeration of the various forms of exploitation, as detailed in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, in order to ensure that every instance is captured under a specific legal provision and to provide for adequate criminalization of the activities of the perpetrators.

2. Prevention

10. In resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly urged Member States to continue to contribute to the full and effective implementation of the Global Plan of Action, including by means of strengthening cooperation and improving coordination among themselves in achieving that goal. In addition, the Assembly called upon Member

States to increase and support prevention efforts in countries of origin, transit and destination by focusing on the demand and supply chains that foster all forms of trafficking in persons. The Assembly also called upon Member States to take into consideration new methods of recruiting victims of trafficking in persons, such as the use of the Internet by traffickers, in particular for recruiting children, and to take measures to develop targeted awareness-raising campaigns.

11. The majority of Member States reported that their prevention efforts were primarily focused on preventing the public and private sector supply chains to contribute in any way to trafficking in persons. Many Member States have put in place specific measures, through the use of the intelligence services and enhanced police investigations, to address the use of social media to recruit victims of trafficking in persons. Several Member States referred to their efforts in enhancing the security of identity documents to prevent their unlawful creation, issuance and use, in line with article 12 of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol.

12. A large number of Member States reported having undertaken national awareness-raising campaigns on trafficking in persons. Those campaigns took many different forms such as e-learning modules, seminars, social network campaigns, billboards and posters, documentaries, art and photo exhibitions and television broadcasts related to countering trafficking in persons. Other Member States reported joining or utilizing the Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking. Many countries also reported having created different events to mark the World Day against Trafficking in Persons (30 July), through a variety of initiatives including films, light shows and seminars. Many of the activities took place in cooperation with the private sector, civil society and other international and regional organizations.

13. Some countries mentioned having developed or funded awareness-raising and information campaigns with a focus on certain types of trafficking and/or campaigns aimed at specific groups – for example, children, forced labour in specific sectors, forced marriage, domestic workers, migrants and other vulnerable workers.

14. A number of Member States also reported having enacted legislation to grant enhanced protection to the rights of workers, provide for frequent labour inspections, impose fair wages, prohibit employers from making deductions from wages for accommodation, and introduce severe ban periods and fines for employers who violate labour requirements.

15. Many States reported on their efforts to enhance cooperation with the business sector, as a source of data and a partner in preventing trafficking in persons, and with civil society, as a key actor in addressing all the various aspects of trafficking in persons. Some countries also provided for increased involvement of diplomatic missions abroad as a vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge on the risks associated with becoming a victim of trafficking in a foreign country.

3. Prosecution and punishment

16. In its resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly called upon Member States to continue their efforts to criminalize trafficking in persons and to investigate, prosecute and penalize traffickers and intermediaries.

17. Member States reported the increasing development of policies and national frameworks that provided detailed guidelines on how to investigate and prosecute trafficking in persons, matched with constant training to relevant criminal justice officials such as police officers, prosecutors and judges.

18. Several States reported the creation of specialized multidisciplinary law enforcement units or specialized prosecutor's offices for countering trafficking in persons, which were key measures for effectively investigating and prosecuting trafficking cases. Many Member States also strengthened national cooperation, knowledge-sharing and the sharing of experiences among branches of national authorities by means of seminars and training sessions or by establishing inter-agency working groups, task forces or special advisory councils, or appointed ambassadors

to take action against trafficking in persons. Some Member States reported having put in place specific mechanisms to identify and respond to children at risk of becoming victims of trafficking, or to quickly detect suspected traffickers.

19. Several Member States referred to special units for the investigation and identification of cases of trafficking in persons being set up at the main entry points, such as airports and ports.

20. Member States reported on the increase in court cases dealing with trafficking in persons, including on the number of convictions. Member States underlined the importance of legally prescribed, adequate sanctions for human traffickers.

21. Member States also stressed the importance of having exempted victims of trafficking from criminal prosecution for crimes they had been forced to commit as a result of their trafficking experience.

4. Protection of and assistance for trafficking victims

22. In its resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly noted the importance of providing protection and assistance to trafficking victims, calling for the full respect of their human rights and the provision of appropriate care, assistance and services for their rehabilitation in cooperation with civil society and other relevant partners.

23. Many Member States reported on the importance of having in place national referral mechanisms. A number of them highlighted the need for protection and assistance programmes for victims of trafficking to be centred on human rights and tailored to individual needs, including with due consideration to the age and gender of the victim. Such programmes should provide for access to health services, education, vocational training, the labour market and compensation. Several Member States reported that government agencies, non-governmental agencies, international organizations and civil society were all part of national systems for the identification of and provision of support to victims of trafficking.

24. Member States reported on the importance of the provision of protection and assistance to trafficking victims, as well as on their enhanced efforts to ensure it. Almost all Member States reported on some aspect of services provided to assist and protect trafficking victims, including psychological assistance, reflection and recovery periods, reintegration and/or resettlement programmes, assistance with travel expenses, legal counselling and access to housing services. Most countries also reported providing a variety of additional services to address the special needs of children and women.

25. Many Member States developed national protocols or standard operating procedures for victim identification, assistance and protection, including some with a specific focus on children, and noted the importance of addressing the special needs of children. In order to engage civil society, several States provided grants to non-governmental organizations that work with victims of trafficking in persons.

26. Numerous Member States reported having established 24/7 accessible hotlines through which victims or potential victims of trafficking, or people in contact with them, can access guidance, support and assistance, in local languages, English, or the languages most commonly spoken among migrants in the area.

27. Many Member States underlined that third-country nationals who had been identified as trafficking victims would be entitled to a residence permit on at least a temporary basis, with some Member States also providing the possibility of family reunification, and/or residence permits that, under certain conditions, could be continued regardless of cooperation with law enforcement. Member States also reported that they allowed third-country nationals who were identified as victims of trafficking to remain on a permanent basis, with a legal right to continue to work. Several Member States reported having established voluntary and safe return programmes, which allowed victims of trafficking to return to their home countries in all safety and respect for human rights.

28. Many Member States reported having held training activities for various actors, including criminal justice practitioners, immigration officials, border guards, labour inspectors, social workers, non-governmental organizations, journalists, school teachers, health professionals, soldiers preparing for deployment on United Nations peace operations, and diplomatic and consular personnel. The activities focused, among other things, on the identification of potential or actual trafficking victims and how to respond with assistance or support.

29. Many Member States underlined the importance of programmes that addressed the socioeconomic factors that increase vulnerability to trafficking in persons, with a special emphasis on reducing revictimization.

5. Partnerships

30. In its resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly urged Member States and other relevant stakeholders to continue to contribute to the full and effective implementation of the Global Plan of Action, including by means of strengthening cooperation and improving coordination.

31. Many Member States reported having actively engaged in partnerships with the private sector, civil society, the media, and international and regional organizations. Additionally, States reported on the importance of regional platforms and cooperation in the fight against trafficking in persons, supported by the signing of memorandums of understanding between countries.

32. In their responses, Member States emphasized the importance of international cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination, as well as effective knowledge-sharing in the fight against trafficking in persons.

33. Many Member States also specifically referred to the fruitful long-standing collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as with other special procedures. The work of the special procedures is considered key in ensuring that the activities carried out at the national level are in line and compliant with the requirements established in the international legal instruments.

34. Member States reported on the importance of establishing partnerships, especially in the fight against new methods of recruiting victims, many of which are framed within cybercrime. Information-sharing as well as mutual learning and exchanging of good practices represent the pillars of joint programmes across countries.

B. Activities undertaken within the United Nations system and by other entities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons

35. In its resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly invited UNODC, in its capacity as coordinator of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, and other relevant agencies of the United Nations system to further strengthen their activities related to the implementation of relevant international instruments and the Global Plan of Action to drive greater progress in eliminating trafficking in persons. For the present report, stakeholders and the member agencies of the Group were consulted on their approach to implementing the Global Plan of Action, and the inputs received are presented below.

1. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

36. In its resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly emphasized the central role of the work of UNODC in the global fight against trafficking in persons and expressed support for the Office's activities. In particular, and as mandated in the Global Plan of Action, the Office continued to host and manage the United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, collect

information for the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* and coordinate the work of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, in addition to providing normative and technical support to Member States.

37. During the reporting period, UNODC serviced and provided technical, substantive and strategic support to the following:

(a) The twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth sessions of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Vienna from 22 to 26 May 2017, 14 to 18 May 2018 and 20 to 24 May 2019, respectively;

(b) The eighth and ninth sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, held in Vienna from 17 to 21 October 2016 and 15 to 19 October 2018, respectively;

(c) The seventh and eighth meetings of the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, held in Vienna from 6 to 8 September 2017 and on 2 and 3 July 2018, respectively.

38. UNODC also participated in the fourth meeting of the Security Council on human trafficking in conflict situations, held in New York on 21 November 2017. At that meeting, the Council adopted its resolution [2388 \(2017\)](#), which addresses the subject of trafficking in persons, building on Council resolution [2331 \(2016\)](#). Resolution 2388 addresses a number of new requests to Member States and the United Nations system, in order to prevent and counter trafficking in persons in conflict and post-conflict situations, and acknowledges the work of UNODC.

39. In line with the Global Plan of Action, UNODC continued to provide technical assistance to Member States, upon request, for the ratification and effective implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. The relevance of that assistance is underlined by the fact that three targets agreed by Member States in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution [70/1](#), explicitly refer to action in response to trafficking in persons.

40. During the reporting period, UNODC provided technical assistance to Member States across all regions. In addition, the Office provided capacity-building assistance at the national level to 79 countries, while 7 Member States were supported in the review and amendment of national legislation to counter trafficking in persons. More than 7,000 criminal justice practitioners and relevant stakeholders received specialized training and briefings through more than 361 technical assistance activities. They included a legislative drafting workshop organized in view of the amendment of the legislation on trafficking in persons in Ethiopia. In addition, a national plan of action against trafficking in persons was drafted and endorsed by the Government of Cabo Verde as a result of a training activity organized in 2018. In the same year, UNODC also organized a highly specialized training activity in Tunisia to assist the Tunisian National Committee for combating trafficking in persons in developing and finalizing the national action plan against trafficking in persons.

41. In December 2018, UNODC, in partnership with the European Union, launched the new four-year Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants. This initiative is being implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in five countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq and Pakistan.

42. UNODC further developed practical tools and publications to support Member State efforts to fight trafficking in persons. In close consultation with Member States, the Office continued its work on a series of issue papers exploring key concepts contained in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. In 2017, UNODC published: the *Human Trafficking Toolkit for Journalists* and the *Evidential Issues in Trafficking in Persons Cases: Case Digest*. In 2018, the Office produced an issue paper entitled “The international legal definition of trafficking in persons: consolidation of research findings and reflection on issues raised”, and a thematic paper entitled *Countering*

Trafficking in Persons in Conflict Situations. The Office is currently working on the revision and update of two key instruments: the *Model Law against Trafficking in Persons*, and the *Legislative Guide for the Implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*.

43. The Office also further expanded the Human Trafficking Case Law Database. As at 31 December 2018, the Database included 1,518 cases from 106 countries, as well as the Economic Community of West African States Community Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights.

44. UNODC continued to work closely with other international and regional organizations, relevant national governmental institutions and civil society organizations. Accordingly, UNODC cooperated closely with the relevant regional mechanisms and organizations that address trafficking in persons, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, the League of Arab States and the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. In 2018, UNODC and OSCE signed a joint plan of action to address and counter trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants.

45. UNODC continues to contribute to the achievement of target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals through the Education for Justice initiative, part of the UNODC Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration: Towards the Promotion of a Culture of Lawfulness. The Education for Justice initiative is aimed at integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges, to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and to also promote public participation. The Education for Justice initiative seeks to enhance teaching on UNODC mandate areas at the primary, secondary and tertiary educational levels including through online teaching modules.

46. As guardian of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, UNODC has provided significant input to the preparation and organization of the Intergovernmental Conference for the adoption of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, convened in Marrakech, Morocco, on 10 and 11 December 2018, which addressed and reinvigorated the United Nations response to challenges emerging from large movements of people.

47. At the inter-agency level, UNODC acts as coordinator of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons and is a member of several inter-agency groups and mechanisms, including the United Nations Network on Migration, the Alliance 8.7 and the Global Protection Cluster.

2. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

48. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) promotes a human rights-based approach to addressing human trafficking. This approach, which stems from the international human rights conventions and other international legal frameworks on trafficking, is conceptualized in the Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking, published in 2002. Since the early 2000s, the Office has promoted this approach in three main areas of interventions: capacity development, research and knowledge, and partnerships.

49. OHCHR continues to rely heavily on partnerships to maximize the impact of their interventions and thus established and reinforced partnerships over the last few years with United Nations entities as well as regional organizations.

50. OHCHR and the International Civil Aviation Organization have been cooperating to produce material to assist airlines in identifying and reporting the

victims of human trafficking, both on board flights and at airports, to the authorities. To that end, a set of guidelines for operators and regulators to train cabin crew on identifying and responding to trafficking in persons were jointly developed in 2018 and published in the six official languages of the United Nations.

51. OHCHR is working closely with the International Labour Organization (ILO) in the framework of Alliance 8.7, which is aimed at accelerating actions to tackle modern slavery, trafficking, forced labour and child labour. Engagement with Member States is under way, in particular with Albania, Chile, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Uganda and Viet Nam.

52. OHCHR is part of the working group of the Inter-agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons together with UNODC, scaling up interventions and impact of the Group activities to offer a coordinated response to trafficking in persons. The two entities, together with the World Health Organization, are currently working to develop a framework on the criminal, health and human rights implications of trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal and trafficking in organs.

3. International Organization for Migration

53. In partnership with Governments, the United Nations system, international and non-governmental organizations, the private sector and development partners, the anti-trafficking responses of IOM encompass all aspects of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons: prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships.

54. Through training and technical assistance, IOM continued to develop the capacity of Governments and civil society to identify, refer and assist victims of trafficking, as well as to develop and implement anti-trafficking legislation, policies and programmes.

55. Within the framework of the Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants – jointly with the European Union, UNODC and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) – IOM implemented a granting facility for civil society partners in six countries: Belarus, Brazil, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mali, Morocco and South Africa. This facility allows these partners to provide comprehensive protection and assistance services to vulnerable migrants, including victims of trafficking. To date, over 400 individuals have been assisted through this facility.

56. Also within the framework of the Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, IOM developed the *IOM Handbook: Protection and Assistance for Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse*, which was soft launched in Marrakech in December 2018, alongside the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The *Handbook* details the IOM determinants of migrant vulnerability model, which provides a method for assessing the risk and protective factors at individual, household, community and structural levels that influence vulnerability or resilience to violence, exploitation and abuse within a migration context, including trafficking in persons. Based on such assessments, appropriate responses to mitigate and address migrant vulnerability to trafficking can be designed and implemented at all levels, either before, during or after migration.

57. In 2018, IOM provided direct assistance to 7,400 victims of trafficking. A total of 462 victims were assisted through the IOM Global Assistance Fund, which provides tailored assistance to victims of trafficking and other migrants vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse. The Fund was created in 2000 to provide immediate protection and assistance services for victims of trafficking who were identified in locations where local actors have limited capacity to respond to their needs. The services provided by the Global Assistance Fund are tailor-made to each individual's unique requirements. They frequently include accommodation, mental and physical

health care, family tracing and reunification, legal assistance, and voluntary return and reintegration.

58. IOM continued to work with the private sector to ensure that the risk of trafficking in persons within business operations and supply chains was prevented and addressed, and that victims were protected. This is achieved through advocacy and advisory services to companies on adherence to international guidance and principles; data and analytics to support risk-based due diligence; and direct assistance to workers impacted by exploitative employment practices, including victims of trafficking.

59. In May 2018, IOM launched the “Remediation guidelines for victims of exploitation in extended mineral supply chains”. Aligned with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework, the Guidelines were developed in consultation with private sector companies, audit programmes, smelters and refiners, Governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and IOM experts. The Guidelines are aimed at providing a six-step operational process that companies can follow to provide protection and assistance to victims of exploitation identified in their operations or supply chains, in partnership with existing State and non-State protection actors.

60. IOM continues to train and deploy its anti-trafficking experts to crises such as those in Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Libya; and north-east Nigeria. Meanwhile, IOM data collection tools help the Organization and its humanitarian partners to identify at-risk groups among crisis-affected populations in order to reduce the risk of trafficking and exploitation and provide direct assistance to those groups and identified victims.

61. IOM continues to take an active role in the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, which published two issue briefs in 2018: one on trafficking in children, and one on the role of the Sustainable Development Goals in combating trafficking in persons.

62. In support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, IOM plays a key role in Alliance 8.7, a global partnership established to assist Member States to achieve target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which focuses on the eradication of forced labour, all forms of child labour, trafficking in persons and modern slavery. In 2018, IOM launched the Alliance 8.7 Action Group on Migration, together with UNICEF, while providing continuous support to the Alliance 8.7 secretariat, the Delta 8.7 knowledge platform, and the Alliance’s broader membership.

4. Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs

63. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs has taken several measures to support Member States in further strengthening the implementation of international instruments relating to combating trafficking in persons as well as the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

64. Activities undertaken included those pertaining to ISIL (also known as Da’esh) and the Al-Qaida sanctions regime. In its resolution [2388 \(2017\)](#), the Security Council requested the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, when consulting with Member States, to continue including in their discussions the issue of trafficking in persons in areas of armed conflict and the use of sexual violence in armed conflict as it relates to ISIL, Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, and to report to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to its resolutions [1267 \(1999\)](#), [1989 \(2011\)](#), [2253 \(2015\)](#) and [2368 \(2017\)](#) on these discussions as appropriate. The Security Council also encouraged Member States to provide, where applicable, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Monitoring Team with relevant information pertaining to linkages between trafficking in persons and terrorist financing.

65. In its resolution [2462 \(2019\)](#), the Security Council encouraged Member States to improve efforts and take decisive action to identify cases of trafficking in persons and in cultural property that financed terrorism, with a view to holding those responsible accountable.

66. The Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, including through the Panel of Experts to which it provides Secretariat support, has also enhanced measures and activities to increase and support prevention efforts in the countries of origin, transit and destination of trafficking in persons, with a special focus on the demand and supply chains that foster all forms of trafficking and the goods and services produced as a result of trafficking in persons, implementing activities at field level in the Central African Republic, Libya, Mali and Myanmar.

67. Cooperation has also been established with UNODC, OHCHR, the European Union, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and national Governments to support the development of best practices at the regional and national levels, with a particular emphasis on protecting human rights and pre-empting the worsening of the situation in many conflict and post-conflict scenarios.

5. Department of Peace Operations

68. The Department of Peace Operations, in line with Security Council resolutions [2331 \(2016\)](#) and [2388 \(2017\)](#), supports peacekeeping missions in addressing trafficking in persons in areas affected by armed conflicts and post-conflict situations, in a coordinated effort with other United Nations agencies, including UNODC, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, and partners including INTERPOL.

69. The role of the United Nations police in this coordinated support is to strengthen the rule of law by encouraging national police authorities to take a more proactive action to prevent and counter this serious crime.

70. With that aim in mind, the Police Division is strengthening the capacity of police components in peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions by deploying specialized police teams on serious and organized crime and on sexual gender-based violence. This new modality of deployment will provide specific police expertise on serious crimes, including trafficking in persons. The Police Division has also been working in close cooperation with UNODC and INTERPOL on finding synergies to better address trafficking in persons in conflict situations. Existing capacity-building efforts include programmes to strengthen the capacities and capabilities of law enforcement agencies in the host State by creating the necessary conditions to effectively counter serious and organized crime in mission areas. To that end, specialized police teams are currently deployed in existing missions of the Department of Peace Operations in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and South Sudan.

71. Ongoing activities in the Central African Republic and South Sudan are aimed at improving the support provided to relevant law enforcement agencies on this serious matter.

6. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

72. The approach of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to the prevention and response to trafficking of women and girls consists of four pillars:

(a) Ensuring that legislative and policy frameworks are in line with international human rights standards against trafficking in women and girls, translated into action and harmonized with other intersecting human rights issues;

(b) Enabling regional, national and subnational institutions to collect relevant data, cooperate, exchange information and develop a comprehensive multisectoral and gender-sensitive approach to the prevention and response of trafficking;

(c) Promoting gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours as well as increasing knowledge and awareness about the rights of women and reducing their vulnerability to different forms of trafficking and exploitation;

(d) Ensuring that survivors of trafficking who are women or girls can use available, accessible and quality essential services that address their long-term needs and that perpetrators are held accountable.

73. UN-Women works to strengthen the normative framework by providing technical inputs that inform United Nations outcomes and resolutions; facilitating and strengthening multi-stakeholder anti-trafficking alliances and networks; strengthening the knowledge base on trafficking through legal analysis, qualitative and quantitative research; and documenting promising practices. In 2019, UN-Women, together with OSCE, is co-chairing the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons.

74. In addition, through its dedicated work on migration, UN-Women works to promote and operationalize gender-responsive migration governance at the national, regional and global levels. UN-Women works with Member States to advance the international normative framework through the provision of technical support to intergovernmental processes, with a focus on the promotion and protection of the human rights of all women and girls in migration, including women migrant workers, and for the elimination of all forms of violence against them. This work helps to ensure that women and girls who are migrating can do so safely and through regular channels, thereby reducing the risk of exposure to human trafficking.

75. UN-Women also collaborates with the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, as per Security Council resolutions [2242 \(2015\)](#) and [2395 \(2017\)](#), to ensure that counter-terrorism strategies are gender sensitive and human rights compliant. They are encouraged to consult women and women's organizations and undertake and gather gender-sensitive research and data collection on drivers of radicalization to terrorism for women, and the impacts of counter-terrorism strategies on women's human rights and women's organizations. This collaboration also encourages the Executive Directorate and UN-Women to examine the nexus between conflict-related sexual violence, terrorism and transnational and organized crime, including trafficking in persons, during the country assessment and follow-up missions, as well as while carrying out research and data collection.

76. As part of the Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, including UNODC and ILO, UN-Women works on the "Safe and Fair" programme, which is aimed at preventing trafficking in Asia by empowering migrant women and ensuring safe and fair labour migration for all women in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations region. The programme has three specific objectives: (a) establishing gender-sensitive labour migration governance frameworks; (b) mitigating the vulnerabilities of female migrant workers to violence and trafficking and ensuring access to coordinated and responsive quality services; and (c) improving data, knowledge and attitudes on the rights and contributions of female migrant workers.

77. Additionally, UN-Women, in partnership with UNODC, is working on a programme in the Greater Mekong subregion on preventing and mitigating the impacts of terrorism, trafficking and transnational crime through the empowerment of women. The programme is aimed at ensuring that at-risk border communities increase resilience to trafficking in persons, with a particular focus on women. The work includes:

(a) Providing economic opportunities for trafficking survivors and women at risk of trafficking;

- (b) Increasing knowledge and awareness on migrant rights and safe migration;
- (c) Community mobilization;
- (d) Enhancing reintegration programmes for survivors of trafficking;
- (e) Improving referral mechanisms;
- (f) Promoting increased women's participation and leadership in law enforcement;
- (g) Strengthening the capacity of front-line officers in border locations to meet the needs of women.

7. International Criminal Police Organization

78. The role of INTERPOL is to enable police in its 190 member States to work together to make the world a safer place.

79. The INTERPOL unit on trafficking in persons draws from a wide range of policing capabilities in assisting its member countries with the identification, disruption and dismantling of organized trafficking groups profiteering from the exploitation of vulnerable people. One of the unit's most important responsibilities is to strengthen the capacity of police forces around the world to effectively investigate cases involving trafficking in persons. In that connection, the unit conducts many capacity-building activities through ongoing projects in different regions around the world.

80. Created in 2000, the INTERPOL expert group on trafficking in persons supports the work of the trafficking unit. The group is an international network of active police officers from member countries specialized in trafficking in persons. In 2018, the Group was opened to the private sector, and as of 2019 is open to international organizations.

81. The trafficking unit provides operational support to counter trafficking in persons through the organization of operations. The last two operations coordinated by the unit were the following:

(a) *Operation Libertad*. A total of 347 potential victims were rescued, and 22 suspected traffickers arrested, pending national investigations. The cases of trafficking in persons involve labour and sexual exploitation. The operation was carried out in 13 Caribbean countries in April 2018;

(b) *Operation Sawiyan*. A total of 94 potential victims were rescued, and 14 suspected traffickers arrested. In addition, ransom money totalling \$22,000 was seized. The operation was carried out in the Sudan in August 2018.

82. The work of INTERPOL is organized under three pillars: capacity-building, information-sharing, and investigative and operational support delivered to INTERPOL member countries to combat trafficking in persons. A total of 120 countries benefited from INTERPOL assistance in 2018, which reflects the continued aim of INTERPOL to ensure global reach.

83. Trafficking in persons is a multifaceted crime that requires an integrated approach. In one country alone, the investigation of such crimes and the provision of assistance to victims requires the involvement of a number of different actors, including criminal investigation units, cyber investigation units, juvenile crime units, social services, private sector companies and non-governmental organizations. As each concerned stakeholder necessarily possesses only pieces of information, information-sharing is a key to success.

84. In 2018, 11 capacity-building activities were developed with the aim of enhancing the ability of law enforcement to effectively manage investigations involving trafficking in persons. In 2018, a total of 342 officers were trained in countries in Central, South and South-East Asia; West and Central Africa; the Middle East and North Africa; Latin America; and South-East Europe.

8. Council of Europe

85. The work undertaken by the Council of Europe in the field of countering trafficking in persons is underpinned by the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and is monitored by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The Group of Experts is currently the only independent panel of experts monitoring the implementation of binding international legal provisions on preventing and combating trafficking in persons. It periodically assesses the steps taken by State parties in the area of combating trafficking in persons and identifying gaps and promising practices.

86. The Council of Europe offers Member States and other stakeholders guidance and support for achieving targets 5.2, 8.7 and 16.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, both through the provision of recommendations resulting from the monitoring by the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and through capacity-building and technical cooperation activities. The programmes currently being implemented by the Council of Europe include one on preventing and combating trafficking in persons in North Macedonia and Serbia. The programme is part of the European Union and the Council of Europe programmatic framework called “Horizontal facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey”, which support the national authorities by addressing legislation, policy and practice in several areas, including preventing and combating trafficking in persons for the purpose of labour exploitation. In addition to the provision of training and guidance to labour inspectors, round tables involving businesses and trade unions were organized in North Macedonia and Serbia in May 2018. Their objective was to increase awareness and facilitate dialogue on the importance of engaging the private sector in preventing and combating trafficking in persons for the purpose of labour exploitation. For the second phase of the horizontal facility programme, anti-trafficking projects have been proposed for Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia, and it is planned to continue implementing activities targeting the private sector.

87. In 2017, the Council of Europe joined the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons as a partner and has since then regularly contributed to the activities of the Group. The establishment of closer relations between the Council of Europe and the Group promotes the implementation of General Assembly resolution [73/15](#), on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, in particular its paragraph 10, in which the Assembly encouraged the Council to continue cooperation with the United Nations in the fight against trafficking in persons, including in the context of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons.

9. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

88. In 2018, OSCE, through its Office of the Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, continued its efforts to strengthen and foster the implementation of international anti-trafficking instruments, in line with the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolutions [64/293](#) and [72/195](#).

89. In doing so, OSCE focused on four main areas of action: (a) strengthening criminal justice responses to end the impunity of traffickers, including by enhancing the efforts of participating States to prosecute trafficking cases; (b) protecting and providing assistance to victims; (c) strengthening partnerships against trafficking in persons; and (d) preventing trafficking in persons.

90. In 2018, in an effort to foster improved multi-agency anti-trafficking work, as well as comprehensive, coordinated and consistent responses at the national, regional and international levels to counter trafficking in persons, OSCE conducted its pioneering simulation-based training programme to combat trafficking along migration routes in English, Italian and Russian. Through simulated cases of sexual and labour exploitation, including of unaccompanied children, those exercises improved the capacity of criminal justice actors from 55 countries, while developing

a network of front-line service providers across borders for cooperation and information exchange.

91. These exercises promote an approach to addressing factors that make people vulnerable to trafficking in persons that is based on human rights and is gender- and age-sensitive, a step that is necessary in order to prevent trafficking in persons, protect its victims and prosecute its perpetrators.

92. In 2018, OSCE became a fully fledged member of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons and was appointed as its 2019 co-Chair, together with UN-Women, in line with General Assembly resolution [72/195](#), which welcomed the participation of OSCE as the first regional organization to partner with the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, and encouraged regional organizations to engage with the United Nations system in sharing information, knowledge and practices in combating human trafficking.

93. This co-chairing arrangement, in line with the principle of inclusiveness reflected both in General Assembly resolution [72/195](#) and by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons First Meeting of Principals, held in London in May 2018, is unique in combining the expertise, reach and resources of the two organizations, bridging anti-trafficking efforts at both the global and local levels, and helping the Group grow in size and impact.

94. Furthermore, pursuant to Security Council resolution [2388 \(2017\)](#), in which it called upon the United Nations system organizations to enhance transparency in their procurement and supply chains, in 2018, OSCE took action to map OSCE procurement practices for the purposes of strengthening protections against trafficking in persons in its own supply chains by partnering with leading academic institutions in this field. To develop common guidelines with the United Nations system, OSCE has made the expansion of this project within the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons one of its priorities in 2019.

C. Towards full implementation: appraisal and the way forward

Appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons

95. On 30 July 2010, a decade after the adoption of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, the General Assembly, in its resolution [64/293](#), adopted the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons as a renewed commitment by Member States to globally address the issue of trafficking in persons and to reinforce the obligations accepted by Member States under legally binding international instruments, including the Protocol.

96. The Global Plan of Action gave new impetus to the efforts of the international community to end trafficking in persons. Governments resolved to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, protect and assist victims, prosecute related crimes and strengthen partnerships among governmental institutions, intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector, including the media. Among the significant achievements of the Global Plan of Action was the establishment of the United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*.

97. The Global Plan of Action called for the first appraisal of the progress made in its implementation in 2013. As mandated by resolution [70/179](#), the following appraisal took place in September 2017, at the seventy-second session of the Assembly. The General Assembly adopted the Political declaration on the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons during a two-day high-level meeting on human trafficking, held in New York on 27 and 28 September 2017.

98. In the two-day discussion, Member States addressed a number of issues, including (a) multidisciplinary approaches focused on prevention, protection and promotion of victims' rights, and prosecution of the perpetrators and co-perpetrators; (b) the importance of partnerships and cooperation in curbing trafficking, in particular with source, transit and destination countries; (c) imposing a minimum threshold to identify trafficking cases; (d) multi-stakeholder mechanisms such as intersectional committees comprising representatives from civil society, faith-based organizations, traditional leaders and others, working directly with communities; and (e) using social media channels to raise awareness.

99. By the declaration, Member States reaffirmed their commitment to the Global Plan of Action and to the related 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while agreeing to address the root causes of trafficking such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, conflict, humanitarian emergencies and gender discrimination.

100. On that occasion, it was underlined that mitigation efforts required a victim- and survivor-centred approach, and a multi-stakeholder perspective. Noting that the United Nations has a duty to be a voice for victims, attention was drawn to the importance of contributing to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking, as a tool to assist victims in recovering, reclaiming dignity and minimizing the risk of revictimization.

101. It was also noted that trafficking in persons is often intertwined with racial, gender and other forms of discrimination. Criminal groups engaging in trafficking in persons are highly proficient at exploiting gaps in governance and weak institutions; in that sense, there are still enforcement gaps that require, *inter alia*, more action in prosecuting traffickers. Noting that refugees and migrants are especially vulnerable, it was stressed that the international community should aim to create legal and safe migration channels, while upholding the rights of refugees to asylum.

102. Other issues considered by participants in the discussions included: (a) the decentralization of anti-trafficking programmes at the local level for increased effectiveness; (b) the need for universal ratification and implementation of all international legally binding instruments addressing trafficking; (c) partnerships with the private sector; (d) addressing trafficking in the context of migration and the refugee crisis; (e) the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a means to address the root causes of trafficking; (f) ways to address legislative and administrative gaps; and (g) placing children at the centre of anti-trafficking efforts.

IV. Activities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons

103. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons was mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution [61/180](#) to enhance cooperation and coordination and facilitate a holistic and comprehensive approach by the international community to the crime of trafficking in persons. The Group is comprised of 23 entities of the United Nations system, as well as other relevant intergovernmental organizations. Over the past year, membership in the Group expanded substantially in both membership and engagement.

104. In its resolution [61/180](#), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to entrust the Executive Director of UNODC with coordinating the activities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. The Group held its first meeting in 2006 pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution [2006/27](#). As of 2011, the Group is chaired on an annually rotating basis, a procedure that was formalized through the adoption of the terms of reference in 2013.

105. During the reporting period, the Group was chaired by UNODC in 2016, OHCHR in 2017, UNICEF in 2018 and jointly by OSCE and UN-Women in 2019.

106. The 10 entities that are most actively engaged in the work of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons and that form its decision-making body, referred to as the “working group”, are OHCHR, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN-Women, the Council of Europe, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, ILO, IOM and OSCE.

107. During the reporting period, the working group of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons met in person twice a year (and three times in 2018), in addition to holding regular coordination phone calls to exchange information and coordinate on matters of policy.

108. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolution [72/195](#), UNODC coordinated the first meeting of the principal Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, held in London on 2 May 2018. The meeting gave new impetus to the Group’s activities and enhanced its operativity. The principals recognized the Group’s continuing role as the main inter-agency mechanism of the United Nations to address trafficking in persons. It also resulted in the adoption of strategically important decisions, including a move to a multi-year workplan, and an acknowledgment of the need for a strong support function for the Group. As such, UNODC was requested to establish a small administrative secretariat, which is now fully operational, further facilitating the exchange of information between members and other stakeholders of the Group.

109. The activities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group are guided by a multi-year workplan. During the reporting period, the Group continued to develop and publish a series of policy papers, as has been standard practice since 2012. Each policy paper undertakes a detailed examination of a particular issue that has been identified by the members of the Group as a critical challenge for the international community to address in the fight against trafficking in persons.

110. To date, two such papers have been published, both in 2016, “Providing effective remedies for victims of trafficking in persons” and “Pivoting toward the evidence: building effective counter-trafficking responses using accumulated knowledge and a shared approach to monitoring, evaluation, and learning”. In the same year, the *Toolkit for Guidance in Designing and Evaluating Counter-Trafficking Programmes: Harnessing Accumulated Knowledge to Respond to Trafficking in Persons* was also produced, which is intended to provide practical guidance for practitioners on the ground.

111. In line with its anti-trafficking coordination role, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group continues to engage with, and assist, a range of stakeholders, including Member States and civil society organizations, through public events, the release of joint statements and the marking of relevant commemorative dates on issues related to trafficking in persons. In order to promote the Group’s visibility, actions undertaken include the continual updating of the website of the Group to provide easily accessible information to a wider public on the work of the Group and its member agencies and to more effectively disseminate the Group’s products.

112. In recent years, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group has demonstrated an increasing level of productivity, and shown itself to be a functioning coordination mechanism and policy forum, capable of gathering the expertise of a number of entities and elaborating shared policies and common positions in key policy areas. This has included key policy outputs aimed at strengthening global security and governance, including submissions of the Group to:

- (a) Co-facilitators of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons;
- (b) General Assembly on Trafficking in Persons in the Zero Draft of the Global Compact for Migration, resilience and the response to crises (including recent issues briefs of the Group that pertained to trafficking in persons in humanitarian crises);
- (c) Trafficking in persons and refugee status;

(d) To help the world's most vulnerable (recent issues briefs on the gender dimensions of human trafficking);

(e) The role of the Sustainable Development Goals in combating trafficking in persons.

113. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons also continued to engage closely with Member States, including by providing joint input into intergovernmental processes, including the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The Group also continued to hold briefings with Member States in various locations, including five briefings and side events that were held in New York and Vienna in 2018.

V. *The Global Report on Trafficking in Persons: update on research and trend analysis*

114. As requested in the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, in January 2019 UNODC published the fifth and latest edition of the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. It included data on trafficking in persons from 142 countries and provided an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at the global, regional and national levels, based on trafficking cases detected between 2016 and 2018. The *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018* puts the spotlight on human trafficking in armed conflict. Trafficking in persons is always a crime, committed with the intention to exploit; in conflict situations, characterized by violence, brutality and coercion, traffickers can operate with even greater impunity. Trafficking in armed conflict has taken on horrific dimensions, including child soldiers, forced labour and sexual slavery.

115. The *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018* confirmed that trafficking in persons is a truly global phenomenon. Increased numbers of victims have been detected, which may indicate that more trafficking is taking place or that countries are making use of more efficient tools and procedures to identify trafficking victims.

116. Adult women comprised nearly half of the detected victims in 2016. Men and girls each accounted for about one fifth of detected victims globally. The analysis of the data on trafficking victims over the last 15 years confirmed that women and girls together continued to represent more than 70 per cent of detected trafficking victims.

117. Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation is the most detected form of trafficking globally. Victims trafficked for sexual exploitation comprised 59 per cent of the detected victims in 2016. One third of victims was trafficked for forced labour; 7 per cent were trafficked for other purposes.

118. The majority of the victims detected worldwide were trafficked within internal borders, and a relevant share of the detected victims was trafficked across borders within the same region. Less than 10 per cent of victims detected in 2016 were trafficked transregionally.

119. In 2016, more countries were experiencing some form of violent conflict than at any other time in the previous 30 years. People living in conflict-affected areas may experience abuse, violence and exploitation, including trafficking in persons. The risk of trafficking in persons is also connected to the high numbers of refugees. A need to flee war and persecution may be taken advantage of for exploitation by traffickers. Trafficking in persons in the context of armed conflict has received increased attention by the international community. In November 2017, the Security Council addressed the topic in its resolution [2388 \(2017\)](#) and reiterated its deep concern that trafficking in persons in areas affected by armed conflict continues to occur. It also underscored that certain offences associated with trafficking in persons in the context of armed conflict may constitute war crimes.

120. Trafficking in persons is another dimension of the violence, brutality and abuse that occurs in the context of armed conflict. While trafficking takes many forms, it

always involves the purpose of exploitation. Victims are trafficked for exploitation in forced labour in different sectors, from agriculture to mines. They are also trafficked to serve as domestic servants, for sexual exploitation or for armed combat. Children are often recruited into armed groups for forced labour in a range of military-related roles.

121. Armed groups are using trafficking in persons as a strategy to engage in conflict. They kidnap and exploit victims to strengthen their military capacity, traffic women for sexual exploitation to spread fear in the territory under their control and to attract new recruits, and use trafficking for forced labour in the extraction of minerals to finance their military operations.

VI. Developments related to the United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children

122. UNODC continues to manage the United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, established by the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. The Trust Fund's mandate emphasizes direct victim assistance, in particular to women and children as an integral component of a global effort to address trafficking in persons. Through the work of its non-governmental organization partners, the Trust Fund supports the implementation and delivery of activities and services that enhance the psychological recovery and social reintegration of victims and empower survivors to claim their rights. Those efforts include support for the identification of victims, legal and administrative assistance, and coordination and information-sharing across relevant actors. Each year, 3,000 individuals are directly supported through non-governmental organization partners of the Trust Fund.

123. Three global calls for funding proposals were launched: in 2011, 2014 and 2017. Over 40 specialized non-governmental organizations from across the globe have been selected and awarded grants to provide direct assistance to victims of trafficking. The priority of the third call focused on projects providing direct assistance to victims arising from armed conflict and among mixed migration flows. As of March 2019, the Trust Fund had received \$6.7 million in contributions from a wide range of supporters, including 30 Member States, 33 private sector organizations and scores of individual donors.

124. The board of trustees for the 2017–2020 term is composed of Benita Ferrero-Waldner (Chair), Arnaud Kouassi, Noor Al-Malki Al-Jehani, Alexis Bethancourt Yau and Viktoria Avakova.

VII. Raising awareness: activities to mark the World Day against Trafficking in Persons

125. In its resolution [68/192](#), the General Assembly decided to designate 30 July as the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, to be observed every year beginning in 2014. Following the events held to commemorate the Day in the first two years after its inauguration, UNODC decided to adopt an annual thematic focus to better target messaging around and shed light on various stages of trafficking in persons or specific aspects.

126. The first theme for the World Day in 2016 was “vulnerabilities to trafficking in persons”. It was aimed at raising awareness, among other issues, on the situation of and the conditions experienced by migrants, who for various reasons are not able to reach their destinations, or who have limited options in the territory they have reached at the end of, or at some point during, their journey. To promote the World Day, UNODC continued with its multi-year social media campaign entitled “#IGiveHope”. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons also issued a joint statement.

127. In 2017, to highlight key pressing issues of the time, such as large, mixed-migration movements of refugees and migrants, and the significant impact of conflict and natural disasters, as well as the resultant, multiple risks of human trafficking that many people face, the theme that UNODC chose for the World Day was “act to protect and assist trafficked persons”. The theme also tied in with the key United Nations intergovernmental meetings on trafficking in persons that were held that year.

128. For branding consistency, the campaign started using the hashtags first used for the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016*, #EndHumanTrafficking and #HumanTrafficking, on all UNODC digital platforms.

129. The social media campaign developed for the 2017 World Day also included a Thunderclap – a coordinated message launched collectively across Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr – which was released worldwide on the actual day, thereby creating a record reach of 73 million impressions worldwide. At the same time UNODC, through the Charidy fundraising platform, organized a fundraising campaign for the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking, which reached the original goal set by the organizers and raised \$50,000.

130. For the theme of the World Day in 2018, UNODC chose “responding to the trafficking of children and young people”, which tied in with the theme that the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons chose for the same year. The Group decided to focus on that topic because children and young people constitute a population group that cuts across and is relevant to the mandates of all members of the Group. It also connected to the 2018 General Assembly-mandated Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, as the draft Global Compact promoted a child-sensitive approach and measures in line with existing international legal obligations. A core component of messaging for the World Day emphasized the findings of the UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016*, highlighting that almost a third of trafficking victims are children. To reach a worldwide audience, UNODC developed a social media package – containing sample messages, visuals, videos and GIFs – that was translated into French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish and shared within the United Nations family, as well as with other partners, such as non-governmental organizations, permanent missions and the private sector.

131. Established in 2010, the Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking is coordinated by UNODC and has so far been adopted by 18 countries. It seeks to encourage involvement and inspire action to combat the crime of trafficking in persons. In August 2017, the Government of Mexico and UNODC launched the #AQUIESTOY *contra la trata de personas* (#HereIAm against human trafficking) campaign, as the Spanish-language initiative under the umbrella of the Blue Heart Campaign. In 2019, Ecuador became the latest country to join the #AQUIESTOY campaign.

132. Finally, UNODC works with goodwill ambassadors at both the national and global levels to raise awareness around human trafficking and the Blue Heart Campaign. Nobel laureate Nadia Murad Basee Taha (Iraq, human rights activist, human trafficking survivor), Mira Sorvino (United States, actress), and Ozark Henry (Belgium, singer and performing artist) are all regularly involved with UNODC headquarters and field offices at events and with the media.

VIII. Situation of the resources of the United Nations system related to combating trafficking in persons, in particular of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

133. As clearly emphasized by Member States in General Assembly resolution 72/195, UNODC plays a central role in the global fight against trafficking in persons, particularly in providing technical assistance to Member States, to implement the Organized Crime Convention and its Protocols. The Office contributes

to policy development and provides normative and technical assistance to Member States upon their request, such as legislative assistance and capacity-building with a focus on the criminal justice perspective. The General Assembly further mandated the Office to manage the United Nations voluntary trust fund for victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, to prepare biennial reports on patterns and flows of trafficking in persons, and to coordinate the activities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons.

134. To fulfil its mandates on trafficking in persons, UNODC relies primarily on extrabudgetary resources from Member States and other donors, with only two dedicated regular budget positions being available for its work on trafficking in persons overall: one in its Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section and one in the Crime Research Section.

135. The resources available for the work of UNODC on trafficking in persons, in particular for its normative and policy work, continue to be limited. This severely impacts on the Office's capacity to provide support to policy development, as well as to support intergovernmental and inter-agency processes to complement the legal and other technical assistance requested by Member States. In the light of a growing demand by Member States for technical assistance on trafficking in persons and the corresponding need for increased policy guidance and enhanced cooperation and coordination with other stakeholders, additional resources are necessary to allow the Office to adequately respond to Member States' assistance needs at national, regional and international levels. In particular, the capacity of the Office to undertake additional tasks is entirely dependent on the availability of adequate resources.

136. UNODC continues to seek extrabudgetary resources to carry out its work on trafficking in persons. In resolution [72/195](#), the General Assembly invited Member States and other international and bilateral donors to provide voluntary contributions to the Office for the purpose of providing assistance to Member States upon request.

137. During the reporting period, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons benefited greatly from a voluntary contribution from the Government of the United Kingdom that allowed it to maintain a dedicated secretariat, hold regular in-person meetings of representatives of all 10 working group member agencies and undertake relevant policy research and analysis. This greatly enhanced the Group's effectiveness as an inter-agency coordination and policy-setting mechanism. Without renewed funding, Member States and other donors are, in line with resolution [72/195](#), encouraged to consider making voluntary contributions to support the Coordination Group.

138. Given the importance of the fight against trafficking in persons, Member States are encouraged to increase their voluntary contributions to support the work of the United Nations system on trafficking in persons.

IX. Recommendations

139. It is recommended that the General Assembly consider taking the following actions:

(a) Encourage Member States to continually monitor, measure and review their responses to trafficking in persons in order to mark progress in national efforts and support the further development of evidence-based responses;

(b) Encourage Member States to share information regarding those responses, including through the submission of related information for analysis and inclusion within the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime;

(c) Call upon Member States to promote effective cooperation and coordination between national stakeholders seeking to implement the multiple goals and targets of the international framework related to trafficking in

persons, including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, the multiple goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that are related to trafficking in persons, and the specific objective and accompanying actions of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;

(d) Call upon Member States to continue to improve international, regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation, whether formal or informal, in order to:

(i) Assess, improve, simplify and expand their international legal cooperation efforts in cases involving trafficking in persons;

(ii) Utilize the near-universal ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime to facilitate the use of extradition, mutual legal assistance, confiscation of proceeds, joint investigation teams and special investigative techniques in responding to transnational cases of trafficking in persons;

(iii) Establish and develop partnerships with the country of residence of victims of trafficking in persons;

(iv) Provide expert interpretation and language assistance to victims of trafficking in persons and endeavour to protect those who provide linguistic assistance from threats and intimidation;

(v) Promote effective cooperation and the exchange of information on services, including protection services, and prevention measures on a timely basis between countries of origin, transit and destination, including appropriate bilateral or multilateral coordination of law enforcement authorities and cross-border authorities;

(vi) Develop processes to ensure that the return or repatriation of a victim of trafficking in persons does not occur where there is a risk that a person would be re-trafficked upon return, where their return would not be safe and sustainable, or where no support is available to support reintegration;

(vii) Take measures to reunite victims of trafficking in persons with their immediate family members, especially in the case of child victims, taking into consideration the best interests of the child;

(viii) Ensure the active and routine consideration of the rights and needs of trafficking victims in the course of implementing standard international cooperation measures;

(e) Invite Member States to adopt a human rights-based and multidisciplinary approach to address trafficking in persons during conflicts and other humanitarian emergencies such as natural disasters, and ensure that addressing trafficking in persons is an integral component of humanitarian preparedness and response, especially regarding the protection and recovery of victims;

(f) Encouraging Member States to interact on issues concerning trafficking in persons with the Inter-agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, as the main United Nations inter-agency mechanism focused on that topic;

(g) Encourage Member States to utilize the *Toolkit for Guidance in Designing and Evaluating Counter-Trafficking Programmes* of the Inter-agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, as a common framework for aligning activities, defining and assessing progress, and building a robust and shared evidence base of effective anti-trafficking programmes and practices;

(h) Encourage the Inter-agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons to work jointly with the Procurement Network of the High-level

Committee on Management to take action to minimize the risk that their vendors or suppliers might engage in trafficking in persons for the purpose of labour exploitation, as well as other types of exploitation, in line with the call in Security Council resolutions [2331 \(2016\)](#) and [2388 \(2017\)](#) for organizations of the United Nations system to address the risk of contributing to trafficking in persons through procurement and supply chains;

(i) Invite Member States to provide adequate voluntary resources for the work of the Inter-agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons as a platform to enhance coordination of efforts, avoid duplication and maximize impact in preventing and combatting trafficking in persons by leveraging the collective benefit of the 23 entities working together.
