



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

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STATEMENT

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THIRD COMMITTEE
63rd SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE**

UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

Dear Mr. Chairman,

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) appreciates the opportunity to address this Committee today in relation *inter alia* to the Secretary General's report on "Trafficking in women and girls" (A/63/215) and is particularly pleased that this report focuses on two issues close to our heart, namely partnership and cooperation at all levels, as well as victim protection.

Mr. Chairman,

The feminization of international migration is a contemporary feature of international mobility, and nearly 50% of the world's migrants are now women. Many women today migrate independently of their families in response to a wide range of labour demands and occupational opportunities, and we recognize the potential for greater ~~autonomy and self-determination enjoyed by this increasing numbers of women~~

around the globe. But while we are encouraged by this general empowerment of women through migration, we must be conscious that migration also has a darker side that disproportionately affects women by as much as 80%, particularly those being recruited for jobs in the most unregulated sectors. Women may also face limits to mobility due to low levels of education, limited socio-economic independence, inadequate resources and support networks, leaving them more vulnerable to ~~exploitation and human traffickers. Human traffickers often target children and young~~

women, and their ploys are creative and ruthless. According to some estimates, about 800,000 of these vulnerable migrants are trafficked across national borders every year, so while national responses are a crucial element to fight trafficking in persons, no state or government can address this global phenomenon in isolation. Because of its cross-border nature, national responses to trafficking in persons need to be complemented by bilateral or regional responses. Furthermore, given that trafficking in persons is a multi-dimensional threat, depriving people of their human rights, freedoms, and harming their physical and mental health, no actor can successfully address it in isolation. Here multilateral organizations can usefully assist committed ~~governments seeking to meet international standards for combating human trafficking~~

Mr. Chairman,

Trafficking in persons is a serious crime that requires a principled approach in addressing victims' assistance and IOM looks at it within a broader migrant protection framework. Much remains to be done to fill the implementation gap that still hamper a comprehensive and rights-based response: Cultural and language barriers may make it difficult for trafficking women to gain legal recourse and necessary health services. In addition, their legal status in the country of destination may subject them to erroneous detention and deportation rather than providing them with the services they so urgently need. As trafficking patterns often follow broader migratory patterns it can be increasingly difficult to distinguish those migrants who are trafficked from others who may not have been trafficked but have similar protection and/or humanitarian needs. While data collection and research on trafficking of women and girls remains an under-documented form of violence against women, the lines we draw between trafficked persons, exploited migrants, and smuggled migrants who