



Thank you, Mr/Madame Chair,

I am making this statement on behalf of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy International Association and the undersigned members of the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons (NY). We welcome the opportunity to address you during the Ninth Session of the Conference of Parties concerning the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Person, Especially Women and Children.

Taking firm action to rid the world of the scourge of human trafficking demands strong political will. This must translate into real action in which states make a solid commitment to the allocation of sufficient resources to address the issue of human trafficking on all fronts simultaneously implementing the 4 P's, Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership.

While much has been done at the national, regional and global level evidenced in the 2018 report of the Secretary General, to the seventy-third session of the General Assembly on Trafficking in Women and Girls (A/73/15), it is the gaps within and between countries and regions that facilitate the continuation of this heinous crime. We are more conscious than ever of the interconnections between systemic root causes including poverty, gender inequality, the persistence of patriarchy, misogyny, DEMAND, gender based violence, including non-state torture, and sexual exploitation coupled with weak legislation, poor budgetary allocations and a dismal record in the number of persecutions recorded. All these factors compound to facilitate the flourishing of this criminal activity that violates human rights, and prey on peoples vulnerabilities and desires for a life of dignity and wellbeing.

We wish to make the following recommendations to the Conference of Parties

- We congratulate the 173 member states that are parties to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Woman and Children but we urge universal ratification and full implement at national, regional and global levels.

- We are calling for the adoption and implementation of a robust review mechanism for the Convention Against Organized Crime and its protocols to jumpstart total commitment to implementation on all levels. Collaboration with Civil Society Organizations as key partners in implementation is critical to success.
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development gives us the interconnected, human rights based, universal framework in which to address the systemic, gendered, socio-economic issues by focusing equally on SDG 5.2; 8.7; 10.7; 16.2; 16.4; and 17.9 It is only when these specific targets are addressed not in an isolated way, but holistically within the context of the other Sustainable Development Goals and in conjunction with rigorous implementation and enforcement of the legislative aspect of the Convention and its protocols and other human rights mechanisms that progress will be achieved.
- It is critical that UNODC and member states keep abreast of emerging technological advances as these advances hold critical opportunities for the prevention of trafficking in persons and offer the possibilities of increased prosecutions countering a culture of impunity.
- Finally, significant resource allocation towards social protection systems including floors to counter root causes of vulnerability to trafficking in women and children is essential if legislation, policy and preventative programs are to be transformative.

Thank you.

*Supported by:*

1. *Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd*
2. *Casa Generalizia della Societa del Sacro Cuore*
3. *ECPAT - USA*
4. *International Presentation Association*
5. *Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary*
6. *Sisters of Mercy, Mercy International Association*
7. *Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries*
8. *Sisters of Charity Federation*
9. *The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Loreto Generalate*