

**World Day against Human Trafficking 2019** is the occasion for a special edition of UN Update on Human Trafficking. It includes the United Nations framework and the work of civil society on Human Trafficking with the United Nations. A thriving global network of religious communities are engaged in the issue, along with continental, national, regional and local networks in which members of the Mary Ward Family are active. Information and videos to help our network be more knowledgeable and informed on the situation are available.

## The First Definition of Human Trafficking

As a result of the growing awareness of this increasing crime, national governments, under the auspices of the United Nations, produced the first legally binding document known as the “Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children”. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000 and entered into force on 25 December 2003. It is a protocol to the Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and is one of the three Palermo protocols, the others being the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms.

The fact that the United Nations adopted the Palermo protocol was due, above all, to the growing evidence and groundswell of pressure from civil society, including religious Congregations and communities. Women religious have engaged in activities against slavery and human trafficking for centuries.

## The Mary Ward Family collaborates with international, continental, national and regional networks all over the world.

In the late 1990s the importance and value of joining forces and resources to address trafficking in persons emerged. National and regional networking developed in the following years. In 2009, during the first global meeting of networks, a proposal was made to create Talitha Kum as the International Network of Consecrated Life against Trafficking, with a representative at the UISG. Talitha Kum is now celebrating its 10th Anniversary.

On 29 July 2019, an impressive 10th Anniversary celebration was held at the United Nations under the auspices of the Mission of the Holy See. It included a Photo-exhibition of Women Religious working against Human Trafficking across the world. On Tuesday 30 July, World Day against Human Trafficking, a joint meeting of Talitha Kum and New York based NGOs working on Human Trafficking was held to advance the collaboration and integration of grass-roots work with advocacy at the United Nations.



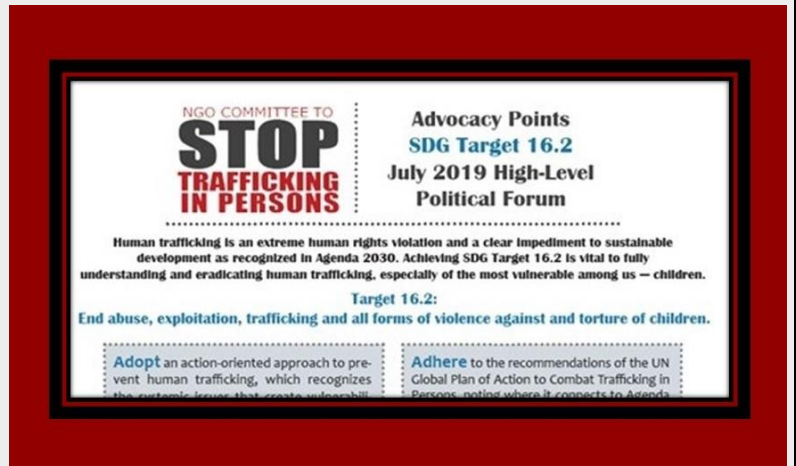
**NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons** at the United Nations. Advocacy to eliminate human trafficking is done through this committee. Our most recent initiative is contained in the **Advocacy points to “End Trafficking of Children”**. During the revision of the Sustainable Development Goals held from 8 – 18 July 2019, SDG 16 on “Peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development”, (target 16.2) highlighted the plight of children. Read [here](#), what we ask of governments to address this inhuman crime. See, [here](#), how the United Nations deals with Human Trafficking.

**Webinars** on Human Trafficking based on the Guide “Inherent Dignity” produced by Mercy International, a member of the Committee. Please see below registration links to view the recordings of all three sessions of the Inherent Dignity Webinar Series.

Session One: [Introducing the Human Rights Approach to Trafficking Prevention](#)

Session Two: [Governments' Obligations to Prevent Trafficking](#)

Session Three: [Prevention of Trafficking: What Individuals and Organizations Can Do](#)



## Latin America

[Red Kawsay](#) Peru, in Latin America, was founded in 2010. More recently, in 2018 it was established in Argentina. Our network of Sisters and Friends of Mary Ward are active in this network and in the campaign *Jugar por la Vida* (Play for Life), denouncing the human trafficking during the Pan American Games held in Lima from 24 July to 11 August 2019. Our Latin American Network (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Cuba) is in the process of establishing its own Spanish speaking Network on Human Trafficking.



## EUROPE

[RENATE](#) - Religious in Europe Networking against Trafficking and Exploitation was established by a group of Religious representing several different congregations working against human trafficking in Europe. It has developed and expanded over the years to other like-minded groups.



Closely connected with, and a member of RENATE, is [Albania Hope](#), part of the Mary Ward Loreto Foundation (MLW). With a human rights approach to combating modern slavery it plants hope and works to eradicate poverty, the prime cause of Human Trafficking.



Mary Ward Loreto Foundation, Albania, is implementing the elimination of trafficking in human beings through works of justice, education, therapy services, and peer group initiatives. It addresses human and economic empowerment and systemic change through self-managing teams. The goal of MWL is to end human trafficking and modern slavery, to ensure that all humans live in dignity, hope and safety. MWL works against human trafficking in all forms of action. Read the recent Report on Mary Ward Loreto Work against Trafficking 2019. It highlights the different types of prevention work implemented in projects all over Albania. Their work also includes the identification of potential/victims of trafficking, referral and processes for protection and the implementation of re-integration programs. All this is carried out in partnership with state and non-governmental organizations. Read the complete and impressive Report [here](#).

RENATE member, **Adina Balan, CJ, Romania**, shares news about the launch of New Beginnings, an initiative based on integrated services for victims of Human Trafficking and Domestic Violence. The launch took place on 18 May 2019, as part of ongoing events to mark the 10th anniversary of SOLWODI Romania. Their first project was a counselling centre for female victims of human trafficking.

While education and awareness-raising activities are critically important to the work of preventing trafficking, the reality is that the NGO is running at full capacity, providing counselling services, training programmes and community education activities to the victims of human trafficking, domestic violence and exploitation.

Despite the continuing demand for services, Adina believes there is a growing awareness about the crime of Human Trafficking and this



in turn creates more active engagement and collaboration amongst national organisations, working to combat human trafficking and support the victims of violence. Read more at :<http://solwodi.ro/EN/>

Our network in **Spain**, also a member of RENATE, distributed information on Human Trafficking for the World Day against Human Trafficking. Based on The Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking, it provides a synthesis of the main points in a way that is accessible to the general public and can be found [here](#). The photos were taken at a prayer service on 8<sup>th</sup> February.



## National and Regional Networks

**ACRATH** - Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans. “We are endorsed by Catholic Religious Australia – the peak body for 155 religious orders in Australia, representing over 5,700 religious sisters, brothers and priests” writes Anne Kelly ibvm. ACRATH is a member of Talitha Kum. Our network in Australia works closely with ACRATH and other organizations, with Anne as our representative. Anne writes:

“Loreto Australia and South East Asia works closely with a range of partners to address the many issues related to human trafficking, one of which is forced marriage.

Each year in Australia girls are forced to marry. Some are taken overseas to be married and others are married in Australia. The exact numbers are unknown because very few girls report a forced marriage, however, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) have investigated 174 cases since 2013, when the legislation banning forced marriage was introduced.

A three-year grant from Mary Ward International Australia (MWIA) to ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans) has facilitated the implementation of forced marriage education programs in culturally and linguistically diverse communities across the country. <https://www.loreto.org.au/breaking-chains/>

The Wedding Dress of Tears was created by a group of Year 12 students at a workshop on forced marriage. The dress was created from tissues – representing the tears shed by those in, or at risk of, forced marriage. The locks and wire rings adorning the bodice represent the slavery-like practice that is forced marriage”.



Read ACRATH Proposal

[HERE](#)



## Mission Council International Day against slavery and Human Trafficking at Loreto Cooparoo, Brisbane, Australia

The Mission Council based its awareness and education action on the fact that human trafficking “is the second largest crime in the world generating billions of dollars for traffickers while victimizing millions of people, some as young as four years of age. An estimated 20.9 million women, men and children, worldwide, are victims of international traffickers. This number reflects those within our borders and across international borders. Victims can be found in domestic servitude, commercial sex industry, hotel and restaurant services, sweatshops, construction, agriculture, mail order brides, child soldiers, panhandling, as well as, the harvesting of organs and illegal adoptions. This crime will continue to exist as long as the demand is high and financially profitable for the traffickers”. They ask: How many slaves work for you? Go to the following website, the slavery footprint website <http://slaveryfootprint.org/>. Check out what you wear, eat and use. We can help STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING by simple things such as asking **questions about the origins of the goods every time we make a purchase.** (Fiona O’Sullivan)



### [Illinois Women Religious Against Human Trafficking \(USA\)](#)

The Illinois Women Religious against Human Trafficking and Associates is a collaborative initiative to prevent and protect women, men and children from sexual and labor exploitation, as well as to advocate for the prosecution of the perpetrators. Their work is inspired by the US Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2013.

**Jean Okroi IBVM**, who is actively engaged, sends this account of recent activities.

1. “We created and implemented a four-hour human trafficking program called *La Trata de Personas es la Esclavitud Escondida* for the Hispanic population in West Chicago. The Speakers included a lawyer, social worker, specialist in human trafficking and a survivor who shared his history.
2. A focus group worked with Hyatt Hotel employees on human trafficking and what to look for in each aspect of the hotel business. The Chicago Hyatt hotels are now hiring and training survivors of human trafficking for employment.

Chicago Tribune, April 18, 2014

#### Let's fight human trafficking

In September, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Ald. Matthew O'Shea introduced an ordinance to try to ensure that the city's purchases of goods and services do not support human trafficking. This ordinance would be amending Chapter 2-92 of the Municipal Code regarding a prohibition on human trafficking. Had this been taken up by the City Council, advocates such as Illinois Women Religious Against Human Trafficking, of which I am a member, would have joined other justice people in speaking to our aldermen in support of its passage. Had Mayor Emanuel followed through on this, it might have been one of the finest actions for his legacy.

If you are serious about working against human trafficking, here is a change perhaps we can all recommend to the women or men who represent us now on the City Council. Surely any portion of whatever money the city has to spend should never support modern-day slavery — and that is what trafficking is.

— Sister Benita Coffey, Chicago

3. Parishes (about 650) in the state of Illinois have been contacted and received human trafficking materials during the past two years. A follow up has been done with the parishes that have responded. The education and evaluation was brought to completion during the month of March, 2019.

4. As we prepare for our planning come the fall months, the focus is on educating the general public regarding the purchasing of goods made/produced by victims of human trafficking. One of the committee members has already contacted the Mayor of Chicago about the ordinance the City Council introduced and did not follow through on ensuring that the goods they purchase do not support human trafficking. “

## Obuasi, Ghana, Africa

Nancy Mugo ibvm, contact person for Consecrated Persons against Human Trafficking (CONPATH) shares the following initiatives from Ghana:

1. Talitha Kum, Ghana, held a meeting on advocacy and awareness raising on 8 February 2019.
2. A presentation on Human Trafficking was given to the school community.
3. Students enacted scenes on child labour, including abuse and other dehumanizing impacts on them as a result of trafficking.
4. Prayer and Eucharist celebration in honour of St. Bakitha focused on this serious issue.



## Kenya

**RAHT (Religious Against Human Trafficking)** organized a forum on human trafficking on 9th February 2019 at Tangaza University College in Nairobi. Members of our network played an active role in the organization of the forum. Speakers were invited to tackle topics related to Church and Government on Human Trafficking. What is the church doing about Human Trafficking? What is the government doing on Human Trafficking? An important question for the participants was the re-integration of returnees, a process which begins as soon as the person is identified in the trafficking country

(country of destination) and the same process continues in the country of origin.

“The striking reality”, writes Nancy ibvm, “was that it is easy to cooperate in human trafficking, anyone can be used as a stepping stone without our knowledge!” According to the speakers, the government is doing its part, what about the church? *It is everyone’s responsibility, You and I are invited to join the fight”.*





## Asia

[AMRAT](#) –Asian Movement of Women Religious against Human Trafficking. The movement was founded in 2009 and is present in India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri-Lanka. They work in close collaboration with Talitha Kum. Sr. Gabriella Bottani, coordinator of Talitha Kum with Cynthia CJ at an Annual General Meeting of AMRAT.

## India

### Narrative Report of the International Conference on Anti-Human Trafficking.

[This report](#) is worth a re-visit if you have already read it, if not, it is a “Must” for its comprehensive content

which provides an overarching view of the situation. It addresses the issues which are critical all over the world. The input dealt with the trends, issues and challenges related to the commercial sex trade, human trafficking and the national and international dimensions of cross-border trafficking, climate change, disasters, forced movements of people and their links with human trafficking. Cybercrime and human trafficking, rehabilitation and reintegration, unsafe migration, armed conflict, displacement and human trafficking are all important components of this criminal activity. There are essential legal responses and challenges when trying to combat human trafficking. The role of NGOs and CSOs was discussed and best practice models on Anti human trafficking initiatives were promoted.



## Ireland

APT is a faith-based group working against Trafficking in Persons (TIP) founded in 2005. Some time back, our network in Ireland, headed by Liz Byrne ibvm, and in collaboration with APT, created an extensive awareness raising campaign with the well-known Gift Box. Meantime, APT highlights one of the increasing and serious connections with human trafficking – pornography. The already huge porn industry is growing exponentially and needs to be addressed urgently. Watch [this video](#), from the APT website which aims at raising awareness of this aspect of the crime which affects men and boys at increasingly younger ages, with disastrous consequences for themselves as well as the victims of this industry. Read the recent issue of [Human Trafficking Awareness](#).

## Mary Ward Family Social Media

Social media has changed and is changing the world as we know it. In a few years the way we receive our news, communicate and spend our time has been revolutionized. Social media has changed the way we learn about and respond to the things that are affecting our world. It has become, for many, a new frontier of compassion. This is the case when information regarding the struggle to end human trafficking is posted. In addition to creating awareness of our concerns and actions, it allows us to network and engage with the global community of concerned people. From the NGO office we join with you, with other NGOs and individuals on Facebook. We follow many schools on Twitter and member states who need to hear our voice. We have a diverse community on Instagram. A vibrant Mary Ward Family sharing humanity and concern for the serious issues of our time on social media will make an impact on our world.

Facebook Page [Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary/Loreto](#) Profile: [Loreto ibvm NGO](#) Twitter: [@ibvmun](#) Web: [www.ibvmunngo.org](#) You Tube: [IBVM NGO](#) Phone: 1 347 357 9893 email: [ibvmunngo@gmail.com](#) and [cynthiamathewun@gmail.com](#) Instagram: [ibvmunngo](#)