

Talking Points
By Ambassador Magued A. Abdelaziz
General Assembly informal Thematic Debate on “**Human Trafficking**”
3 June 2008

Panel 1: Enhancing Multilateral Cooperation to prevent trafficking in persons:

* Congratulating **the President of the General Assembly** for choosing one of the most prominent issues and outstanding problems that the international community is facing nowadays, it is a timely discussion that we need to have to underline the aspects of the problem, the challenges that we are facing and the way forward to deal together, collectively with the problem in a comprehensive manner.

With the same token to command H.E. Dr Anwar Grgash, **Minister of State of Emirates**, Ms **Asha Rose Migiro** and Ms **Asley Judd** for their very insightful statements. And to thank also the Moderator **Mr. Antonio Maria Costa**, whose efforts are much appreciated by the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the previous speakers for their presentations.

* We are gathered here to **review and assess the way forward** yet another global challenge against humanity, trafficking in persons has grown to be the third largest growing criminal activity in the world, after arms and drug trade. A serious challenge, that needs our full attention, therefore our focus today should be to examine **how to mobilize a global action** to deal with such a challenge.

* **The 2005 World Summit Outcome document** is our starting point, as it clearly stated **that development, peace and security and human rights are the** the pillars of the United **three interlinked pillars, and the foundation that allow our** people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair.

* Furthermore, In the 2005 Summit Outcome document, we committed ourselves to discuss and define the notion of **human Security** within the General Assembly, which we started several days ago in the informal debate initiated by the President of the General Assembly, we can not separate one theme from the other. **Human trafficking is a core issue of human security** and should be treated as such.

* My fervent conviction is that a **global vision** should be aligned against human trafficking with our long standing efforts and empower to meet our security needs and accordingly place **human security** at the center of all our development strategies, reducing poverty, addressing social injustices and promoting gender equality. Let me stress on this again, if we are talking on this organization on how to achieve Human Security, then let's deal collectively with one of its core challenge which is Human trafficking and commit ourselves to **protecting the Victims of Human trafficking and bringing the crime perpetrators to justice.**

* **A global Action Plan should be formulated to address the global phenomena from all sides and angles, through a process that can be facilitated within the GA. in a manner similar to the strategy we have adopted to counter terrorism, it should include:**

- I. Measures to address the **conditions** conducive to the spread of Human Trafficking
- II. Measures to **combat and prevent persons and victims from being trafficked.**
- III. Measures to **build States' capacity** to prevent and combat human trafficking and to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in this regard.
- IV. Measures to ensure respect for **human rights for all particularly** the right of all people to live in freedom and dignity, free from **poverty** and despair and the rule of law as the fundamental basis of the fight against human trafficking.
- V. Measures to help **raising public awareness**, providing credible, **disaggregated data**, ensuring **coordination amongst international and regional organizations** dealing with this issue, **and providing technical assistances for developing countries** to overcome causes for human trafficking. Here we should note the “**OUAGADOUGOU Action Plan** to combat trafficking in human beings especially women and children, which was adopted in Tripoli by the African States and the European Union, in November 2006, during the Ministerial conference on Migration and development. This can act as a good bases for South-North cooperation.

* There is a need to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to fight human trafficking, through full **coordination amongst relevant mechanisms**, particularly:

- The General Assembly annual resolution on improving coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons,
- The resolution of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice on efforts in the fight against trafficking,
- The 2000 protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons especially women and children,
- The United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime,
- The Palermo protocol,
- The ILO conventions on forced labor, instruments on combating trafficking in children as well as protection of human rights of traffic victims,
- The UN global initiative (UN-GIFT) which aims at tracing public awareness throughout the world as part of large strategy to fight human trafficking and forced labor and to combine respective efforts of private and public sectors towards this end.

All of those mechanisms should comprise a fertile ground towards achieving the suggested action plan.

* And in an attempt to ensure better **coordinated and coherent efforts across the UN system** to combat human trafficking, a Task Force within the UN System needs to come

together, to formulate a network amongst all relevant UN Agencies, funds and programs, particularly the UNODC, the ILO, IOM, UNICEF, OHCHR should combine efforts to assist Member States in implementing this global action plan..

* We should all commit to work together, seek solidarity amongst all countries and member states whether they are countries of **demand, supply** or **Passage** like “Egypt”, we should all work together with different stakeholders, international and regional organization, NGO’S, public and private sector, financial institution and others towards an elimination of one of the most aggravating forms of violation of human rights.

* **In Egypt**, we have committed ourselves towards ending this practice and combating this crime, we work closely with the **UNODC**, Our **regional partners**, and Neighbors, through several mechanisms and instruments, whether within our Arab Circles, or within our African Circles, and here I would like to bring to the attention of this August Body that the issue of coordinating to combat trafficking in Persons is one of the priority issues on the agenda of our next coming **African Summit**, which will soon take place in Sharm Elsheikh.

***Private Sector** has a pivotal role to play, here I would like to point to a success story that started in January 2006, a campaign was successfully launched in Athens in January 2006 with the business community to end human trafficking, **the First Lady of Egypt**, Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, was a drive force behind this initiative with her International Suzanne Mubarak women’s Movement for Peace all behind is, she was one amongst other pioneering international figures helping in the success of the campaign, which was an awakening to among the International Business Community showing them how to take their responsibility in Ending the Crime, through:

- International awareness on both the national and international levels,
- finding innovative business solutions to end human trafficking and forced labor.
- creating opportunities among all multi-stake holders to join hands in ending human trafficking.
- Conducting research- analyzing laws- policies - identifying problems through business practices - holding conferences - auditing - and signing joint ethical codes of conduct towards ending the practice.

* **Egypt** has been one of the Countries that have benefited from the fruit Labor of this initiative, which committed so many prominent figures from the Business Community who are already taking ownership of the imitative

* **The First Lady of Egypt** didn’t stop at that, rather had joined hands with the UNODC, and other prominent figures of the International Community in addition to a congregation of experts and activists participating in a plenary session of the Vienna Forum to fight human trafficking, which took place in February 2008, pledging support, exchanging ideas and sharing experiences in the coordinated ways in how to fight human trafficking together.

Finally, we shouldn't let this opportunity slip from our hands, we should take stoke of our responsibility, build on what we have and move forward in a coordinated manner to end together trafficking in persons

Panel 2: Protecting victims and cross-border cooperation in prosecuting trafficking in persons

Egypt's efforts:

* Egypt is keenly aware of the increase in instances of trafficking in persons worldwide which is facilitated partly by globalization and exploited by groups and individuals targeting vulnerable sectors of our societies especially women and girls. And while in the past, our efforts in dealing with issues of trafficking tended to focus on dealing with incidents of transit through the Egyptian territory from parts of Europe to a neighboring country (Israel) we have now moved on to adjust in Egypt all aspects of the phenomena and to revamp our legislative, executive and awareness structures in order to deal with this scourge in a more comprehensive manner.

* In this regard, our standing point is to combat this inhuman practice which does not only violates the most basic legal norms but furthermore, counters our strongly held morale and religious convictions. Consequently, we in Egypt look forward to working constructively with an open mind with all partners towards strengthening cooperation in combating the most inhumane and degrading practice.

* Our efforts in this regard, were not limited to one or the other form of trafficking but include all its forms as enumerated in all the international instruments to which Egypt is party. We also believe that combating the practice is not only a trans-government but rather requires a consolidated effort amongst all stake holders including law makers, civil society, general public and media. This conviction is translated into national legislations including a comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation which was drafted by a national committee in February 2008 in accordance with the UN guidelines as well as international agreements which we are party to especially the supplementary protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons especially women and children and the indicative Arab law to combat trafficking in persons, and the "OUAGADOUGOU Action Plan to combat trafficking human beings especially women and children", which was adopted by the African Union Summit in Tripoli in November 2006. A separate draft legislation to control the transfer of human organs is also in the process of adoption during the current parliamentary session.

* In the addition to all the abovementioned, a national coordinating committee to combat and prevent in trafficking in persons have been established in Egypt in July 2007 to coordinate all the national efforts amongst national institutions, ministries, civil society, and private sector as well as the general prosecution, the National Council for Human Rights of Egypt, the National Council for Motherhood and Childhood, and the National Council for Women. With its specialized Secretariat, in the office of the Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for Human Rights Social and Humanitarian Affairs, the mandate of the committee shall concentrate on drafting national action plans, preparing draft legislations, reviewing others that might need the reviewer to harmonize them with international agreement and to cooperate with the specialized offices of the United Nations especially UNODC and GPAT. The same committee which is considering feasibility study of a project that has been submitted by the UNODC regional office for the Middle East and North Africa on measures to prevent and combat trafficking human beings in Egypt. This is in addition to several programs and measures that has been taken by the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood concentrating on ending the practice against children in Egypt, further training programs for law enforcement, customs, and immigration officials as well as prosecutors, judges, and other officials who deals with potential victims particularly children. Generating empowerment of families is one of the aims of such project by providing micro-enterprise and micro-credits for poverty alleviation and combating phenomena like street children, child labor, early enforced marriage, establishing a data base and conducting national surveys is one of the outcomes too and enhancing regional and international cooperation in exchanging data on the criminal networks.

- **In brief, here follows what we need to protect victims and help cross-border cooperation in prosecuting trafficking in persons:**
 - We need sound international cooperation to help training programs for law enforcement, customs and immigration officials, judges, prosecutors, and other officials who deals with potential victims.
 - We need raising awareness campaigns including dissemination materials, through national, regional and international media outlets.
 - We need to empower families, socially, politically & financially.
 - We need to share information.
 - We need to raise punishment against traffickers, and to enforce those punishments though international collective cooperation aiming at bringing down those cross boarder criminal networks, as well as developing functional communication support systems developed for information sharing, information analysis.
 - We need to continue mobilizing business communities to prevent all forms of exploitation of labor.
 - And finally we need to close this circuit of crime by education and better law enforcement against traffickers and abusers of trafficked persons in the Countries of demand, to be balanced on the other hand by sharing in poverty alleviation, education and teaching prospect victim on self worth and rights in the Countries of supply.

If we do this we can really end the practice Mr. President,

I thank you.