

PORTUGAL

General Assembly Thematic Debate on Human Trafficking
03.06.08

Panel 1: ENHANCING MULTILATERAL COOPERATION TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

My delegation would like to start by thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this thematic debate on such an important issue, which merits our urgent consideration and engagement. We would also like to thank both Panels for their extremely interesting contributions to the debate.

These remarks were intended for the first Panel in the morning and as such address the theme "Enhancing multilateral cooperation to prevent trafficking in persons".

Madam Chair,

The discussion we are having, that enables us to exchange information and best practices, is already one example of how we can enhance multilateral cooperation in this field.

Portugal agrees with the intervention made this morning by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union and would like to stress the importance of first and foremost promote the adherence and implementation of the additional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

Portugal has ratified this Protocol in 2004 and has approved last year its First National Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings. This Plan's key structuring element is the symbiosis between the repressive approach to combating human trafficking and the promotion of human rights through the adoption of strategies to prevent, support, raise awareness, empower and include victims.

We hope that other Member States will feel encouraged to adhere and implement this Protocol, as a first essential step to strengthen the multilateral action against this phenomenon.

I thank you Madam Chair.