



## Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations

### Consultations on a United Nations Global Plan of Action on Preventing trafficking in persons, prosecuting traffickers and protecting and assisting victims of trafficking

#### Comments of Colombia

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Colombia wants to reiterate that the core purpose of a Plan of Action on trafficking in persons should be to promote and facilitate the universal ratification of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Colombia deems the Protocol as the minimum acceptable standard to combat the crime on a balanced and comprehensive approach recognizing the responsibility of countries of origin, destination and transit through mutual cooperation. As a consequence, any intended draft of a plan should observe the structure and content of the Protocol which establish measures to prevent the crime of trafficking, to protect and assist the victims, and to prosecute traffickers.

The plan should be a political instrument in nature aiming to reiterate and reinforce the political will to combat trafficking in persons and to raise international awareness to the crime. While promoting the implementation of the Protocol, it should avoid duplication of efforts and the creation of new entities and mechanisms for coordination, review or monitoring.

Moreover, this political instrument should:

- Promote universal ratification and effective implementation of the Protocol;
- Encourage the adoption of a comprehensive, balanced and human rights based international approach that emphasizes protection and assistance to the victims;
- Advocate for the development and updating of national legislation in accordance to the Protocol;
- Raise national and international awareness on the crime and victims;



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- Urge for the coordination of efforts and the strengthening of synergies between competent entities of the UN system;
- Promote international cooperation and mutual legal assistance;

With regard to the issues on which progress could be made, Colombia believes that the recommendations adopted by the *Working Group on Trafficking in Persons established by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (the Palermo Convention) and the *International Framework for Action to Implement Trafficking Protocol* released on January 27, 2010, provide valuable, practical and innovative elements to advance in the fight against this crime while remaining true to the Protocol. Colombia would favor for the inclusion of the following topics:

- With regards to the adoption of adequate legislation, particularly on criminalization, the Protocol should be interpreted and implemented in conjunction with the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;
- In terms of prevention and awareness raising, the inclusion of trafficking in persons in public education curricula and the implementation of educational and awareness campaigns on a permanent basis;
- With respect to training, the importance of educating the judiciary, police, immigration and social workers on the identification and timely assistance to victims of trafficking;
- With regard to trafficking for labor exploitation, the calling for governments, producers and consumers to adopt specific measures to combat it;
- In terms of victims protection, the need to adopt measures for proper identification, prevention of re-victimization and criminalization of the victims;
- On international cooperation, to stress the importance of regional approaches to facilitate mutual legal assistance and the exchange of information, including operational information.
- On data collection, research and analysis, the need to assist countries on data collection and research on figures, trends and patterns of trafficking in persons aimed at enabling them to portray the true extent of this crime.



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Colombia suggests that the draft emphasizes the political elements which are familiar to the Assembly while limiting detailed and technical mandates already covered and defined by the Protocol. Furthermore, Colombia advises that at some point of the consultations Member States should be given the opportunity to exchange points of view and to start a dialogue with international experts which will facilitate the draft content to be reasserted.

To conclude, Colombia is convinced that the adoption of a global and political in nature document would bring together Member States on the fight against the scourge of trafficking in persons under the Protocol provisions, and on ensuring that the resources and efforts of specialized entities focus on its universal ratification and effective implementation. To this extent, Colombia advocates for an open and constructive consultations process that avoids controversial issues which will keep us from reaching our common purpose to defeat this ominous crime.