

**Statement by  
H.E. Amb. Oh Joon  
President of the Economic and Social Council**

**“In Stronger Partnership and Better Coordination of Efforts to Stop Human Trafficking:  
Eradicating Modern-Day Slavery through Sustainable Development”**

*February 9, 2016 (10 a.m.-1 p.m.), ECOSOC Chamber*

Mr. President of the General Assembly,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express my sincere gratitude to Belarus and other members of the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking for inviting me to address this special high-level event. I commend the Group for organizing this timely and important event.

Last year, we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Among the 17 SDGs, Goal 5 on gender equality and women’s empowerment, Goal 8 on economic growth and employment and Goal 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies all include targets aimed at eliminating human trafficking. This reflects Member States' renewed commitment to eradicating human trafficking, the modern-day slavery, once and for all.

Human trafficking affects the world's most vulnerable persons, especially women and children. Therefore, we need to develop a more comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying social and economic factors that make such persons vulnerable in the first place.

This will certainly call for a greater collective effort to reduce inequalities, offer long-term economic opportunities, provide social protection, and build more resilient, peaceful societies.

Such efforts should be complemented with a focus on strengthening the rule of law, combating corruption and reducing the demand for all forms of human exploitation.

This year, the Economic and Social Council will convene a Special Meeting on Inequality on 30 March to address inequality as a multidimensional issue, which also constitutes one of the root causes of human trafficking.

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, a functional commission of ECOSOC, works to combat national and transnational crime, and to increase the efficiency and fairness of criminal justice administration systems.

On the recommendation of the Commission, ECOSOC adopted Resolution (2015/23) on the Implementation of the UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons in the 2015 Session.

The resolution underlined the importance of fully implementing the Plan of Action, as well as the role of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other relevant UN agencies.

The Plan of Action will serve as an important milestone in establishing a coordinated approach to prevent trafficking, prosecute offenders and protect victims.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we begin working to realize the 2030 Development Agenda, let us make sure that we take all of the necessary measures to prevent trafficking in persons and continue our efforts to tackle its root causes. This is critical in safeguarding human dignity for all and leaving no one behind.

Thank you. //END//