

4 November 2010

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss,
President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Launch of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims
of Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children**

Mr. Secretary-General,
Mr. Executive Director,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We meet here today to launch the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children. I thank you all for your attendance, which illustrates your support for this important initiative by the General Assembly. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his ongoing engagement with this issue, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for organizing today's event and for its valuable assistance to Member States throughout the process. I also welcome to the United Nations today's special guests, celebrated humanitarians and actors Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher, and New York Times Pulitzer Prize winning author and journalist Nicholas Kristof.

Trafficking in persons is a global problem. It transcends national borders and today affects almost every country in the world. It is, therefore, our collective responsibility to address this abhorrent crime, to protect the world's most vulnerable, including women and children, from abduction, coercion, sexual exploitation and servitude.

The General Assembly has continuously recognized its responsibility in this respect. In the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, the General Assembly urged all States to devise, enforce and strengthen effective measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in persons. In 2008, the thematic debate on human trafficking held by the Assembly called for more action to assist victims, prosecute traffickers and boost prevention of trafficking.

But it is this year, in 2010, that we are finally seeing these discussions being transformed into tangible action. In July, the General Assembly adopted by consensus the United Nations Global Plan of Action against trafficking in Persons. I would also like to recognize the critical role of the facilitators in this process.

By adopting the Plan of Action, Governments resolved to take concrete action to prevent trafficking in persons, to protect and assist victims, to prosecute related crimes, and to strengthen partnerships among Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector, including the media.

As an important instrument, the Plan of Action also established the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children. This Trust Fund will provide humanitarian, legal and financial aid to victims of trafficking in persons, through established channels of assistance, such as governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

I call on Member States, private organizations and private donors to give generously to this fund. With your support, real progress can be made towards achieving justice, real change can be made to the lives of victims. Let us show the world's most vulnerable how much we care.