

3 April 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,  
President of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Closing of the Interactive Dialogue on Human Trafficking:  
Partnership and Innovation to End Violence against Women and  
Girls**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
Good afternoon.

We are now reaching the end of this interactive dialogue.

It has been an extremely informative discussion on the issue of fighting human trafficking.

I would like to thank all of today's participants.

We have heard from the heads of key international organizations, and leaders from NGOs, the private sector, academia, foundations, the arts, as well as brave survivors who are using their experience to rescue and rehabilitate victims of this terrible crime.

I would particularly like to thank our very special guests, Ms. Rani Hong and Ms. Somaly Mam.

Your stories, your work and your dedication deeply inspire us all.

I would also thank Ms. Mira Sorvino for the important attention she brings to the issue of human trafficking, and for her great efforts in this area. Thank you so much.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let us reaffirm the importance of the implementation of the "UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children", and the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

These standards ensure that human trafficking is regarded as a crime that victimizes women, children and men in all its many forms, including sexual exploitation and forced labour.

I would like to highlight a few important points that I have heard repeatedly over the course of the day, because I think they will be relevant for any future discussions on this matter.

First, we must provide a coordinated and comprehensive response at the local, national, regional and international level.

Integrated regional programs, through their ability to leverage political commitment at the international level and to deliver practical action at the field level, offer one of the best platforms for success against human trafficking.

We should not underestimate the sophistication of trafficking networks and how they operate.

Traffickers tend to be extremely organized and connected throughout countries, regions and even worldwide.

As we respond to their acts, we must ensure to remain one step ahead of the traffickers.

Second, where we have adopted laws on human trafficking, we must now ensure that we implement them.

We should educate our law enforcement agents, prosecutors, attorneys and judges so that they understand why human trafficking is a high priority.

We have also heard survivors and experts explain that most criminal codes leave out criminalization of the demand side of human trafficking, and instead treat victims as criminals under the law.

A review of our laws is required, and makers of preventive policy should equally focus on demand.

Third, we must ensure that women have a leading role at the negotiating and policy-making table, particularly survivors of human trafficking.

Survivors can offer invaluable firsthand knowledge and insight into the mindsets and practices we are trying to understand.

Fourth, all our activities must be based on an inter-agency, multi-stakeholder strategy that includes the private sector and local NGOs.

Fifth, we must integrate the fight against human trafficking into the UN's broader programmes, to boost development and strengthen security worldwide.

Sixth, we must strengthen measures to reduce the factors that make persons, especially women and girls, vulnerable to trafficking, such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity.

Seventh, we must be guided by human rights instruments that provide for more effective protection and treatment of victims.

No one knows better what a survivor needs than a survivor herself.

Whenever possible, survivors should be called upon to determine what survivors need, and how they can be assisted.

Any assistance programmes for survivors must be sustainable.

Short-term projects are not a solution.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The aforementioned points cannot be implemented without funds.

We have to ensure that our strategic response to human trafficking is well-resourced and well funded.

As I noted this morning, the 2010 Global Plan of Action created a Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking that is helping NGOs on the ground provide much-needed support.

However, based on information presented today, it is not yet receiving the necessary funds to enable it to provide the support envisaged by Member States.

I call on Member States to provide assistance.

We had three generous donations pledged today - from Australia for \$200,000, from Russia for \$30,000 and from Luxembourg 30,000 Euros.

I extend sincere thanks to Australia, Russia and Luxembourg, and encourage other Member States to follow this example.

Because according to UNODC, only one out of 100 victims is ever rescued.

We owe it to the few who are freed to assist them in rebuilding their lives.

I am confident that today's robust discussion will be of great use in the coming year when this Assembly will appraise the Plan of Action and its implementation.

Finally, let me thank everyone for taking part in this interactive dialogue.

And I want to repeat again, I really encourage you to assist the Fund.

Thank you.