

26 July 2021

Excellency,

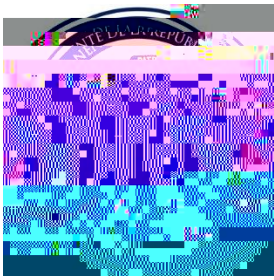
I have the honor to transmit herewith a letter from H.E. Mr. José Alfonso Blanco Conde, Permanent Representative of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations, and H.E. Mr. Enrique Austria Manalo, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations transmitting a zero draft of the Political Declaration for the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the progress achieved in the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

delegations that the first
informal consultation of the process will be held in the General Assembly Hall on
Wednesday, 4 August 2021 at 10 a.m.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Volkan BOZKIR

All Permanent Representatives and



[Handwritten signature]

ZERO DRAFT

2021 Political Declaration on the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons

1. We, the States Members of the United Nations, reaffirm the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons¹ and our commitments made therein, and evince our strong political will to take decisive concerted action to end this heinous crime, wherever it may occur.
2. We recall and reaffirm our commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,² recognizing its integrated and indivisible nature and acknowledging that the 2030 Agenda includes commitments that relate to combating all forms of trafficking in persons, recognize the importance of partnerships in this regard, and emphasize that the 2030 Agenda and the Global Plan of Action are mutually reinforcing.
3. We reaffirm the crucial importance of universal ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime³ and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,⁴ taking into consideration the central role of those instruments in the fight against trafficking in persons, and urge Member States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying or acceding to the Convention and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, as a matter of priority. We urge States parties to those instruments to implement them fully and effectively, and welcome the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime to establish a mechanism for the review of the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto.
4. transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation, which includes, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation,⁵ 836xp51(e)4(x)-9(ploi)-3(tat3-3(tat3-3(tat3-3(of))] TJET g0 G[for)

6. We reiterate our commitment to prevent trafficking in persons, including through targeted education and awareness-raising campaigns. We welcome the designation of 30 July as the World Day against Trafficking in Persons.⁷ We commit to intensify our efforts to prevent and address, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters trafficking, especially of women and girls, for all forms of exploitation, and in this regard to put in place or to enhance preventive measures, including legislative and punitive measures, to deter exploiters of trafficked persons, as well as ensure their accountability. We reaffirm the crucial importance of addressing sociocultural patterns that sustain gender inequality and discrimination, including the culture of tolerance towards violence against women and girls, that make women and girls particularly vulnerable to trafficking in persons and commit to include more women in leadership positions and decision-making processes.

7. We reaffirm our commitment to address the social, economic, cultural, political and other factors that make people vulnerable to trafficking in persons, such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, gender inequality and discrimination, social exclusion, marginalization, corruption, and humanitarian emergencies, including armed conflicts and natural disasters.

11. We will also undertake appropriate measures for access to justice and protections for victims in criminal justice processes, including measures to ensure that such access is never conditional on participation in criminal proceedings, to provide for the admission of digital access to remedies and compensation

14. We reiterate, in the strongest terms possible, the importance of strengthening collective action by Member States to end trafficking in persons, including through regional, subregional and cross-regional mechanisms, and through partnerships and initiatives with the United Nations system and other stakeholders, including, inter alia, regional and international organizations, the private sector, the media, parliamentarians and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and faith-based organizations, as well as national human rights institutions, where they exist, with regard to the Paris Principles.⁸ We will promote partnerships and engage the private sector and civil society, in developing and implementing sustainable initiatives to prevent and combat trafficking in persons. In particular, we recognize the work of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on contemporary forms of slavery, in combating trafficking in persons, and welcome their continued efforts to implement the Global Plan of Action and the present political declaration.
15. We also reiterate the need to continue to enhance the overall organization and coherence in the efforts of the United Nations system to respond to trafficking in persons, especially in ensuring support to Member States. In this regard, while recalling that the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons was established to foster coordination and cooperation among relevant United Nations system entities and other international organizations involved in combating trafficking in persons, with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as its coordinator, we urge the Secretary-General to continue efforts to strengthen coordination within the United Nations system and to inform Member States thereof through existing reporting channels.
16. We recognize the important role played by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons in the United Nations system, and recognize with appreciation the ongoing efforts of its member entities, jointly and separately, to respond to trafficking in persons. We invite the Group to continue to increase its activities related to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action and, to that end, to incorporate aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development relevant to preventing and combating trafficking in persons and to continue to advance the coordination of future activities and avoidance of duplication of efforts. We encourage the Coordination Group to continue to expand and diversify its membership to include international entities that have a role in addressing trafficking in persons in all regions.
17. We reaffirm the central role of the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the global fight against trafficking in persons, particularly in providing technical assistance to Member State

19. We reiterate the need for improved data collection and analysis of trafficking in persons, disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant factors, including the form of exploitation, and using systematic and consistent criteria, to effectively counter trafficking in persons. We thus recognize the importance of improved data collection by national authorities and will enhance international cooperation to this end, including through capacity-building, financial support and technical assistance. We will do so consistent with our national legislation on data protection, if applicable, and our international obligations related to privacy.

20. We acknowledge the importance of the biennial Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, prepared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime pursuant to the Global Plan of Action, and request the Office to continue to collect information on patterns, forms and flows of trafficking in persons, at the national, regional and international levels, in a balanced, reliable and comprehensive manner, to be published in the Global Report, and in ongoing research to estimate the prevalence of trafficking in persons, in close cooperation and collaboration with Member States.

21. We express serious concern about the lack of political will and commitment of financial resources to effectively address trafficking in persons in situations of armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies, including natural disasters. In this regard:
 - (a) We recognize that refugees and migrants in large movements are at greater risk of being trafficked and will work to prevent trafficking among those affected by displacement, including through targeted measures to identify victims of trafficking in persons or those at risk of trafficking in places of first arrival. We reiterate our commitment to take steps to address the particular vulnerabilities of women and children during the journey from country of origin to country of arrival, including their potential exposure to trafficking in persons, including through the development of age- and gender-sensitive policies and programmes.]

 - (b) We commit to intensify our efforts to create and strengthen regular pathways for migration to reduce the exposure of people to human trafficking.

26. We acknowledge that the gaps between the Global Plan of Action and its implementation by Member States should be closed, and recognize that arrangements are needed to ensure the systematic follow-up to and review of all of the commitments we are making at the present high-level meeting, including in the quadrennial high-level meetings of the General Assembly to appraise progress