



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK**

NEW YORK, 15 MARCH 2017

SECURITY COUNCIL – OPEN DEBATE

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

We thank the United Kingdom for this opportunity to speak on human trafficking in conflict and modern slavery. The prohibition of slavery is one of the very rare norms of international law that apply at all times, in all places, to all actors. States are under legal obligation to criminalize, investigate, prosecute and punish slavery where it occurs. Over 90% of countries have legislation in place criminalizing human trafficking¹. Yet, estimates suggest that 46 Mio people have fallen victim to modern slavery and human trafficking, and convictions for these crimes amount to a mere fraction of the total number of perpetrators. The impunity gap is glaring, in spite of the strong universal legal norm.

Resolution 2331 on trafficking in persons in conflict situations, adopted in December 2016, was the first-ever Security Council resolution on this issue. It identified a correlation between human trafficking, sexual violence, armed conflict, terrorism and transnational organized crime. It also highlighted the gender-specific implications of human trafficking in conflict. Over 70% of

¹ http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP_2014_full_report.pdf

trafficking victims are women and girls². This is why it is particularly important to explore the gender dimensions of modern slavery – which was the main topic of a ministerial-level side event organized jointly by the UK, Nigeria and Liechtenstein yesterday. We hope to take from this event concrete actions that the international community can implement in its efforts to end and prevent slavery, particularly as it pertains to female victims.

Mr. President,

Last June, Liechtenstein organized a two-day workshop, together with the UK Mission and the United Nations University, on how the Security Council can address and tackle human trafficking in conflict. The resulting report identified 10 ideas for action for the Security Council, some of which were reflected both in the SG report on Trafficking in Persons as well as in resolution 2331. One of the central conclusions was the need for a paradigm shift, meaning recognition that national criminal justice responses may need to be supported by other forms of Security Council leverage – normative, financial and technological – and for innovative approaches in the fight against modern slavery. The business with forced labor currently generates estimated annual profits of USD 150 billion³. One obvious innovative approach is therefore involving financial institutions in detecting and disrupting financial flows associated with human trafficking – i.e. to “follow the money”. To explore this avenue further, we are organizing a two-day workshop with the United Nations University at the end of this month. It will bring together leaders from the financial sector – financial regulators, investigators and prosecutors as well as Member States and civil society representatives. We will discuss the nature of the exposure of the financial sector to modern slavery, human trafficking and forced labor, the risks associated with that exposure, measures it can take to combat these crimes as well as the role of different actors in protecting the financial sector against involvement in modern slavery, human trafficking and forced labor. The outcome of the workshop will be a limited set of concrete, actionable ideas and recommendations to assist the financial sector,

² http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP_2014_full_report.pdf

³ http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_243201/lang--en/index.htm

regulators and other stakeholders in the fight against modern slavery and human trafficking.

Mr. President,

While the Council underscores that acts or offences associated with human trafficking in conflict may constitute war crimes, it fails to acknowledge that these may also amount to crimes against humanity. The full potential of international criminal justice needs to be exhausted if we are to be serious about the eradication of slavery. In her briefing before the Security Council in November 2016, the ICC Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, indicated that her Office would probe the trafficking of migrants out of Libya for evidence of war crimes and/or crimes against humanity. Hundreds of thousands of migrants are being smuggled from Libya into Europe. The IOM estimates that up to 76%⁴ of them have fallen victim to practices amounting to human trafficking. Women and children usually bear the brunt of these crimes. We look forward to receiving the results of this probe and hope it will provide us with a better understanding of how and when human trafficking may amount to atrocity crimes as well as how we can make use of relevant tools available to us.

Mr. President,

The upcoming report by the SG is an opportunity to broaden the approach to both the issue itself as well as to the terminology associated with it. This is a crosscutting issue relevant for all pillars of the UN and an integral part of commitments made by UN Member States such as the 2030 Agenda. We hope that the Council will remain seized of this important issue and look forward to presenting results from our efforts to combat modern slavery and human trafficking at the next open debate on this matter.

I thank you.

⁴ <https://www.iom.int/news/mediterranean-human-trafficking-and-exploitation-prevalence-survey-iom>