

Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children

Concept Note

**Consultative Meeting on Strengthening Partnerships with
National Rapporteurs on Trafficking in Persons and Equivalent Mechanisms**

Berlin, Federal Republic of Germany, 23-24 May 2013

Overview

Trafficking in persons has received increasing attention in recent years at international, regional and national levels. As the UN Human Rights Council has noted, trafficking in persons violates fundamental human rights and continues to pose serious challenges to humanity. In this context, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, was established in 2004 by the then Commission on Human Rights to focus on the human rights aspects of trafficking in persons. The current mandate-holder, Ms. Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, was appointed by the Human Rights Council in June 2008.

In its Resolutions on trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, including Resolution 63/156, of 18 December 2008, Resolution 61/144 of 19 December 2006, and Resolution A/RES/59/166 of 20 December 2004, the UN General Assembly has recommended considering setting up or strengthening a national coordinating mechanism, for example, a national rapporteur or an inter-agency body to encourage the exchange of information and to report on data, root causes, factors and trends in violence against women, in particular trafficking. Moreover, in its Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recommends that States and, where applicable, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, consider establishing mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the human rights impact of anti-trafficking laws, policies, programmes and interventions.

In exercising her mandate, the Special Rapporteur has noted the importance of having national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms, which help in coordinating, monitoring and evaluating of anti-trafficking policy. In particular, the analysis and data provided by national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms are instrumental in measuring the effectiveness of steps taken to prevent human trafficking, to prosecute suspects and to protect victims.

The UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons encourages effective cooperation and coordination of efforts at the national, bilateral, sub-regional, regional and international levels and taking advantage of the networks provided by relevant organizations to share best practices in capacity-building for responding to and combating trafficking in persons. The Special Rapporteur's mandate also includes, among others, identifying and sharing best practices as well as challenges and obstacles in order to uphold and protect the human rights of the victims; and giving particular emphasis to the identification of concrete areas and means for international cooperation to tackle the issue of trafficking in persons. In this connection, the Special Rapporteur has emphasized that cooperation and exchange of

expertise and good practices among countries would contribute to raising the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts.

In October 2010, the Special Rapporteur convened a consultation in Dakar on the role of regional and sub-regional mechanisms in international efforts to counter trafficking in persons, especially in women and children. The participants of this meeting highlighted that a pre-requisite to effective and wider cooperation was effective coordination at the national and regional levels through structures such as focal points, coordinators or rapporteurs. Also, in February 2012, the Special Rapporteur participated in the meeting of the Informal Network of European National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms, organized by the European Commission and the European Union Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, where the participants shared information on their work and activities and had discussions on the challenges of and good practices for implementing the existing National Referral Mechanisms, the advantages of having Transnational Referral Mechanisms as well as the issues of victim identification and safe return to prevent re-trafficking.

Objectives and expected outcomes of the consultation

As a follow-up to the above discussions and initiatives and in line with her mandate, the Special Rapporteur would like to convene a meeting on 23-24 May 2013, in Berlin, the Federal Republic of Germany, to provide an opportunity to share experiences and lessons learnt among national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms, and further strengthen the partnership between her mandate and such mechanisms. The Special Rapporteur intends therefore to invite several national rapporteurs and representatives of equivalent mechanisms from countries of different regions of the world.

The objectives of the meeting are as follows:

1. To promote exchange of information on current trends, good practices and lessons learnt from the activities of various national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms;
2. To consider and discuss possible ways of promoting partnership and cooperation between national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms from various regions of the world;
3. To provide an opportunity for participants to meet with one another and create and enhance networking between national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms from countries of different regions.

The expected outcome of the consultation is to develop - based on the observations and conclusions of the participants - a set of recommendations for fostering cooperation and sharing of expertise and good practices among national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms from different regions of the world.

Modalities

The consultation will be organized as a two-day consultation. It will consist of a number of sessions addressing, amongst others, the following topics:

1. The role of national rapporteurs on trafficking in persons and equivalent mechanisms in addressing trafficking in persons within the national institutional anti-trafficking framework: lessons learnt, good practices and remaining challenges;
2. Collection and analysis of information and data on trafficking in persons.

3. Monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the implementation of anti-trafficking legislation and policies
4. Coordinating anti-trafficking responses and cooperation of national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms with State and non-State actors including civil society and business community
5. Fostering cooperation between national rapporteurs and equivalent mechanisms around the globe as well as their partnership and cooperation with international and regional organizations and mechanisms
