



GLOBAL ALLIANCE AGAINST TRAFFIC IN WOMEN

Statement on the 2nd annual report of the special rapporteur on the human rights aspects of victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, *Sigma Huda*: "integration of the human rights of women and a gender perspective."

Human Rights Council, United Nations, Geneva, September 2006.

The Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) is an alliance of 80 autonomous organisations from six continents, most of whom provide assistance directly to trafficked women or carry out trafficking prevention and women's empowerment. La Strada International is a European network of anti-trafficking organisations. Both GAATW and La Strada are founded on a belief in centring the human rights of trafficked persons in all anti-trafficking initiatives and ensuring that anti-trafficking work promotes, not adversely impacts on, the rights of affected groups.

We acknowledge the importance of the mandate of Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Aspects of Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children for raising international awareness of the human rights abuses suffered by trafficked persons, and to bring the experiences of trafficked persons to public attention.

In relation to the recent thematic report of the Special Rapporteur addressing demand in the sex industry, we are concerned that the Report has not realised the opportunities open to the Special Rapporteur to address the human rights impact of trafficking according to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking. We believe that the following comments should be taken into consideration:

1. The core human rights conventions should form the back-bone of any human rights analysis of trafficking and recommendations for combating trafficking. Human rights should be seen holistically, to include social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights.
2. All research on trafficking and recommendations for anti-trafficking policies should be based on broad-based consultation with communities affected by trafficking or anti-trafficking policies.
3. Any analysis of demand in the trafficking context should include demand for all products or services that are the result of trafficked labour into industries in which workers are vulnerable to severe exploitation such as in the construction, agriculture, domestic work, manufacturing and the sex industries. By recognising as trafficking the slavery-like practices people suffer in all of those industries, more international legal tools are available for protection of their rights.
4. The value of the definition of trafficking in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, is the autonomy it gives to governments to take their own positions on consensual prostitution, while requiring them to criminalise all coerced prostitution.
5. Trafficking occurs in a variety of industries, both legal and illegal, therefore, legal responses to the site of trafficking are not the key to curbing trafficking. Anti-trafficking policy should focus on protecting the human rights of trafficked persons and affected groups, and should address the root causes of trafficking, namely poverty, gender inequality, traditional social structures and lack of safe, legal migration possibilities.