

Statement
High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the
Appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action
on Trafficking in Persons

(27-28 September 2017)

Mr. President,

Pakistan welcomes the High-level meeting of the General Assembly on the Appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

My delegation thanks the Secretary General for his insightful remarks.

We reiterate our strong support and commitment to bring an end to the heinous crime of trafficking in persons, especially women and children. We also welcome the adoption of the Political Declaration on the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action.

Mr. President,

Trafficking in persons continues to be one of the most serious offences. It violates human rights of an individual; it undermines peace and sustainable development. It is an egregious violation of the principles of human dignity and integrity; it is a threat to rule of law.

Trafficking in persons, especially women and children, is condemnable in all its forms, including, sexual exploitation, debt bondage, organ removal, and forced labour.

The transnational nature of this complex crime calls for enhanced international cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination.

The international community is currently witnessing human displacement on an unprecedented scale. A pervasive sense of despondency and lack of prospects, induced by protracted conflict and insecurity, lies at the core of this phenomenon.

To succeed in preventing and combating trafficking in persons, we should also address the root causes and drivers of trafficking, including poverty, inequalities and protracted conflict. Sustainable solution requires that we also enhance efforts to address the demand side of the challenge.

Mr. President,

The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, together with the Protocol on Trafficking in Persons has served as a centerpiece of the existing global legal framework to combat this challenge.

The adoption of the Global Plan of Action on Trafficking in Persons in 2010 was an important step in our collective fight against this organized crime. The holistic approach, predicated on components of Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership, continues to be a blueprint for concerted efforts at all levels.

We should forge victim-centered approach, and scale up efforts to identify and protect those in need of our assistance.

The Security Council resolution 2331 of December 2016 was also significant, not only as an unequivocal affirmation by the international community to confront this menace, but also as a call for immediate action, to prevent, criminalize, and prosecute those engaged in trafficking in persons.

International resolve and commitment is a *sine qua non* for removing the bottlenecks and obstacles in the proper implementation of the relevant laws and Conventions. The financial and technical support of the developing countries can help them in streamlining processes, developing data collection and sharing mechanisms and implementing grass root level projects.

Mr. President,

Pakistan has taken a range of legislative and regulatory measures. We have set out a comprehensive policy document relating to trafficking in persons, known as the National Action Plan for Combating Human Trafficking. Currently, we are implementing Strategic Framework 2016-22. Besides, Pakistan is also party to various international instruments which include, inter alia, UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), International Convention for the Suppression of the Trafficking in Women and Children and Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957.

Mr. President,

Instances of growing nexus between transnational organized criminal groups and terrorist groups, in some cases, are a cause of global concern. Conflict situations provide an ideal opportunity and environment for such unholy alliances.

To effectively tackle persistent challenges and emerging trends, we should continue to be guided by the imperative of an integrated and comprehensive approach with long term political and financial commitment. Coordination and cooperation among various stakeholders is needed to develop synergized policies for countering this threat.

Mr. President,

To conclude, let me convey Pakistan's appreciation for the ongoing work by UNODC to assist Member States in countering the challenge of trafficking in persons, particularly in providing assistance to victims of trafficking.

I thank you.
