

김/영/호

**Thank you, Mr. President.**

On behalf of the government of the Republic of Korea, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the United Nations, and UNODC in particular, for its tireless efforts to combat trafficking in persons and for convening this meeting. I also welcome the adoption of the Political declaration on the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons that emphasizes our unified will to cope with this issue.

It has now been seven years since the General Assembly adopted the Global Plan of Action to combat trafficking in Persons and it remains an important framework in this ongoing challenge. This heinous and multi-faceted crime preys on the weakness of individuals and thrives in conflict.

The UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons is designed to effectively tackle this serious human rights crime in terms of prevention of trafficking in persons, protection of and assistance to victims, prosecution of crimes and strengthening of partnerships.

The government of the Republic of Korea supports the Global Plan of Action and has taken measures to put an end to trafficking in persons following the UN's blueprint. We codified human trafficking as a serious crime in 2013 domestically. We also ratified the convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children in 2015.

Mr. President,

Prevention also plays a huge role in ending this crime, which involves capacity building at a national level, addressing societal inequalities as well as gender

discrimination, among other root causes. In this regard, the Republic of Korea believes that to strengthen our ability to prevent this crime, the best practices and lessons learned in countering trafficking in persons should be more actively shared and promoted across the globe.

Another important aspect is the protection of and assistance to victims. This crime often targets society's most vulnerable members, making it all the more vital that policy is formulated with a victim-centered approach.

The strengthening of partnerships is also important since human trafficking is by its nature a transnational activity. Perpetrators of such crimes thrive in the shadows of lawlessness and must be brought to justice through the coordinated efforts of Member States.

Finally, my delegation would like to emphasize policy support for the public, private sector and civil society who are fully and cooperatively engaged in the fight against trafficking in persons.

The government of the Republic of Korea believes the UN Action Plan rightly stresses the need for partnership building, and fully supports the UN's efforts to encourage cooperation at all levels, promote effective mutual legal assistance and criminal extradition, strengthen public-private-civil society partnerships, and bolster cooperation among law enforcement agencies.

My government recognizes the urgency of this challenge and is committed to providing its full support in this fight that pits the darkest elements of our society against its most vulnerable.

Thank you.