

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOUR AND SOCIAL WELFARE, HON PRISCAH MUPFUMIRA, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON THE GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS HELD IN NEW YORK: 27-28 SEPTEMBER, 2017**

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Let me start my remarks by congratulating you, Mr. President, for your election to this post. I wish to assure you of Zimbabwe's support in the discharge of your responsibilities.

Mr. President,

Trafficking in Persons is a heinous crime which has been described as a modern-day form of slavery affecting millions of men, women and children worldwide. It is pleasing to note that issues of human trafficking have become global concerns requiring global solutions.

Like other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Zimbabwe is a source, transit and destination for men, women and children subjected to various forms of abuse that

**include, inter alia, sexual abuse, domestic servitude and forced labour.**

**Zimbabwe ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) in 2007, and acceded to the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children in 2013. On 13 June, 2014 Zimbabwe enacted the Trafficking in Persons Act (Chapter 9.25) to criminalize human trafficking in the country. To demonstrate its commitment to counter trafficking in persons, Zimbabwe enacted Statutory Instrument 2 of 2015 establishing the Anti-Trafficking Inter-Ministerial Committee. In 2016 Zimbabwe launched its first National Plan of Action (NAPLAC) for 2016-2018 which is the implementation tool and national response strategy for the Trafficking in Persons Act. NAPLAC is anchored on four pillars of intervention namely;**

**Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership/coordination.**

**The Ministry of Home Affairs chairs the Anti-Trafficking Inter-Ministerial Committee seized with the overall responsibility to coordinate the programme.**

**Mr. President,**

**Prevention of trafficking in persons falls under the mandate of the Ministry of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services in partnership with the Ministry of Home Affairs. Their responsibility is to raise public awareness and build capacity of relevant stakeholders.**

**The Protection pillar falls under the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare which is tasked with the provision of protection services to survivors of human trafficking by offering appropriate shelter for safety, counselling, rehabilitation and re-integration support.**

**Prosecution is the responsibility of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, which investigate and prosecute cases of human trafficking, respectively.**

**Partnership and coordination is important in pulling together efforts and resources to prevent trafficking in persons, protect victims of trafficking and for prosecution of perpetrators. The Government works in partnership with a number of strategic stakeholders including UN agencies, civil society organizations, NGOs, the private sector and survivors of human trafficking.**

**The issue of human trafficking has attracted considerable national attention in Zimbabwe and efforts are being channeled towards combating human trafficking. The country has held two successful commemorations of the World Day against trafficking in persons with full participation of all key stakeholders. The anti-trafficking programmes have been decentralized to Provincial levels for greater effectiveness.**

**Mr. President,**

**The Government of Zimbabwe, through the Anti-Trafficking Inter-Ministerial Committee, has facilitated and funded the repatriation of 138 victims of human trafficking since April 2016 under the protection pillar.**

**Upon arrival, special arrangements are made to receive and move the victims to places of safety without unnecessary media attention to protect their privacy. At the reception centres medical, psychosocial and other support services are provided to the victims.**

**Before the victims leave the place of safety, the Government assists in reintegrating the victims with their families and relatives. They also get out of pocket allowances and starter packs comprising basic provisions. The Government continues to support the returnees through the existing Social Protection Programmes, including access to free education, medical assistance, cash transfers and other public assistance programmes.**

**Under the partnership pillar, Government is working with IOM to establish income generating projects for the victims. So far, 100 women have benefitted with each receiving up to US\$1 500.**

**Mr. President,**

**Despite the initial progress in tackling the four Ps, particularly the protection pillar, there is still a lot to be done as human trafficking is a relatively new phenomenon in Zimbabwe. We are of the strong view that the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons should prioritize support of victims and survivors of human trafficking, the criminalization of trafficking in persons, the need to strengthen cooperation among Member States, the capacitation of anti-trafficking bodies and the establishment of a Trust Fund to provide practical support for the victims and survivors.**

**Zimbabwe is ready and willing to share and learn from others who have more experience than us in dealing with challenges associated with human trafficking. Migration is a reality upon us all hence global solutions and collective commitment are needed. Hopefully, the Global Compact on Migration will deliver us from the scourge of human trafficking. You can count on Zimbabwe's continued support in combating human trafficking and its associated evils.**

**I THANK YOU.**