



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

23 June 2017

Excellency,

Further to my letter dated 19 June, please find enclosed a letter received on 23 June 2017 from H.E Ms. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations, and H.E. Mr. Marc Pecsteen de Buytsverve, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations with all Member States which aim at producing a short and concise political declaration for adoption at the opening plenary of the high-level meeting on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

In their letter, the co-facilitators circulate a zero draft political declaration for your consideration.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson'.

Peter Thomson

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

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23 June 2017

Excellency,

Further to our letter of 16 June, please find attached a zero draft political declaration on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

We very much look forward to discussing this zero draft with all delegations on Thursday, 29 June (10:00 am ECOSOC Chamber).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

H.E. Mr. Marc Pecsteen de Buytsverve
Permanent Representative of Belgium
to the United Nations

H.E. Ms. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani
Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar
to the United Nations

To All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Political Declaration on the Implementation of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons

1. We, the States Members of the United Nations, reaffirm the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons and our commitments therein to end this heinous crime. *(based on the preambular para, A/Res/64/293 Annex)*

2. We reiterate our strong condemnation of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, which constitutes an offence and a serious threat to human dignity and physical integrity, human rights and development, and which requires the implementation of a comprehensive approach that includes partnerships and measures to prevent it, to prosecute and punish the traffickers and to protect the victims, as well as a criminal justice response commensurate to the serious nature of the offence. *(based on PP1, E/CN.15/2017/L.2/Rev.1)*

3. We reaffirm the crucial importance of universal ratification of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, taking into consideration the central role of those instruments in the fight against trafficking in persons, urge States parties to those instruments to implement them fully and effectively, and welcome the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime to establish a mechanism for the review of the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto, including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. *(based on PP16(a), OP3, and PP7, A/Res/64/293; OP2 of CTOC/COP/2016/L.5)*

4. We also reaffirm our recognition that “trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation, which includes, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs, as set forth in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. *(ref: OP2, A/Res/64/293 Annex)*

5. We evince our strong political will and shared responsibility to step up efforts against trafficking in persons, wherever it may occur. *(based on PP12, E/CN.15/2017/L.2/Rev.1)*

6. We recall and reaffirm our commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including commitments that relate to trafficking in persons, which are relevant to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action. *(based on PP14, E/CN.15/2017/L.2/Rev.1)*

7. We recognize that trafficking in persons not only violates the rights of its immediate victims but also undermines whole communities' sustainable development by excluding people from full participation in the social, political and economic life of the community. *(based on the preamble of the 2030 Agenda.)*

8. We express solidarity with and compassion for victims of trafficking, and encourage further consideration of the perspective and experience of survivors in all efforts to combat human trafficking. *(based on OP22, S/Res/2331 (2016) and para 11, S/PRST/2015/25)*

9. We reaffirm our support for the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, established in accordance with the Global Plan of Action, aimed at providing victims of trafficking in persons with humanitarian, legal and financial aid through established channels of assistance, such as governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and we invite all stakeholders to contribute to the trust fund, including through the announcement of pledges at high level appraisals of the Global Plan of Action. *(based para 38, A/Res/64/293 Annex)*

10. We stress the need to ensure overall organization and coherence in the efforts of the United Nations system to respond to trafficking in persons, especially in ensuring support to Member States. In this regard, we urge the Secretary-General to continue efforts to strengthen coordination within the United Nations system through the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT). *(based on OP59, A/Res/64/293 Annex)*

11. We recognize the critical role played by ICAT in the UN system and invite ICAT to continue to increase the activities of the Group related to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action and, to this end, to incorporate aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development relevant to preventing and combating trafficking in persons and to consider how future activities will be coordinated and how the duplication of efforts will be avoided. *(based on OP7, E/CN.15/2017/L.2/Rev.1 (2017))*

12. We take note with appreciation of the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016, prepared by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) pursuant to the Global Plan of Action, and request UNODC to continue to collect information on patterns and flows of trafficking in persons, including trafficking in persons in the context of armed conflict, at the national, regional and international levels, in a balanced, reliable and comprehensive manner to be published in the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, and to further expand ongoing research to estimate the prevalence of

trafficking in persons in close cooperation and collaboration with Member States, in order to track progress towards attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. *(based on OP5, E/CN.15/2017/L.2/Rev.1 and OP60, A/Res/64/293 Annex)*

13. We reiterate the need for improved data collection and analysis of trafficking in persons, disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant factors, including the form of exploitation, to effectively counter human trafficking. We thus recognize the importance of improved data collection by national authorities, and will enhance international cooperation to this end. We will do so consistent with our national legislation on data protection, if applicable, and our international obligations related to privacy, as applicable. *(based on para 40, A/Res/71/1)*

14. We welcome the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, which, inter alia, recognized that refugees and migrants in large movements are at greater risk of being trafficked and of being subjected to forced labour. We will, with full respect for our obligations under international law, vigorously combat human trafficking with a view to its elimination, including through targeted measures to identify victims of human trafficking or those at risk of trafficking. We will provide support for the victims of human trafficking and work to prevent human trafficking among those affected by displacement. *(based on para 35, A/Res/71/1)*

15. We reiterate our recognition of and our commitment to take steps to address the particular vulnerabilities of women and children during the journey from country of origin to country of arrival, including their potential exposure to human trafficking and contemporary forms of slavery, including through the development of age-and-gender sensitive policies and programmes to address the vulnerability of all migrants, particularly women and girl migrants, to being trafficked. We also welcome reinforced technical cooperation, on a regional and bilateral basis, between countries of origin, transit and destination on the prevention of human trafficking and the prosecution of traffickers. *(based on paras 29 and 36, A/Res/71/1; and OP34, A/Res/71/167)*

16. We express our deep concern about the increasing links between armed groups, including terrorist groups, and human trafficking, with armed groups often engaging in trafficking in their territories of operation, coercing women and girls into marriages or sexual slavery, and pressing men and boys to act as forced labour or combatants. We also note the increasing attempts by armed groups to normalize human trafficking as a method of finance, a weapon of war, and an element of terrorist ideology. *(ref: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016; S/Res/2195 (2014), S/Res/2253 (2015), and S/Res/2331 (2016))*

17. We recognize that the issue of trafficking in persons in conflict situations requires further attention. We call for serious consideration to be given to training of all peacekeeping personnel to be deployed in UN peace operations in conflict and post-conflict zones on responding to trafficking in persons in the context of armed conflict, gender expertise, sexual exploitation and abuse prevention, and

ensuring that this consideration is integrated into the performance and operational readiness standards against which troops are assessed. We further encourage all UN entities and bodies to train their personnel to prevent and respond appropriately to trafficking in persons in areas affected by armed conflict. *(based on OP19 and OP17, S/Res/2331 (2016))*

18. We invite relevant UN agencies operating in humanitarian crises derived from armed conflict and post-conflict situations to consider ensuring, in accordance with their respective mandates, that the risk of trafficking in persons in armed conflict is considered in protection of civilians and humanitarian needs assessments, that they build their technical capacity to assess situations for instances of trafficking in persons in armed conflict and that they work together to identify, prevent and respond effectively to victims of trafficking. *(based on OP20, S/Res/2331 (2016))*

19 We note with concern the criminal misuse of information and communications technologies, particularly the Internet, to facilitate the trafficking of persons, and emphasize the importance of countering such use while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms and in compliance with other obligations under international law. *(based on PP14, S/Res/2331 (2016))*

20. We condemn the involvement of criminal groups and unethical medical personnel in the unauthorized removal or implantation of organs, and the illicit sale, brokering, purchase and other illicit transactions in respect of human organs, as well as trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal. *(based on PP7, CCPCJ resolution 23/2 (2014))*

21. We reiterate, in the strongest terms possible, the importance of strengthening collective action to end human trafficking by Member States, the United Nations System and other stakeholders, including, inter alia, regional and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, the media and the faith community. In particular, we underline the invaluable work of national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris principles, the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in persons, especially women and children, the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector, in combatting trafficking in persons, and welcome their continued efforts to implement the Global Plan of Action and this political declaration. *(based on PP12, A/Res/64/293 and OP9, A/Res/71/287)*

22. We will promote partnerships and engage the business community and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in developing and implementing sustainable initiatives to prevent and combat human trafficking in supply chains, taking into account the views and experiences of trafficked persons in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating such initiatives. *(based on OP6(g), (A/HRC/23/L.8).*

23. We encourage businesses to become supporters of the Global Compact and the Athens Ethical Principles, which underscore the importance of respect for human rights by businesses and their participation in efforts to combat human trafficking. *(based on OP7(a), A/HRC/23/L.8)*

24. We recognize that arrangements are needed to ensure systematic follow-up to and review of all of the commitments we are making today. We decide to hold future high-level meetings of the General Assembly to appraise progress achieved in the implementation of the Global Plan of Action and this political declaration, on a [quadrennial] basis, with the next high level appraisal to be held at the [76th] session of the General Assembly, immediately after the General Debate. *(based on OP6, A/Res/64/29 OP88, A/Res/71/1, and OP4, A/Res/70/179)*