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Seventh Meeting of National Authorities

on Trafficking in Persons

February 5 and 6, 2024

Washington D.C.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF NATIONAL AUTHORITIES ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS ON PRIORITIES TO PREVENT AND COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND ASSISTANCE AND PROTECTION OF VICTIMS[[1]](#footnote-2)/

(Agreed upon by the Committee on Hemispheric Security on February 5, 2023)

(To be considered by the Seventh Meeting of National Authorities on trafficking in persons)

We, the National Authorities on Trafficking in Persons of the Americas and representatives of the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS), meeting February 5 and 6 2024, at the Seventh Meeting of National Authorities, chaired by the United States of America in Washington, D.C.,

RECALLING our commitment to the principles that inspired the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the American Convention on Human Rights, especially the provisions pertaining to the protection of children; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; the optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography; the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; the Inter-American Convention on International Traffic in Minors; the International Labor Organization’s Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor; the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará, 1994); as well as resolutions on the matter adopted in the United Nations General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, and Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Global Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda;

REAFFIRMING the obligations of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Convention) and of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women, and Children, which supplements said Convention, of which all the member states are parties; and welcoming the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of both instruments;

RECOGNIZING the valuable role of civil society organizations, community leaders, survivor leaders and other social actors, and academic experts in understanding, preventing, protecting persons, and prosecuting cases of trafficking in persons;

WELCOMING the adoption of the OAS Third Work Plan for a Comprehensive Response to Trafficking in Persons in the Western Hemisphere (2023-2028) which reflects the latest trends and actions needed to effectively prevent and combat trafficking in persons and protect the victims and survivors;

CONTINUING our efforts to address human trafficking in a comprehensive manner, will seek to integrate the Third Work Plan’s guidelines, whenever possible, into our national policies and programs, and reflecting on the discussions at this Seventh meeting, to prioritize implementation of the following guidelines by the eighth meeting of National Authorities;

Multidimensional approach

1. Address the crime of trafficking in persons in comprehensive strategies and/or broad action plans related to organized crime, targeting money laundering, corruption, cyber-crime (including crypto-currencies), migrant-smuggling, drug trafficking, illegal mining, crimes against sexual freedom, smuggling, illegal logging, illicit trafficking in firearms and ammunition, recruitment of children for armed conflict, violence against children, gender-based violence, and violence against women, persons with disabilities, the elderly, indigenous peoples and individuals, people of African descent, LGBTQI+ persons, and other minorities, as well as in humanitarian and biosecurity emergencies, including armed conflicts and disasters.[[2]](#footnote-3)/ (Paragraph 10 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)

The role of technology and capacity building

1. Call for effective partnerships between the public sector, civil society, academia, and the private sector—including technology companies—to enhance innovation, cooperation, and technology-use to combat trafficking in persons. (Paragraph 30 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
2. Enact appropriate legislation and develop mechanisms to counter misuse of ICTs, in particular, digital platforms such as social networks, which facilitates trafficking in persons, including advertising, grooming, recruitment, control, financial transactions, and money laundering, as well as other forms of exploitation, including online sexual exploitation, and the production and distribution of child sexual abuse material. (Based on paragraph 50 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
3. Strengthen the digital expertise and capacity of law enforcement to conduct proportionate, lawful, accountable, and necessary investigations in cyberspace, including the dark web, and to seize associated electronic evidence. (Paragraph 68 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)

Preventing trafficking in persons in the supply chain

1. Develop and/or revise policies, regulations, or contracting procedures to prevent public institutions from procuring goods, assets, and services derived from the exploitation of victims of trafficking in persons; and develop or overhaul mechanisms for assessing risks, legal consequences, and responses, identify compliance therewith, and support their implementation. (Paragraph 33 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
2. Encourage the establishment of measures to regulate and monitor travel, employment, and/or recruitment companies and encourage them to adopt measures to train their personnel on trafficking-in-persons indicators, the risks associated with the crime, the importance of prohibiting recruitment fees charged to workers, and the guidelines in force for compliance with procurement regulations and trafficking-in-persons and labor laws, as well as for identifying and referring any potential cases of trafficking in persons or labor exploitation. (Paragraph 38 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
3. Encourage public-private sector joint efforts to safeguard the human rights of workers, including by establishing and/or strengthening safe access to information and accessible reporting channels, exit mechanisms, and relevant information for workers to notify authorities of abusive practices that foster trafficking, and take measures to prevent such abuses. (Paragraph 76 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)

Financial investigations and intelligence

1. Enhance the capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice systems to identify, investigate, and prosecute cases of trafficking in persons, through the analysis of financial flows to detect criminal networks in collaboration with financial institutions. (Paragraph 70 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
2. Adopt investigative procedures and evidence-gathering techniques that do not rely exclusively on the testimony of victims of trafficking in persons, but also draw on evidence collected through financial intelligence gathering and the use of undercover agents, while also taking into consideration in the investigation the trauma experienced by victims, as well as their age and gender, to avoid their revictimization at all stages of the procedure. (Paragraph 61 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
3. Leverage international cooperation to promote procedures and practices within domestic criminal justice systems, such as parallel financial investigations, to ensure tracing and confiscation of the proceeds and, where appropriate, the means of trafficking in persons. (Paragraph 65 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
4. Establish specialized trafficking-in-persons investigation units, specialized prosecutor’s offices for trafficking in persons, and specialized courts for trafficking in persons staffed with personnel highly experienced in victim identification and in the investigation and prosecution of complex trafficking-in-persons cases; and provide training for those units on victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches.(Paragraph 54 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)

Corruption

1. Conduct robust, transparent criminal investigations and prosecution of government officials alleged to have facilitated or perpetrated crimes involving trafficking in persons, including through laws against corruption and trafficking. (Paragraph 35 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)

Public awareness and capacity building

1. Promote training for broadcasters, journalists, and social media influencers on trafficking in persons, in order to promote better coverage of the crime, distinguish it from migrant smuggling, and properly inform and raise awareness and counter misinformation in different target groups in a way that takes victims’ and survivors’ trauma into consideration and protects their privacy. (Paragraph 42 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
2. Encourage and update, as appropriate, ongoing and continuing education and training of professionals, institutions, and organizations involved in fighting the crime of trafficking in persons by promoting, among other things, interaction between them and survivor leaders in a way that takes into consideration the trauma of victims and survivors and considers it essential to have several levels of learning, starting with a level of awareness of the phenomenon, as well as the populations that are most at risk of being victims of trafficking (children, women, Afro-descendants, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, migrants, and LGBTQI+ populations). [[3]](#footnote-4)/ (Paragraph 14 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)

Trauma-informed, victim- and survivor-centered assistance

1. Recognize the role of victims and survivors as rights holders and agents of change, acknowledging the need to incorporate their perspective and experience in all efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in persons and assist and protect victims. (Paragraph 47 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
2. Facilitate access to justice and protections for victims of trafficking in persons that are not contingent on their participation in criminal proceedings, taking into account national legislation. (Paragraph 92 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
3. Promote the creation or updating of protocols and processes for identifying and assisting victims of trafficking in persons, based on the competencies of the agencies involved in the identification, care, protection, and repatriation of victims of this crime, as appropriate. (Paragraph 95 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
4. Establish public-private partnerships to strengthen social and economic reintegration programs for victims and survivors of trafficking in persons and to prevent re-victimization, including by encouraging the financial sector to facilitate access to bank accounts and micro-loans for victims and survivors.(Paragraph 100 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
5. Reinforce institutional and human capacities to prevent individuals affected by the crime from being revictimized and punished. (Paragraph 59 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)
6. Adopt in their domestic systems of laws, as appropriate, measures offering victims and survivors of trafficking in persons the possibility of seeking compensation and/or restitution from traffickers for harm suffered. (Paragraph 85 of the Guidelines of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons)

Follow-up

1. Invite member states to report on the progress of implementation of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons at the Eighth Meeting of National Authorities.
2. Upon the availability of funds, request the Secretariat to publish a report on the progress of implementation of the Third Work Plan on Trafficking in Persons.

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1. . The paragraphs in this document are taken from the Recommendations of the Sixth Meeting of National Authorities on Trafficking in Persons (document RTP-VI/doc.4/21 rev. 1) or the Third Work Plan for A Comprehensive Response to Trafficking in Persons in the Western Hemisphere (document CP/CSH-2209/22 rev. 1), except the last two paragraphs of the preamble and operative paragraphs 21 and 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. . The Delegation of Paraguay requested to have the following text included as a footnote: "in accordance with domestic laws." [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. . Idem 2 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)