



**TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN ON THE RISE: IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED
MARGINS OF THE 58TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**Venue: Palais des Nations, Geneva
Room XXII
14 March 2025
14:00-15:00 CET
(9:00 – 10:00 EST)**

BACKGROUND

Trafficking in children – a severe violation of human rights, a form of violence against children and a serious crime – continues to increase and evolve within and across borders. According to the latest [UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons](#), children account for 38 per cent of victims detected globally. That is a significant rise in the share of children detected among victims of trafficking since 2019.

Children of all ages, genders, nationalities and backgrounds are affected by this crime. While no child is immune, those who are already vulnerable or disadvantaged are more severely affected. Children are exploited for various reasons. Girls are increasingly trafficked for sexual exploitation and, to a lesser extent, for forced labour and other forms of exploitation, such as forced marriage. Boys are primarily trafficked for forced labour and criminality, with children reportedly recruited and exploited for drug trafficking and other crimes.

This complex crime is also one of the fastest growing, driven by three interrelated factors that must be addressed simultaneously: (a) the growing vulnerabilities of children worldwide, which are exacerbated by multiple global crises; (b) a rise in lucrative and organized criminal activities that are increasingly facilitated by technology; and (c) the growing global and local demand for the exploitation of children. Trafficking in children remains a low-cost and low-risk, yet high-profit, illicit trade. Increasingly, organized criminal groups are trafficking more victims and making more profits.

Responses to trafficking in children are not evolving fast enough to keep pace with the evolution and scale of the crime. Traffickers are adapting rapidly, taking full advantage of technological advancements and of the vulnerabilities created by crises to recruit, exploit and control victims, while responses continue to lag behind. A rapid, multi-stakeholder, well-coordinated, child rights-based and adaptive approach is needed to tackle the crime and its underlying causes.

Therefore, urgent attention and redoubled efforts at the global, regional and national levels are required to prevent child trafficking and protect children. Equally, criminal justice measures to hold

perpetrators accountable and end their impunity are important to deter traffickers from committing the crime. Without immediate accelerated action, the number of children at risk and child victims of trafficking will continue to rise, also undermining the commitments under the Sustainable Development Goal target 16.2¹.

Building up on the annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children to the Human Rights Council; and in line with the concerted effort within the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT)², as well as the OSRSG-VAC-UNODC Strategy, this High-Level Panel brings together key partners to share concrete views, examples, actions, and lessons learned to pave the way for a robust, strengthened and scaled up responses to prevent and protect all children from trafficking.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this high-level event are to:

1. Spotlight on the alarming rise in trafficking in children, its root causes and its multiple and devastating consequences;
2. Highlight practical actions for durable solutions that are efficiently addressing the growing vulnerabilities of children; responding to organized criminal activities related to child trafficking in particular those facilitated by technology; and addressing the global and local demand for the exploitation of children.

The event will last for one hour. There will be interpretation (English, French, Nepali, and Spanish).

It will be possible to attend the event in person or follow online through registration [here](#).

¹ End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children

² ICAT in 2023 issued out a [Call for Accelerated Action by 2025 to Prevent and End Child Trafficking](#), followed by additional relevant advocacy messages. See: [child-friendly version of the Call to Action](#) (July 2024), [Joint Statement on World Day against Trafficking in Persons](#) (30 July 2024); [Joint Statement on Child Trafficking](#) (13 December 2024)

AGENDA

DATE AND VENUE:	Palais des Nations – Room... (TBC) Geneva, 14 March 2025 14:00-15:00 Geneva Time
14:00 – 14:20 Setting the scene	<p>Welcome by Dr. Najat Maalla M'jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children & Moderator of the Panel (5 min)</p> <p>Key Address by Ms. Ghada Waly, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Video message)</p> <p>Ms. Sophie Otiende, Champion for victims of human trafficking and survivor (Kenya) (6 min)</p>
14:20 – 14:55 Actions taken and remaining challenges	<p>Accelerated action on ending child trafficking is possible if we act rapidly and concretely addressing increasing vulnerabilities of children; the risks offline and those increasingly facilitated by technologies and breaking the demand. Hard talk setting ...</p> <p><i>Proposed draft questions:</i></p> <p><i>Panellists (3-5 mins each)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ms. Aleksandra Choluj, Head of the Department for Combating Human Trafficking, Hate Crimes and Supporting Activities within the EU Internal Security Policy at the Department of Public Order of the Ministry of Interior and Administration in Poland</i> • <i>Ms. Laura Arango, Counsellor for Humanitarian Affairs, Permanent Mission of Colombia to the United Nations in Geneva</i> • <i>Ms. Tolulola Olufunmilayo Odugbesan, Director of the Violence Against Person Prohibition (VAPP) Department in Nigeria</i> • <i>Mr. Mark Beavan, Head of Crimes against Children Unit, INTERPOL</i> • <i>Mr. Guillaume Landry, Executive Director of ECPAT (Online)</i> • <i>Ms. Charimaya Tamang, Founder and Executive Director of Shakti Samuha (CSO from Nepal) (Online)</i> <p><i>Followed by Q&A (10 mins) – other states invited to intervene</i></p>
14:55 – 15:00 Closing remarks	<p><u>Key messages and next steps</u> Dr. Najat Maalla M'jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children</p>