



**Statement by Ambassador Rabab Fatima, Permanent Representative of
Bangladesh to the UN at the Virtual Observance of
World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, 30 July 2020**

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Dear Colleagues.

As a member of the Group of Friends, I align myself with the statement delivered by earlier you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to deliver some remarks in my national capacity now.

The pandemic has raised the risks of trafficking and human smuggling. As the global economic downturn pushes more people into poverty and raise other vulnerabilities; they become more susceptible to exploitation and abuse. Bangladesh recognizes the critical work of frontline actors and first responders in addressing the menace of TIP, which has become more important during the pandemic.

Bangladesh has a “zero tolerance” policy against TIP. Last September, we joined the Palermo Protocol. In line with our international commitments, we have put in place extensive legal and institutional frameworks and mechanisms in our



fight against human trafficking in all its forms. We have adopted a strong national TIP law that addresses all aspects of trafficking. We have a National Task Force to monitor and coordinate implementation efforts.

We have a multi-pronged approach to TIP encompassing: 'prevention, promotion, protection, and partnership', involving all key stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, legal community, CSOs and NGOs, and very importantly the community. At the same time, we also actively pursue bilateral, regional and international cooperation, given the trans-border and transnational nature of the crime. We have bilateral agreements with some of our neighbours; and draw upon our SAARC regional convention on trafficking as a basis for such collaboration.

In this context, I would like to make some concrete suggestions:

- *First:* We need to look into the problem of TIP in its entirety and address the root causes. Unless we address the root causes, we can never root out trafficking.
- *Second:* Women make up 49% and girls 23% of all victims of trafficking. So, our efforts should have particular focus on the gender dimension.



- *Third:* Conviction and prosecution remain relatively low and weak globally. We need to reinforce relevant national laws, as well as bilateral, regional and international mechanisms and cooperation.
- *Fourth:* There is a need for developing effective intelligence and information sharing platforms among member states to monitor and intercept TIP related crimes. IOM, UNODC, INTERPOL and others have important roles to play in this regard.
- *Fifth:* We need to improve on digital surveillance and use of ICT as we are up against transnational organized groups who use digital platforms. Capacity building of national governments in this sector is crucial.
- *Sixth:* To counter the negative impact of TIP we need to promote safe, orderly and regular migration as positive and sustainable alternatives. The Global Compact for Migration is an important framework in this regard, and its implementation can have a meaningful impact in combating TIP.
- *Finally,* we need to undertake more vigorous efforts to ensure universal acceptance and application of international conventions and related protocols on TIP. Efforts against TIP will not be effective otherwise.



In our fight against TIP, we need real time, effective cooperation and collaboration, at every level – national, bilateral, regional and international. It is our sincere hope that today's observance would serve to strengthen our efforts towards that end. And such engagement must continue.

I thank you.