



## Statement at the Fifth Thematic Consultation on the Global Compact Migration

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I am Carmen Elisa Bando representing VIVAT International, an NGO in Special consultative status with ECOSOC at the United Nations, member of the NGO Committee of Migration, as well as member of Talitha Kum, a worldwide international network of Catholic women religious active in the prevention of and fight against human trafficking.

Based on our varied and in-depth experience gained in supporting survivors of trafficking and other vulnerable groups, we would like to stress that currently the increasing socio-economic disparities, widespread conflicts and lack of legal migration channels are creating a fertile ground for trafficking to flourish. More and more people are willing to leave poorly governed countries, in order to escape a destiny of marginalization or death. People on the move are today the most vulnerable and at the risk of being trafficked, especially women and children. We express concern for the children that continually disappear along the migratory road, and the violence that they suffer.

Both migrants and refugees are at risk of being trafficked. This situation is exacerbated by the low number of victims identified as such. Although statistics speak about millions of trafficked persons, only a small proportion is properly identified and receives proper assistance and protection in countries of transit and destination, as well as in the home countries upon return. We call for a multidisciplinary approach to tackle human trafficking and would like to draw your attention on the following recommendations:

- That proper clauses for the protection of trafficking victims among refugee and migrant populations are included in both Compacts: the one on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;
  - That States increase their capacities to identify victims particularly among people on the move, through a multidisciplinary, age and gender-sensitive approach. Special attention should be paid to minor victims and presumed victims as well as to women.
  - That strong national child protection and social protection systems be in place, in origin, transit and destination countries;
  - Ensure that the victims of trafficking and contemporary forms of slavery are not punished for the criminal offenses committed as a direct consequence of being trafficked by the insertion of a non-punishment clause - similar to the one envisaged in the Palermo Protocol on Smuggling (that should mention, *inter alia*, prostitution where this is considered a crime, immigration laws, including both criminal and

administrative penalties, petty crimes, particularly when the alleged perpetrators are minors);

- Ensure that protection and assistance to victims of trafficking are not made conditional upon cooperation with the authorities against suspected criminals. Police investigations on trafficking cases be done with proactive techniques and Intelligence rather than relying on the testimony of the victim;
- Ensure protection of victims through long-term residence permits in transit and destination countries or voluntary return and reintegration in the origin countries, including re-settlement schemes in third countries when necessary to ensure the victim's security from retaliation.
- Ensure access to justice on a voluntary basis as well as entitlements of victims to remedies, including compensation for damages;
- Consider developing a framework for States' accountability, including monitoring of progresses in victims' identification and assistance, based on clear indicators, including public budget allocations, as well as independent and transparent assessment processes.

Thank you.