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REPUBLIC OF GHANA

**MINISTRY OF GENDER, CHILDREN
AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
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MINISTRIES - ACCRA**

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PRESS RELEASE

WORLD DAY AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

World Day Against Human Trafficking is today, 30th July, 2019. As the World marks this day, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection calls on all Ghanaians to join hands to combat human trafficking which is a danger to our society. Ghana joins the rest of the world in commemorating the World Day Against human Trafficking also known as the Blue Day. This day is commemorated to raise awareness on the dangers associated with human trafficking and all forms of exploitation.

According to UN estimates, at any given time, an estimated 2.5 million people are trapped in modern-day slavery. Men, women and children fall into the hands of traffickers both in their own countries and abroad. Every country in the world is affected by human trafficking, whether as a country of origin, transit or destination for victims. With the over 30 billion dollars human trafficking economy globally, perpetrators are doing all in their power to maintain their grip on the trade.

Ghana is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. The trafficking of Ghanaians, particularly children, within the country is more prevalent than the transnational trafficking of foreign migrants. Ghanaian women and children are recruited by unscrupulous fraudulent agencies who entice them with offers of good paying jobs in domestic service or the hospitality industry in the Gulf Countries and they are abused, raped, tortured, disgraced and reduce to nothing. Some lose their minds, their dignity and everything they work for in life to traffickers and their exploiters. Many have reported of being deceived, overworked, starved, molested, and/or forced into prostitution sleeping with countless men.

Government has been working hard to curb this menace. A number of legislations have been enacted to ensure that victims of trafficking are protected while perpetrators are punished for the offence of human

trafficking and other related criminal conducts. Ghana has enacted the Human Trafficking Act of 2005, Act 694 and its Amendments as well as the passage of the Human Trafficking Prohibition Regulations 2015 (L.I. 2219) which was approved and passed by Parliament to provide guidelines for the HT Act of 2005, Act 694. The Ministry has developed the Human Trafficking National Plan of Action (NPA) (2017 to 2021) which is a comprehensive document to support the effective implementation of the HT Act of 2005, Act 694. The Plan of Action covers all the thematic areas: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution and Partnership. Some others are the Labour Act, Children's Act 1998, (Act 560); the Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Act 732) and the Criminal Offences Act, 1960 (Act 29).

Institutional mechanisms to combat this crime against humanity are important. It is for this reason that Ghana has taken steps to ensure that the requisite institutions are established to coordinate and prosecute anti-human trafficking agenda. Among these institutions are the Human Trafficking Secretariat under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Anti- human Trafficking Unit of the Ghana Police Service and the Economic and Organize Crime Office, Anti Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons Unit in the Ghana Immigration service and the human trafficking desk officers in the Attorney General's Department. We also collaborate with our development partners, Non-Governmental Organizations, Faith Based organizations, Traditional leaders and Civil Society to combat human trafficking.

There was significant improvement in 2018 in terms of prosecution unlike 2017 when we had only 4 convictions. In 2018 the Anti Human Trafficking Units in the Ghana Police and Immigration Services had 20 convictions for offenses of human trafficking and 12 for other related offenses. Out of the total, 13 for child labour offenses. 14 individuals were charged and convicted for child labor exploitation and fined with 120 penalty units whilst 10 individual defendants were charged with human trafficking offenses and jailed between 5 and 7 years in prison. 92 cases were investigated; out of this number the Police investigated 77, Immigration 14 cases and EOCO 1 case in 2018.

75 law enforcement officials received specialised training in areas of border control, human trafficking and victim identification. The Ministry together with the Chief Justice organized a sensitization workshop for over 120 Judges of higher courts to increase perpetrator accountability. We also sensitized most of the Chief Executives of the MMDAs on the issues of human trafficking and the dangers associated with child labour.

There are 2 public shelters for victims of human trafficking, one for adult female victims which is operational and receiving victims and also the children shelter.

Through these efforts, Ghana is currently ranked a tier 2 country on the United States of America Department of Labor tier ranking of countries. This depicts that, the Government is making great efforts to combat human trafficking in Ghana.

To further strengthen Ghana's drive in the fight against human trafficking, the Government of Ghana and the Government of the United States signed the first Child Protection Compact (CPC) Partnership worth \$5 million in Accra, Ghana. The CPC Partnership is jointly-developed and being implemented by the International Organization for Migration and Free the Slaves aimed at bolstering current efforts of the Government of Ghana and Ghanaian civil society to address child sex trafficking and forced child labor within Ghana. The project has received project extension and a second phase with the JTIP 2 to include issues of adult sex trafficking.

Trafficking in persons is cruel, exploitative and one of the most heinous crimes that can be perpetrated by any person or group of persons against fellow human beings, and must be eradicated in our society. Trafficking steals the rights of others, the dignity and pride of the individual and therefore we must all be part of protecting each other by being vigilant.

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection urges all Ghanaians to be on the lookout to report any suspected cases of human trafficking to the law enforcement agencies.

SIGNED

**HON. CYNTHIA MAMLE MORRISON (MP)
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SOCIAL PROTECTION (MOGCSP)**

FOR ANY FOLLOW UP PLEASE CALL:

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