

Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking – February 13, 2008
High-Level Intervention – Carole Morency, Acting General Counsel/Justice and Co-Chair of the Inter-Departmental Working Group on Trafficking in Persons

As the Co-Chair of Canada's Inter-Departmental Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, I am proud to be part of this commendable international effort to raise global awareness of human trafficking, and catalyze actions to combat it.

CANADA'S APPROACH

Canada's approach to combating human trafficking reflects that of the international community. Our focus is on:

- The prevention of trafficking
- The protection of victims;
- The prosecution of offenders; and
- Partnerships, both within government and beyond.

Canadian effectiveness at home demands a coordinated effort amongst federal, provincial and municipal governments and their law enforcement and social policy agents in Canada, as well as civil society and the private sector.

PARTNERSHIPS

Our delegation here in Vienna reflects the many inter-agency groups at the federal and provincial government level that form part of our collective effort.

The Parliamentarian Forum held yesterday reminds us of the important role that parliamentarians play in shaping our public policies. In Canada, human trafficking remains an issue of significant interest within Canada's **Parliament** as evidenced through a report released in February 2007 on human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation and a number of pending Bills in front of Parliament that transcend partisan politics.

How can we improve our partnership with the **private sector**? Canada has partnered with Microsoft to develop the Child Exploitation Tracking System, which helps law enforcement apprehend sexual predators of children on the Internet. Such tools and technology may also be useful in combating human trafficking. The Canadian NGO, "One Child" has cooperated with Air Canada, our national airline, in a campaign to show in-flight videos raising awareness on the child sex trade and sex tourism which reaches as many as 400,000 people each month.

We cannot overstate the importance of working with our neighbours. Last year and together with the United States, we completed a Bi-National Assessment on Trafficking in Persons. More recently, the Prime Minister has made it clear that Canada's **re-engagement in the Americas** is a priority for the Government. The illicit drug trade and

associated crime are at the root of security challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean and are causing upward trends in urban gang violence, human smuggling and trafficking. We are sponsoring initiatives in the Caribbean to raise awareness and galvanize action. Canada is also committed to enhanced regional cooperation, including through the **Organization for American States** and at the **Regional Conference on Migration**, which brings together North and Central American partners. At the last Conference, Canada assisted in the development and adopted *Regional Guidelines for Special Protection in Cases of Repatriation of Child Victims of Trafficking* which provides a step-by-step guide on dealing with cases involving child victims.

PREVENTION

In terms of preventing this crime, Canada has worked to expand public education, including recently partnering with the Canadian Crime Stoppers Association to develop awareness material on human trafficking. This campaign will help Canadians understand the potential perils of trafficking, recognize when trafficking is happening in their communities, and let them know **how to report suspected cases**.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's Human Trafficking Coordination Center has strengthened its awareness raising and **training efforts** for law enforcement, border services and immigration officials, and prosecutors across Canada. Toolkits have been developed to sensitize front-line officers on how to identify trafficked victims, trigger protection services and put more traffickers behind bars.

Mindful of the **2010 Vancouver Olympics** on the horizon, Canada is developing human trafficking prevention strategies drawing upon the experiences of others who have hosted major international sporting events.

Finally, Canada has several multi-million dollar **international programmes** supporting prevention and building states' capacity to prosecute human trafficking in their countries, in partnership with international organizations such as the UNODC, the OAS, OSCE and IOM. I am happy to report on the successful launch of a UN Office on Drugs and Crime project last month in Central America, recognized by Attorneys-General in the region as the official training project for prosecutors. Canada is also supporting anti-trafficking programming in **Haiti**, where porous borders, insecurity, and poverty increase population's vulnerability to this heinous crime.

PROTECTION AND PROSECUTION MEASURES

A critical component of any country's responses to combat human trafficking is ensuring that there is a comprehensive **legal framework** in place. In 2002, Canada enacted an immigration law that includes specific offences to address the illegal cross-border movement of persons through human trafficking and smuggling. Further criminal laws were enacted in 2005 to build upon our existing criminal offences, including through the creation of specific trafficking in persons offences as well as to facilitate the testimony of vulnerable victims and witnesses, including trafficking victims.

More recently, in June 2007, Canada expanded measures to **protect foreign nationals who are victims of trafficking** in Canada. Trafficking victims are now eligible to receive a temporary resident permit (TRP) that allows them to stay in Canada for up to 180 days, to access health-care benefits; and to apply for a work permit, while they consider their options, including for example, about whether they wish to remain in Canada. Victims of trafficking are not obliged to testify in court in order to obtain such a permit.

And of course, successful implementation of these laws is just as important as the laws themselves. I am pleased to note that last month, the Government of Canada launched an additional \$6 million per year to strengthen existing law enforcement and public awareness efforts combating the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children.

Recent criminal law reforms and ongoing training will assist in tracking and monitoring trafficking cases. Canada will be conducting a study of the feasibility of developing a national **data collection** framework to help us measure the nature and extent of human trafficking in Canada. We will also be conducting research on the impact of trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, particularly as it relates to Aboriginal and other vulnerable communities. Rigorous and effective methodology is crucial in order to measure and track the problem accurately: this holds true also for any global research planned by the UNODC.

Canada is eager to share experiences, but also to learn. We are here to forge partnerships that galvanize actions. We are here to raise awareness, help give victims a voice, and to reinforce our collective resolve to combat this horrendous crime.

Thank you for your attention. And thank you for your commitment to global action to combat trafficking.