

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE DATUK AHMAD FUAD AB AZIZ
DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL (SECURITY),
MINISTRY OF INTERNAL SECURITY, MALAYSIA**

**THE VIENNA FORUM (UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL INITIATIVE TO FIGHT
HUMAN TRAFFICKING)
VIENNA, AUSTRIA
13-15 FEBRUARY 2008**

**Excellencies,
Fellow Participants,
Ladies & Gentlemen,**

I'm privileged to be given this honour to lead the Malaysian delegation for the convening of **The Vienna Forum (United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking)** in the magnificent city of Vienna, Austria. Like my fellow participants, I wish to thank our host United Nations on Drugs and Crime for the excellent hospitality accorded to us.

2. I'm aware that this year alone, the issue of trafficking in persons has been highlighted and widely discussed in various regional and international fora. This illustrates the seriousness of the problem and the dire need of initiatives at all levels to curb this phenomenon. Malaysia acknowledges the fact that trafficking in person is not only degrading to human beings but also has the propensity to effect ties between countries of origin, transit and destination.
3. Malaysia is fully committed to the problem of trafficking in persons and shares the concern of the international community that there is an urgent need to accelerate global efforts to stop this scourge. Efforts to combat human trafficking require integrated and comprehensive international cooperation particularly through information sharing, cooperative measures as well as capacity building. In this regard, Malaysia welcomes continued dialogues and cooperation.
4. The Government of Malaysia has made significant efforts to curb human trafficking especially women and children within its available resources and capacity. Malaysia is fully committed to reduce if not deter human trafficking and shares the concern of the international community that there is a pressing need to accelerate global efforts to put a stop to this ill trade.
5. Malaysia will continue to allocate resources for programmes to strengthen preventive measure against trafficking in persons especially women and children. Campaigns to increase public awareness on the abused victims of trafficking, particularly women and children, will be undertaken. The Malaysian authorities also collaborate with NGOs in offering programmes on counseling, training, access to medical services and reintegration into society for victims of trafficking.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. In echoing the nation's dedication and seriousness in curbing trafficking in persons, Malaysia has enacted a comprehensive **Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2007**. The Act not only covers the offences of human trafficking, provides wide enforcement powers and establishes state and national programmes to address the welfare and protection of victims, more importantly it provides for the establishment of the **Council for Anti-Trafficking in Persons** which will formulate the policies and the **National Action Plan for Anti-Trafficking in Persons**. With this development, we are optimistic that issues concerning trafficking in persons will be sufficiently addressed. This is a national landmark accomplishment in our effort to reduce if not eradicate human trafficking. Malaysia is still at the infant stages of the implementation of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act 2007 and welcomes assistance and sharing of best practices including training and capacity building from regional and international bodies.

7. With this developments, Malaysia will be in the position to accede to the **UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children** in the near future.

8. Malaysia is of the view that the issue of trafficking in women and children should not be isolated from a bigger issue that is violence against women and children. Hence, Malaysia is supportive of measures and resolutions to protect women against all forms of violence such as rape, criminal force and assault, kidnapping, abduction, trafficking, slavery and forced labour. Malaysia will also strengthen existing facilities to provide better protection of women and children.

9. The signing of an **ASEAN Declaration against Trafficking in Persons Particularly Women and Children** on 29 November 2004 in Vientiane, Laos is a significant commitment by ASEAN Member Countries to address this transnational problem. For Malaysia, the Declaration would serve as an impetus for relevant agencies to pursue actively a workable mechanism that would enable them to address the issue of 'victims of trafficking' and subsequently lead towards Malaysia's ratification of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. Malaysia attests to the role of the Vienna Forum as an important platform for assessing our initiatives and achievements to fight human trafficking. We recognize that cooperation and collaboration at all levels are essential to fight human trafficking which is becoming more sophisticated with time.

11. On that note, I thank all of you for lending me your ears. Vienna, Austria once again, thank you for your gracious hospitality.

Thank you.