



PRESS RELEASE

Businesses step up action against human trafficking

Ten years after the Palermo Protocol, top world personalities will convene during the Luxor International Forum to outline a roadmap for ending human trafficking

GENEVA, 4 November 2010 — *The* landmark event on human trafficking will be in Luxor on 10-12 December, organized by End Human Trafficking Now! and UN.GIFT. Rather than point fingers at where businesses have turned a blind eye to problems within their supply chains, the 400-participant Forum will seek to acknowledge good practices and focus on moving forward. CEOs will be expected to step up their leadership role in reversing the tide of illicit trade.

“It’s very important to develop a core corporate strategy against human trafficking”, said Mr. David Arkless, President of Corporate and Government Affairs, Manpower Inc.

Most anti-trafficking initiatives today have been undertaken by governments and NGOs. Very few programmes have actually engaged the business sector and made use of their global reach and network of connections. End Human Trafficking Now!, an initiative of the Suzanne Mubarak Women’s International Peace Movement (SMWIPM), is the first global campaign to involve the business community in anti-trafficking efforts.

“Luxor is a call to fully engage the private sector in the fight against human trafficking,” said Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, Founder and President of SMWIPM. “Today’s economic engine is enterprises, and their social responsibility is pivotal for putting an end to this terrible scourge.”

The Luxor International Forum has resonated well with the business community, which will be represented by CEOs of major corporations covering very diverse sectors – from Oil to Tourism. A prestigious jury including Suzanne Mubarak, Princess Mathilde of Belgium and the Aga Khan, will present the first-ever award in history to recognize a business executive’s energy and commitment in tackling human trafficking. The trophy will be created by Chopard, designer of the Cannes Film Festival’s Palme d’Or.

One of the main messages of the Luxor Forum is that *no* country is exempt. With an estimated 27 million victims, Human Trafficking is the world’s second most profitable crime, after Arms. And it is a crime that knows no boundaries. According to the ILO, forced labour of trafficked persons raises profits of US\$ 38 billion a year, including US\$ 28 billion from the sexual exploitation of women and children, half of which is in industrialised countries. This has been exacerbated by globalisation, including the use of the Internet.

Illegal trafficking also brings huge and quick benefits. Traffickers can be ‘reimbursed’ within three months of their ‘investment’, while the victims can be sold over and over again, making this crime highly lucrative.

“I thought slavery had died out hundreds of years ago”, said Sir Richard Branson, Chairman, Virgin Group. “It was only recently that I found out that human trafficking still existed.”

The Forum wants to make it clear that slavery is still very real and needs to be eradicated. With a unique mix of participants – youth, media, government, the entertainment industry – the Luxor Forum hopes to provide a platform for the business community to diversify its partners, understand its responsibility within its own area of operation, and identify and share its role within the anti-trafficking campaign.

About End Human Trafficking Now!

End Human Trafficking Now! is the first global anti-trafficking campaign to engage the private sector. Whilst striving to put an end to human trafficking altogether, the campaign emphasizes the role of the business community and puts business companies in the front and centre of anti-trafficking efforts. The campaign seeks to integrate the business community into the solution of ending this illicit trade. End Human Trafficking Now! was created in 2006, and is an initiative of the Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement.

About UN.GIFT

The Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) is a multi-stakeholder initiative providing global access to expertise, knowledge and innovative partnerships to combat human trafficking. This is done by supporting State and non-state actors with capacity development activities focusing on prevention, protection and prosecution so that they can better respond to the human trafficking challenge.

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