



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
BULGARIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

---

11 East 84<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10028, Tel: (212) 737 4790, Fax: (212) 472 9865, e-mail: bulgaria@un.int

**High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Appraisal of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons**

**New York, 28 September 2017**

**H.E. Mr. Georgi Panayotov, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the UN**

**Mr. President,**

Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union.

The Government of Bulgaria is strongly committed to preventing and combating trafficking in persons, prosecuting the traffickers and protecting and assisting the victims.

Bulgaria emphasizes the importance of the UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons and welcomes this High-level Meeting and the Political Declaration which renews the global commitment to eliminating this heinous crime and ensuring protection of the victims, also in line with the responsibilities ensuing from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind.

Trafficking in persons is a grave human rights violation and a highly lucrative form of transnational organized crime with huge human, social and economic implications that requires a concerted global response. Bulgaria emphasizes the importance of accelerating the international cooperation to eliminate human trafficking through a comprehensive, multidisciplinary and cross-border approach. Better cooperation should be established among countries of origin, transit and destination on information sharing and victims' identification, support and reintegration, including in the consolidation of transnational referral mechanisms and data collection systems.

Bulgaria reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Palermo Protocols therein which constitute a solid foundation of international law in this area, as well as Security Council Resolution 2331 of 2016.

Bulgaria was among the pioneers in Europe to adopt specialized anti-trafficking legislation back in 2003 and currently has one of the most comprehensive legal and institutional frameworks to combat trafficking in persons. Bulgaria has penalized trafficking in persons. Taking into account the particular vulnerability of minors, the Bulgarian Government has introduced more severe punishment for crimes involving children.

The new National Anti-Trafficking Strategy of Bulgaria for 2017 – 2021 contains the long-term vision of the Government to combat trafficking in persons placing a special emphasis on early detection and prevention and following a victim-centered, human rights-based, gender-specific and child-focused approach, enabling a series of consultations with all stakeholders and an analysis of on-going trends. In October Bulgaria will host an international expert forum on the usage of Internet as a tool for recruitment and control of victims of trafficking but also as a possible platform to counter this crime through general and targeted prevention campaigns. Special measures are taken to raise public awareness, especially among children, in partnership with local authorities, civil society and youth volunteers.

The National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings coordinates the state policy in this priority area and provides assistance for victims of trafficking in Government funded shelters, including specialized facilities for child victims.

In recent years Bulgaria has increased its capacity to ensure the rights of victims of trafficking and has stepped up its participation in international efforts to fight this crime. Combating trafficking in persons will feature as one of the priorities during the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first semester of 2018.

**Thank you, Mr. President!**