

Mr. Giorgio (Eritrea):

Allow me at the outset to convey my deepest sympathies to the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation on the assassination of Ambassador Andrey Karlov in Ankara, and to the Permanent Mission of Germany on the tragic attack on innocent civilians in Berlin. Our thoughts are with the bereaved families.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Bahrain, who spoke on behalf of the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking.

My delegation wishes to thank Spain for organizing this open debate of the Security Council on trafficking in persons in conflict situations, in connection with the agenda item “Maintenance of international peace and security”. Trafficking in persons is a transnational crime that affects almost every nation, given its negative implications for peace and security and its contribution to grave violations of the basic rights and dignity of the victims. Therefore, Eritrea views today’s open debate as giving important impetus to the global fight against the scourge of human trafficking.

It is clear that this is limited in its scope. Nevertheless, we would like to see it as part of national, regional and global efforts to address trafficking in persons. Resolution 2331 (2016), adopted today, decides

“to take decisive and immediate action to prevent, criminalize, investigate, prosecute and ensure accountability of those who engage in trafficking in persons” (*resolution 2331 (2016), para. 2 (b)*).

This particular paragraph points to the direction of what Eritrea has been asking of the United Nations for the past few years, since 2013. It is critical, however, that the investigations carried out be independent and transparent.

Given the complex and multidimensional nature of the crimes of human trafficking, strengthened coordination among the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, Member States and other stakeholders would contribute to the much- desired outcome.

It must be underscored that human trafficking has recently become more acute along migration routes, where vulnerable communities and individuals continue to be subjected to sexual violence, degrading treatment, organ harvesting, murder and kidnapping for ransom. This highlights the fact that the problem of trafficking has further evolved. In this regard, as the United Nations is about to embark on the review of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Eritrea believes that, with the much-improved

understanding and experiences gained over the past 10 years, the Global Plan of Action will play a stronger and more critical role in harnessing collective action to advance the fight against human trafficking.

Mindful of the gravity and urgency of the problem, Eritrea has acceded to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the Convention. Eritrea is also taking concrete steps to contribute to the fight against human trafficking by establishing a legal and institutional framework, including by dismantling criminal networks. Moreover, it is also actively involved in the Khartoum process and other projects to address the scourge, including in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Recognizing that trafficking in persons is a transnational criminal enterprise with annual revenues amounting to about \$150 billion, it is imperative to flesh out the underlying causes and intertwined dimensions of the problem in order to find effective and durable solutions to the crime.