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Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in persons, especially women and children

Oral statement delivered by: Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23)

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Madame President,

APG23 welcomes the report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and shares the need and the call for new strategies to face and contrast this major threat to human rights.

As with several other human-rights related issues, vulnerable people are those more exposed, and APG23 wants to stress and reaffirm in particular the link among human trafficking and migration, which the Special Rapporteur properly highlights in her report.

Policies put into action to prosecute migration unfortunately receive more attention and momentum than policies that aim to prevent, contrast and condemn human trafficking. It seems that migrants who move to new places in order to achieve their right to development, are far more criminalised than human traffickers. On the contrary, contrasting so strictly migration results in actually reinforcing human trafficking.

There is need to change the narrative on migration overcoming the security perspective that criminalises migrants and trafficked persons with the claim to protect the citizens of rich countries who feel threatened by the new arrivals. The real victims are, indeed, those vulnerable people that put their life and liberty at risk to pursue their wellbeing.

These victims should not be prosecuted for their need and search for a better life. There is need to address the pull factors that create the demand for human trafficking. For this reason, APG23 supports the so called “Nordic Model” that reduces the demand for sexual exploitation by fining the clients. Our Association also believes that it is crucial to guarantee social protection, empowerment and social inclusion of women trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Human trafficking is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, which should be addressed by different angles. Decriminalizing migration, reducing the demand for sexual exploitation, and involving the very same victims into the recovery and remedy process, are the key aspects that APG23 considers fundamental to tackle this major human rights threat.

Thank you!