

Opening Statement at the Training of Trainers Workshop on Investigation and Prosecution of Trafficking in Persons cases

GOLDEN TULIP, NYAMATA 20/12/2017

Ministry of Justice.

Representative of the US Embassy to Rwanda,

Representative of UNODC,

Representative of IOM,

Dear Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I will begin by thanking the United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime, Regional Office Nairobi, who accepted to share their experience and came from Nairobi to deliver this course. Many thanks to the US Department, through the US Embassy in Kigali and our partner IOM for making possible this training.

Human Trafficking is a new trend of transnational organized crimes that the world is facing today, and Rwanda is not left behind by this phenomenon.

Rwanda has a favorable travel regime which criminals tend to exploit, especially those coming from African countries. The existence of hundreds of porous borders, the wide spread of social media and free movements to neighboring countries do favor Human Trafficking.

However, the country's commitment to ending Trafficking in Persons is reflected in the adoption of national legal frameworks and incorporation of internationally accepted standards for addressing the crime of human trafficking. The law relating to Human Trafficking is contained in Chapter 8 of the Penal Code of 2012, which is under

revision, and now the special law on prevention and punishment of Human Trafficking is before the parliament.

Cases of Human Trafficking were registered since 2009, with some of them involving traffickers who use Rwanda as a transit route for victims heading to other countries, and the majority of victims were girls below the age of 35.

As clearly articulated by H.E. President Paul Kagame in a statement made in August 2014, during an extraordinary Cabinet meeting, he called upon all concerned institutions and Rwandans in general to do their best to eradicate the phenomenon of trafficking in persons.

Many activities have been carried out by MIGEPROF, Rwanda National Police, GMO and different Civil Society Organizations within the framework of sensitization and preventing Human Trafficking and many efforts are put together to fight Human Trafficking.

Among government priorities to combat this phenomenon, the Government, in collaboration with partners, is committed to Increase the capacity of law enforcement officials to screen for trafficking (knowledge & equipment to detect trafficking in persons), Coordination of the national efforts against human trafficking by creating a national policy and action plan, Establishment of a policy on the treatment(rehabilitation) of victims of trafficking.

The Ministry of Justice as the leading institution in this project, welcomes this training and others which will follow for our Law enforcement staff, they are the ones who are the port of entry of traffickers and victims and I do believe that at the end of these coming three days, participants will have acquired more skills which will help them to perform more their duties.

Thanks once again to the organizers, thanks to participants and I wish you a fruitful training.