

Panel Discussion for the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery **Breaking the Chains: Eradicating Slavery through SDGs**

28 November 2019, 11:30 – 13:00, Palais des Nations, Room XXI

Organized by the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund
on Contemporary Forms of Slavery

On 28 November 2019, the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery will host a Panel Discussion on connections between victim-centred anti-slavery efforts and Target 8.7 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event will feature the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, and NGO practitioners providing services to slavery survivors with the Fund's support. The event is funded by Germany and co-sponsored by Australia and the UK.

Background

According to the *Global Estimates of Modern Slavery*, over 40 million people in every region of the world were in a situation of modern slavery in 2016 — an estimated 5.4 victims per 1,000 people. With the aim to tackle this issue and to mark the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, the [United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery](#) (UN Slavery Fund) will host a Panel Discussion, including remarks from the High Commissioner for Human Rights, on 28 November 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Panel Discussion will explore connections between victim-centred anti-slavery efforts and Target 8.7 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, the discussion will examine the four priority areas defined by the Thematic Action Groups of the [Alliance 8.7](#) (rule of law & governance, supply chains, migration, and conflicts & humanitarian crisis) and how they relate to victim-centred approaches in the design and delivery of assistance to survivors of slavery.

The event will seek to raise awareness about the importance of victim-centred approaches in the context of these priority areas, by featuring lessons learned and good practices from practitioners providing assistance to victims on the ground, with the support of the UN Slavery Fund. The Panel Discussion will be open to State representatives, civil society and the media and include an opportunity for exchange and debate. Interpretation will be provided in English, French and Spanish. (This public event will be preceded by a closed working session between panellists, the Fund's Board of Trustees and United Nations Office staff to share knowledge and expertise).

UN Slavery Fund

The UN Slavery Fund provides support to victims of contemporary forms of slavery through partner organizations providing medical, psychological, legal and social assistance to victims worldwide. The Fund has over the years produced tangible impact for survivors and has empowered many of them and other actors in their fight against contemporary forms of slavery. Since its establishment by the General Assembly in 1991 ([resolution 46/122](#)), the Fund has

awarded more than \$8 million USD via more than 730 grants in 104 countries. The Fund uses a victim-centred approach and is global in scope, forming partnerships with grass-roots victims associations, as well as with well-established NGOs. It collaborates with other slavery-related mandates of the international human rights system, including the Special Rapporteurs on contemporary forms of slavery; trafficking in persons and sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. It also provides a platform for practitioners working on the front lines to exchange experiences. By providing support to its grantees, the Fund contributes to the achievement of SDG Target 8.7 on the eradication of forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking.

2030 Sustainable Development Goals and Alliance 8.7

Target 8.7 of the SDGs specifically calls for States to: *“Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking (by 2030) and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.”*

An important initiative offering an opportunity to accelerate progress towards target 8.7 is *Alliance 8.7*—an inclusive global partnership that includes countries, international and regional organizations, workers’ organizations, employer and business membership organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and other relevant stakeholders and networks. Under this initiative, these actors collaborate, strategize, share knowledge and accelerate progress to achieve target 8.7. Currently, 22 countries are partners to Alliance 8.7. The International Labour Organization (ILO) currently serves as Secretariat and France as the Chair.

The Panel Discussion organized by the UN Slavery Fund will be structured around the Action Groups of the Alliance 8.7, reflecting the following thematic priorities:

- **Supply Chains** (chaired by the ILO): Focused on child labour, forced labour and human trafficking in supply chains by: advancing research and understanding of the issue; supporting policy coherence and advocacy; promoting greater cooperation on capacity building and tools; and accelerating action in key countries and supply chains.
- **Migration** (co-chaired by the IOM and UNICEF): Focused on the particular vulnerability to abuse and exploitation that migrants face moving irregularly or through regularized channels.
- **Rule of Law and Governance** (chaired by the UN Human Rights Office): Focused on providing guidance to countries to improve legal and policy frameworks, including access to justice and the right to effective remedies. It also provides tools such as model laws, and supports the setting up of national level accountability institutions such as equality bodies.
- **Conflicts and Humanitarian Settings** (chaired by UNICEF): Focused on the country or region in crisis, with a particular focus on a forced labour and child labour in crisis contexts. This group is improving standard prevention models using new research findings.

Victim-centred Anti-slavery Approach

There is a growing recognition that survivor-informed and survivor-led initiatives should be the norm and not the exception, although many current anti-slavery efforts do not sufficiently enable such active participation. The Fund’s partner organizations demonstrate that supporting

slavery survivors as agents of change contributes to more effective anti-slavery efforts. This is in line with the latest [thematic report](#) of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, which highlights that survivors should be at the centre of anti-slavery efforts as leaders and interlocutors and have a central role in shaping responses. The Panel Discussion will seek to raise awareness about the need for a victim-centred approach in the shaping of projects and in the delivery of assistance to victims of slavery and in the overall global strategy to eradicate slavery in a sustainable manner by 2030.

Panel's Objectives

- Draw attention to the linkages between slavery and supply chains, migration, conflicts and humanitarian crisis, with a focus on the needs and challenges faced by victims and survivors;
- Present the experiences, including the lessons learnt, of the Fund's grantees relating to the assistance and empowerment of victims and survivors of slavery in the context of supply chains, rule of law and governance, migration, conflicts and humanitarian crisis;
- Demonstrate the importance and present best practices of the victim-centred approach in the design and delivery of assistance and its multidimensional impact;
- Emphasize the importance of the rule of law and the need to tackle persistent impunity and to ensure accountability for the practice of slavery.

Programme

<i>Time</i>	<i>Panellist</i>
3 minutes	<i>Moderator:</i> Deputy Permanent Representative of Australia, H.E. Ambassador Elizabeth Wilde
5 minutes	<i>Statement:</i> Board of Trustees, UN Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery
7 minutes	<i>Keynote speech:</i> UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Michelle Bachelet
7 minutes	<i>Supply Chains:</i> CONDEG (Guatemala), Mr Helmer Leonel Velásquez Herrera
7 minutes	<i>Migration:</i> Pacific Links Foundation (Vietnam), Ms Diep N. Vuong
7 minutes	<i>Conflict & Humanitarian Settings:</i> Action des Chrétiens Activistes des Droits de l'Homme à Shabunda (Democratic Republic of Congo), Mr Descartes Mponge Malasi
7 minutes	<i>Rule of Law & Governance:</i> SOS Esclaves (Mauritania), Ms Salimata Lam
7 minutes	<i>Migration, Humanitarian Settings and Supply Chains:</i> Kurdish Human Rights Watch (Iraq), Mr Hoshyar Malo

<i>5 minutes</i>	<i>Statement:</i> Representative of Alliance 8.7, Mr Thomas Wissing, Head of ILO Advocacy and Partnerships Unit, Fundamental Principals and Rights at Work Branch
<i>30 minutes</i>	Questions and Answers