

Ambassador Richmond's remarks on "The Global Fight to End Modern Slavery"
before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
November 28, 2018

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Menendez, Members of the Committee, it is a pleasure to appear before you today to speak about the global fight to stop human traffickers and end modern slavery. We in the anti-trafficking community have tremendous respect for this Committee and the work you have done to shine a light on the offence of human trafficking, one of the most compelling human rights and criminal justice issues of our time. I would also like to thank the two witnesses you have invited to testify on the second panel for their contributions to this movement. I am honored to share this platform with them today. I have only been in my new position at the helm of the State Department's Trafficking in Persons Office for a little over a month, but I have to say I am excited by the team's enthusiasm and the challenges ahead, and have hit the ground running.

With an estimated 24.9 million people trapped in modern slavery around the world today, one could feel paralyzed by the enormity of this crime and cynical about the chances for ending it. But, it is important to remember how far we have come. The modern anti-trafficking movement launched globally only 18 years ago with the adoption of the UN Palermo Protocol and the enactment of the United States' Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). As we approach this movement's 20th anniversary, we must recognize the tremendous successes it has achieved so far:

- 173 parties have ratified the Palermo Protocol.
- The number of governments that have statutes criminalizing human trafficking increased from 33 in 2003 to 158 in 2016.
- Since 2009 human trafficking prosecutions globally have increased 118% and convictions 166%.
- International organizations and regional bodies are developing international norms and policies, and providing technical assistance to governments.
- Understanding has sharply increased regarding the various forms of human trafficking, as well as the importance of victim-centered and trauma-informed approaches, and not punishing trafficking victims for crimes their traffickers forced them to commit.
- Human trafficking, once a stand-alone issue, is now being integrated into other types of policy work, including national security, human rights, violence against women, refugee protection, and business responsibility.
- And, the anti-trafficking community has grown exponentially: we now see new stakeholders taking action including survivor leaders, the private sector, investigative journalists, filmmakers, and academics.

Understanding of the realities of human trafficking around the world continues to grow due, in part, to these achievements, however, needs outpace resources. Traffickers rake in huge profits while facing little risk of the improved laws holding them accountable. Several notable gaps make the challenging task of combating trafficking in persons even more difficult.

Human trafficking is an incredibly difficult crime to measure and many traffickers make it difficult to identify victims. We lack quality data on sector-specific prevalence and on the impact of the field's anti-trafficking efforts. We also lack sufficient global resources dedicated to combating the crime. And, in many places, governments still lack the capacity and even political will to combat trafficking effectively.

One critical tool to eliminating these gaps is an effective use of **partnerships** focused on achieving specific goals. Such partnerships have shown to be a force multiplier in the anti-trafficking field, encouraging the sharing of best practices, leveraging the benefits of comparative advantage, encouraging innovative solutions, and building consensus and momentum.

One notable partnership I would like to discuss in detail today is the executive-legislative partnership to combat trafficking.

Bipartisan leadership in Congress has played an enormous role in raising the profile of human trafficking in the United States and abroad, beginning with the passage of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and creation of the Trafficking in Persons Office in 2000. Today, our most high-profile and significant programs owe their existence to leaders in Congress – from both sides of the aisle – who had a vision to see real change. I am eager to work hand-in-hand with Congress to implement these programs in my new role as Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Let me mention a few here:

Trafficking in Persons Report

Perhaps the most well-known of congressionally created anti-trafficking tools is the annual Trafficking in Persons Report. Mandated in the original TVPA, the report has become a symbol of U.S. global leadership on human trafficking and is the gold standard around the world for assessing government efforts to combat human trafficking crimes. The recommendations outlined in the Trafficking in Persons Report form the backbone of our year-round diplomatic engagement. And, as I understand it, the recommendations are used by many in Congress to inform their engagement with foreign governments on human trafficking. This cooperation and alignment holds great potential for further impact, and I look forward to working closely with this committee to continuously refine the report's effectiveness as a diplomatic tool.

President's Interagency Task Force

The original TVPA created the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons in 2000. This Cabinet-level task force now consists of 15 agencies across the U.S. government responsible for coordinating efforts to combat trafficking in persons. Using a multidisciplinary approach, the task force focuses on victim-centered enforcement of criminal and labor law, development of trauma-informed protection measures, support for innovations in research and public awareness, and coordination of federal anti-trafficking programs and procurement policies.

On October 11, 2018, the Administration convened the latest meeting of the PITF. President Trump's participation in the meeting, along with Vice President Pence, Secretary Pompeo and several senior White House officials, underscored the Administration's commitment to combat this crime, and Cabinet members demonstrated their commitment to continue to chart a strong course forward.

U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking

Established by Congress in 2015, the U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking is another congressionally-created initiative that has become integral to the anti-trafficking work of the federal government and serves as a model to other governments and NGOs alike. The Council comprises survivor leaders appointed by the President who provide input on federal anti-trafficking policies and programs. As Ambassador, I have already met with the Council and I look forward to their insights on how to combat this crime.

Building on the lessons learned from the Council and from Congress's leadership, Secretary Pompeo recently announced a groundbreaking initiative for the State Department called the Human Trafficking Expert Consultant Network. The Network will allow us to meaningfully incorporate survivor input into our anti-trafficking work while also compensating expert consultants for their time and expertise.

Child Protection Compact Partnerships

A lesser known program that has become instrumental to the Trafficking in Persons Office's anti-trafficking diplomacy and programming over the years is the Child Protection Compact Partnership program. Created in large part due to the efforts of former Senator Barbara Boxer, the Child Protection Compact Partnerships represent a unique foreign assistance and diplomatic tool. A partnership is a multi-year plan, developed jointly by the United States and a foreign government, that documents the commitment of the two governments aimed at strengthening the country's efforts to prosecute and convict child traffickers, to provide comprehensive trauma-informed care for child victims, and to prevent child trafficking in all its forms. These Partnerships require foreign governments to make their own investments in their anti-trafficking programs. To date, using foreign assistance resources the TIP Office has used this unique tool to forge strong partnerships with four governments – Ghana, Jamaica, Peru, and the Philippines – that are showing positive initial results. I am committed to continuing to strengthen this model of engagement.

Program to End Modern Slavery

Last, but not least, I would like to talk about an initiative of this Committee that I feel has huge potential to transform the battle against modern slavery. Thanks to the leadership of Chairman Corker and the support of the members of this Committee, the Appropriations Committees, and others, the Program to End Modern Slavery has been funded with a total of \$75 million to date. This groundbreaking public-private partnership supports transformational anti-trafficking programs. Specifically it seeks to pair funding with a metrics-based approach, including extensive monitoring and evaluation, all with the goal of measurably reducing the prevalence of

human trafficking in targeted populations in specific countries or regions. This approach is important to me personally and something I focused on both in my hearing as a nominee and during my swearing-in ceremony: a dedication to policy rooted in data and measurable impact.

The first award under this program was made in 2017 in the amount of \$25 million to the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery, followed by a second award of \$21 million to the Global Fund this past September. The Office made a third award of \$4 million, also in September, to the University of Georgia Research Foundation to develop innovative research methodologies to measure the prevalence and impact of human trafficking in two target countries in Africa. To date, we are optimistic about the work of the Global Fund, particularly its work to leverage U.S. investments to secure additional international funding. By year three, the Global Fund expects to have mobilized \$150 million in further funding from other governments and private stakeholders. For instance, UK Prime Minister May pledged £20 million to the Global Fund at last year's UN General Assembly session. I believe the keys to success of the Program to End Modern Slavery include: continued support from Congress, an emphasis on other countries and private entities contributing funds, and a focused, strategic approach. If done well, the Program to End Modern Slavery could have a massive, measurable impact on this global crime.

I mention these important initiatives not just to commend this Committee and others in Congress for their leadership. I mention them because they exemplify the potential for progress when the executive branch works hand-in-hand with the legislative branch—working together to create tools, secure resources, and share insights. We are hopeful lawmakers will continue to make this issue a priority and champion the critical resources that make this work possible.

For my part, I am excited to take on this new challenge along with my colleagues in the Trafficking in Persons Office and look forward to working in close partnership with this Committee. I want to encourage Members to travel and raise human trafficking with other governments. I want to ensure our congressional reports are providing you with actionable information, and I want to have an open and regular dialogue. In short, I want us to be partners in this fight.

We have an exceptionally talented group of dedicated professionals working year round to fight human trafficking around the world. Together, we are all excited to work with you, exploring new and creative partnerships to combat human trafficking around the globe.