

Statement of the Malta Summit on Sharing Models and Best Practices to End Modern Slavery and Restore Dignity to its Victims

13-14 June 2017

In accordance with the Magisterium of Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, the [2014 Joint Declaration of faith leaders against modern slavery](#), the [2015 Vatican Summit of Mayors](#) from the major cities of the world, the 2016 [Judges' Summit on Human Trafficking and Organized Crime](#), and the 2017 [Summit on Organ Trafficking and Transplant Tourism](#), we, the undersigned participants of the Malta Summit on Sharing Models and Best Practices to End Modern Slavery and Restore Dignity to its Victims, declare that human trafficking and smuggling, as well as new forms of slavery such as forced labour, prostitution, organ trafficking, the drug trade and organized crime, are true crimes against humanity and need to be recognized as such by all religious, political and social leaders and stakeholders, and by national and international legislation, in order to eradicate them forever.

Today, the elimination of modern slavery is a new moral imperative for the 193 Member States of the United Nations, according to the Sustainable Development Goals (Target 8.7) approved in September 2015.

As stated by the SDGs, inspired by Pope Francis' Encyclical *Laudato si'*, poverty, unemployment, climate change, war, migration and the lack of socioeconomic opportunities are factors that make persons vulnerable to modern slavery and trafficking. Most people want to reside and prosper in their land of their birth. This is natural. Yet when they are trafficked or forced to migrate, it is important for them to receive assistance aimed at their full rehabilitation, resettlement and integration into the economic, social, political, and cultural life of the destination country. Automatic repatriation of undocumented foreigners should never be the default judgement, in order to avoid the risk of their being re-trafficked or resorting to illegal activities. Only when their dignity, freedom and peace are restored, can they contribute positively to society.

During the Summit we have identified the following best practices and models, which should be adopted by all countries and adapted to local contexts:

1. The "Nordic model" that for the first time combats prostitution by criminalizing the purchase of sex and has so far been adopted by the following countries: Sweden (1999), Norway and Ireland (2009), Canada (2014), Northern Ireland (2015), France (2016) and Ireland (February 2017).
2. The British model of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commission, represented by Commissioner Kevin Hyland, OBE.
3. The Mexican protocol for the rehabilitation of sex trafficking victims.
4. The Baton Rouge model for shelters for teenage victims of sex trafficking with the cooperation of parish priests, women's religious orders, governors, senators and local community.
5. The international, integrated approach delineated by Dr Francis Delmonico's initiative to combat organ trafficking and transplant tourism.

In an attempt to cure humanity's wounds once and for all, we pledge to promote these 5 models and best practices in our own countries and to continue to study and reveal the magnitude, locations and extent of this crime against humanity.