

Points of Intervention by the Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia at the 5th Informal Thematic Session: Panel 2- Trafficking in Persons and Contemporary forms of Slavery

- We thank the panelists for sharing their thoughts.
- The contemporary forms of slavery in many instances is interlinked with trafficking in persons, especially of women and children. It is particularly concerning to note that domestic migrant workers remain disproportionately affected by contemporary forms of slavery as they remain least protected, despite the adoption of various international legal frameworks, labour standards and policy tools for the protection of their human rights. It is thus important for States to identify the root causes and fight trafficking in persons and take the necessary measures to protect the human rights of victims of human trafficking irrespective of their status.
- Ethiopia has taken various policy, legislative and institutional measures to address trafficking in persons and establish a framework for regular migration. We have enacted legislations to define the role of the private sector in overseas employment exchange services and follow-up and monitoring of such services; prevent and suppress trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants as well as make those individuals or entities engaged in human trafficking which has contributed to address irregular migration. We have also signed bilateral labour agreements with some of the countries which are destination to establish a framework for lawful overseas employment and prevent human trafficking. We have assigned labour attaches in Ethiopian embassies located in countries that are destination for Ethiopian migrants.
- Beyond measures at the countries of origin, there is a need for countries of transit and destination to ensure access to basic rights of migrant workers and ensure the protection and respect of their human rights, in particular fair terms of employment, decent working conditions, and protection against all forms of abuse, harassment and violence, right to food, right to health.
- At the international level, the following could be considered to complement national efforts:

1. Adoption of a rights based approach to ensure the protection of migrants in transit and destination countries irrespective of their status;
2. Addressing the protection gaps, including at the international level, the absence of a comprehensive framework on the protection of the human rights of migrants irrespective of their status (there are the Slavery Conventions, the ILO Conventions on forced labour bla bla. But there is still a protection gap);
3. Ensuring the protection of the labour rights of migrants, integration of the broader decent work agenda and occupational safety and health standards; and
4. constructing an agenda for fair migration which not only respects the fundamental rights of migrants but also offers them real opportunities for decent work and integration in the society they find themselves.

Question

In the recent report of the SR on Contemporary forms of Slavery: focus was debt bondage. You can raise that the panelists to explain a bit about and how we can address it as our migrants are also victims of debt bondage though the report states that migrants from Asia are victims of debt bondage in the Middle East.