

**MY SPEECH IN THE THEMATIC SESSION ON SMUGGLING, TRAFFICKING OF MIGRANTS ORGANISED BY UNITED NATIONS, VIENNA, AUSTRIA:**

Thank you very much Chair & Panelists for giving me this opportunity to make the voice of the vulnerable rural girls heard in UN. I am indebted to UN & IOM for this.

I am Dr Mamatha Raghuveer Achanta a Pro Bono Advocate and Founder of Tharuni a Seventeen year old NGO working for the welfare of Adolescent Girls and Women in India

- India is the second most populous country with 1.36 Billion people and children form 39% of the population.
- In this vast country where there are high economic discrepancies definitely it is a ground for Trafficking & smuggling of people. The Global Slavery Index 2016 says that out of 45.8 million modern slaves in the world 18.3 million are Indians.
- There were 20,000 Trafficking cases registered in 2016 and there is a steady increase in the cases making India a fastest growing region.
- The Government has been doing its bit and initiated new Trafficking Bill last year which is pending in the parliament.
- I come from State of Telangana, a newly formed State which stands in 4<sup>th</sup> position in Trafficking in India. We have registered more than thousand cases since 2014 and this happens by luring the vulnerable people for employment or by Forced Marriage or Child Marriage, there is also failure of crops leading to Debts leading people to migrate to cities for employment.
- There is a high demand for child labour and few months back more than 300 children were rescued from our capital city Hyderabad who were working in the Bangle Industry based in small households. We found even a 4 year old also who was working for more than 12 hours each day.

- But there is a Good News and we could able to prevent Trafficking although in a smaller way but have initiated a successful strategy. Way back in 2002 we could stop trafficking of 15 rural girls who were lured for employment. This became possible through our Girl Child Clubs in villages named Balika Sanghas. Here the Girls are taught Life skills and we are able to stop more than 12,000 rural girls from Child / Forced Marriage and Trafficking in 17 years.
- With my two decades of experience I think we can overcome this problem working on Prevention & Prosecution. For this I would like to put forward few points to the chair.
  1. Pressure should be built on Nations to create better Employment opportunies for the needy particularly women who will spend their incomes on their families.
  2. Ask the Countries to create safe Path ways for Migrants and protect their Rights.
  3. Ask Business houses to invest on rehabilitation of victims and create safer work places for women.
  4. Digital control is the need of the hour to control online initiation of Trafficking which ends up in offline.
  5. Our Girls sent a special request to UN to pressurize the States to achieve the Four important Sustainable Development Goals namely -1, 4, 5 & 8 so that no girl is trafficked.
    - 1 (No Poverty), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality),& 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth)

Thank you so much for the opportunity.

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