

## Presentation 11 June;” If you speak up, I will join”

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The project: “If you speak up, I will join” represents a new approach of involving those affected by human trafficking. A lot has been documented about the harm caused to children and adults because of trafficking - but there has been less focus on the long-term follow up of the survivors and the lack of space for what we could call social inclusion.

Thus, in this project the focus is on the survivors and the conditions supporting their resilience and empowerment. We also emphasise the cooperation between organisations, policy makers, professionals, civil society and private sector working closely with survivors.

As such the “Survivors Manifest” is a good starting point representing and including the voice of the survivors. The Survivors Manifest is not only talking “about” the needs of the individuals harmed by the brutal trafficking crime – it is also a solid step for survivors to be acknowledged as the subjects, witnesses and experts to support each other, to lay out the necessary actions needed for healing and inclusion and to advice the society to prevent the harm to individuals caused by trafficking and for all citizens to protect the rights of survivors.

We all need to be there to avoid being part of the trafficking chain, to acknowledge and report crimes against children and adults, to support the survivors and to listen to their recommendations.

Many recommendations have over the years been made by the international community including by the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Council of Europe and the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons.

In this Manifest, survivors highlight their overall recommendation to be ensured safety, justice, and long-term viable solutions and support including for their children.

From a human rights standpoint, and to promote social inclusion, - services and residence status should be non-conditional and disconnected from the criminal proceedings. Trafficked persons *are entitled* to effective remedies and justice according to international norms and standards regardless of whether perpetrators have been prosecuted or punished.

Survivors are also reminding States about their obligation to eradicate discrimination and xenophobia, and to reduce social stigma linked with sexual exploitation and other forms of human trafficking and migration. We have heard today about how

traffickers exploit young persons and marginalised populations and their vulnerabilities.

A gender-sensitive approach is in addition needed as well as a human rights and child rights approach in all phases of the social inclusion process.

For many victims, the recruitment into trafficking represents the culmination of a history of violence, exploitation, and neglect. Thus, solutions reducing human trafficking require stronger efforts to prevent and respond early to childhood maltreatment globally.

Resources need to be allocated to empower survivors of human trafficking to become agents of change within their families and communities. Survivors must be included on a voluntary basis in the design, implementation and evaluation of all anti-trafficking interventions aimed at social inclusion.

As part of the Survivors Manifest, we have also developed a separate part, where survivors reflect upon their own learning and the journey to get out of the trafficking situation. The journey is richly described, the challenges, the courage needed and the huge importance of the support from others including from responsible institutions.

Most importantly, the survivors point to the opportunities to break free – let us listen and learn.