

ANNEX I

Republic of Namibia – Submission of information to the Note Verbale dated 15 April 2024, received from the Secretary General of the United Nations, requesting Member States to provide progress made in the implementation of the General Assembly resolution 77/194 on Trafficking in Women and Girls for the period 1 August 2022 to date.

1. During the period under review approximately thirty (30) women between the ages of twenty-one (21) and thirty-nine (39) were trafficked inside Namibia, from Angola and from other Asian countries using Namibia, either as a destination or a transit country. One out of the thirty women, some were exploited sexually, while the rest were recruited for labour exploitation. The latest trend involves a group of women that were recruited by a syndicate to participate in sophisticated international cryptocurrency networks to carrying out pig-butcher scam operations. Correspondingly, about four (4) girls between the ages of three (03) and ten (10) were trafficked from Angola into Namibia. For easy reference attached please find information regarding the age, nationality and sex of the women and girls suspected to be victims of trafficking.
2. It is worth indicating that the Government of the Republic of Namibia has done tremendous efforts in addressing trafficking in women and girls. These efforts include the National Legal Framework for Trafficking in Persons (TiP); Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, Act 1 of 2018 to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, paying particular attention to women and children; to protect and assist the victims of such trafficking, with full respect for their human rights; and to promote cooperation among stakeholders.
3. Secondly, the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons 2023 -2027 was developed to ensure that actions are taken to protect and ensure the safe return of Victims of Trafficking (VoTs). The Plan enhances a coordinated and efficient response to TiP in Namibia, it also ensures the operationalization of the Combating of Trafficking in persons Act, 2018 (Act. No.1 of 2018) to confront suspicious TiP activities as well as to provide prevention measures necessary for TiP and protection of victims and potential victims. Additionally, it also advocates for the effective prosecution of perpetrators and create a conducive environment for concerted approaches against human traffickers and to ensure enhancement of knowledge and skills of frontline officers and spearhead campaigns, specifically to raise awareness on TIP.

4. The National Referral Mechanism and Standard Operation Procedures was developed as a guiding tool for all stakeholders to carry out joint counter-trafficking activities in Namibia and deals with the identification, protection and referral of victims of trafficking and to enhance collaborated efforts with both government and other stakeholders in the implementation of the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, Act 1 of 2018.
5. Namibia did not experience any conflict, crisis or climate or other emergency context on the trafficking of women and girls. However, the use of technology and digitalization is an emerging trend where traffickers recruit young girls online for apparent modelling and other job opportunities. The Victims are lured online for better life and job opportunities and later exploited through online scams, sexual exploitation and forced labour. The Government embarked on internet safety sensitization campaigns including capacity building and the establishment of an Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Unit.
6. In order to increase access to justice and to strengthen detection, protection of victim-survivors and prosecution of perpetrators the government carried out efforts in developing awareness materials that are readily available to the public at no cost. The National Action Plan (NAP) on Combating Trafficking in Persons 2023 - 2027 makes provision for the implementation of capacity building efforts for frontline officials to effectively respond to TiP involving vulnerable communities including women and children. The NAP also makes provisions for public education programmes for vulnerable communities. The World Day against Trafficking is commemorated annually in areas where trafficking in persons is predominant.
7. It is worth mentioning that, the Government render multi-sectoral services for victim-survivors of TiP through coordinated efforts. These services include; providing the victims of trafficking with housing; counselling, with information regarding his or her legal rights, providing medical or psychological assistance; or providing safety to the victims of trafficking irrespective of their nationality.
8. Irrespective of the above-mentioned efforts and due to an increase in the influx of potential foreign victims of trafficking into Namibia, the Government experiences some challenges in terms of adequate shelters for victims of trafficking. Currently, there are no specific shelters with specialized services

for trafficking victims. Although TiP victims are accommodated together with victims of Gender Based Violence, there are separate Residential Child Care Facilities for children who are victims of trafficking.

9. Furthermore, from the prosecutor's perspective, the Office of the Prosecutor-General embraces and complies with its obligation to diligently, effectively and efficiently prosecute criminal activities, not limited to, but including the prosecution of those accused of trafficking in persons, as means of punishing perpetrators and enforcing deterrence of would be offenders.
10. In realizing the seriousness of trafficking in persons cases and in compliance with requirements contained in the UN Conventions as ratified, a specialized unit within the Office of the Prosecutor-General was established with the primary aim of guiding the investigations by police and overseeing the prosecution of cases, including TiP cases.
11. To date, the creation of the specialized unit has facilitated in rendering positive results in the sense that, trafficking in persons cases are proficiently investigated and subsequently successfully prosecuted, whilst at all times ensuring that a victim centred approach is adapted in handling the vulnerable victims of TiP.
12. Furthermore, acting in the interest of victims of TiP, the Judge President has issued directives that enables the Prosecutor-General to approach his chambers when she requires the hearing date and finalization of a case to be fast tracked, especially when vulnerable witnesses are involved.
13. Moreover, although the specialized unit is based at the head office in Windhoek, prosecutors in the respective regions are trained to identify and correctly charge perpetrators of TiP in accordance with the elements of the offence that presents itself in a specific case. It is of importance to note that from the outset, as soon as a case of TiP is registered the involvement of the specialized unit is sought in guiding investigations.
14. A further act aimed at implementing General Assembly resolution 77/194 is in respect of the multi-sectoral approach adopted by the respective stakeholders when conducting TiP trainings as means of ensuring that all concerned parties are informed and knowledgeable on TiP and holding joint

stakeholders' meetings aimed at resolving matters pertaining to a specific TiP case or an issue requiring a joint approach.

15. In having regard to the types of cases dealt with, with special focus on the trafficking of women and girls for the period stemming August 2022 to date, it presents a trend of offenders or perpetrators enticing economically impoverished women and children by offering money or items in kind and subsequently subjecting them to sexual exploitation. This for instance was evident in the case of *S v Alexander Krylou and Another (CC 32/2018) (2023) NAHCMD 349 (22 June 2023)*, Mr Krylov, was convicted of 10 counts of human trafficking in contravention of s 15 read with s 1 of the Prevention of Organized Crime Act 29 of 2004, for enticing young girls (aged 9 to 14) to go to his flat whom he in turn sexually exploited. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment on each of the trafficking counts and fifteen years' imprisonment on each of the rape counts. Parts of the sentences were ordered to run concurrently, resulting in an effective period of thirty-five years' imprisonment to be served.
16. Furthermore, an emerging trend has presented itself in the use of social media or online platforms as means of luring unsuspecting victims of TIP and exploiting them, whereby in some instances such exploitation is recorded and sold as pornographic material on the dark web or distributed further online.
17. Trafficking for purposes of organ harvesting has of recent also emerged as a trend in respect of which 3 cases have been registered and currently the prosecution thereof is still ongoing in the courts.
18. Statistically, the period under review has yielded the prosecution of forty-six (46) TiP cases of which twenty-one (21) cases presents exploitation of a sexual nature, twenty (20) of the cases depict forced labour as a form of exploitation and with regards to the remaining five (5), the exploitation is unspecified. From the forty-six (46) cases, a total of five (5) cases were finalized.

End.