



Position paper
Canada
UNCSW

Combating Global Trafficking Of Women

Addressing exploitation and forced labor

Topic background

Common among these regions are widespread poverty and weak rule of law, which create exposed, vulnerable grounds for traffickers to exploit vulnerable populations. Additionally, global migration trends — especially irregular or dangerous migration — make women and children disproportionately vulnerable to forced labour networks.

Historically, the issue has intensified due to:

1. The rise of complex global supply chains since the 1990s, which can obscure forced labour.
2. Prolonged regional conflicts and instability (e.g., civil wars, political unrest) displacing millions.
3. Rapid globalisation without parallel strengthening of international labour protections and migration safeguards.

Recent global estimates suggest over 21 million people are trapped in forced labour worldwide — with 3 of every 1,000 workers suffering from exploitative conditions. The real number is likely far higher due to underreporting driven by fear, stigma, and lack of access to protection.

A key trend is the link between labour trafficking and irregular migration — migrants and international students are increasingly targets for fraudulent schemes that promise work or residency, but result in exploitation, as seen in recent Canadian cases involving Mexican workers and Indian students.

Past UN Actions

The United Nations has long tackled human trafficking through global frameworks like the Palermo Protocol (2000), which Canada signed early, setting standards to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking, especially of women and children. Its goals — protecting victims, prosecuting traffickers, and promoting international cooperation — remain crucial. However, inconsistent implementation and limited enforcement in some regions reduce its impact.

The UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (2010) encouraged member states to strengthen domestic laws and victim support. While it raised awareness and funding for NGOs, lack of monitoring and gaps in data sharing slowed real progress.

Additionally, the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7 urges countries to end forced labour and modern slavery. Despite its ambition, underreporting and poor cross-border cooperation still hinder results.

Canada believes lessons from these actions show that only robust enforcement, clear supply chain accountability, and survivor-centered support will close protection gaps and translate commitments into real change for vulnerable women worldwide.

National Policy

Canada's domestic fight against human trafficking is anchored in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) and the Criminal Code, both of which criminalize trafficking and ensure victim protection. The National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking (2019–2024) backs this with \$75 million, emphasizing survivor-focused support, prevention, and prosecution.

Internationally, Canada ratified the Palermo Protocol and supports the UN Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Canada also collaborates through INTERPOL and the UNODC, strengthening cross-border investigations and training programs for law enforcement.

Canada has consistently supported resolutions addressing forced labour and trafficking, reflecting its core belief in defending human rights, gender equality, and humanitarian protection.

These trends show Canada's policy is clear: combine strong domestic frameworks with international partnerships, victim-centered services, and robust enforcement. The goal is to protect vulnerable women and children while holding traffickers accountable — ensuring that human trafficking has no safe haven within or beyond Canada's borders.

Proposed Solutions

Canada firmly believes that combating human trafficking requires a layered approach that goes beyond laws on paper. First, Canada proposes stronger international cooperation through real-time intelligence sharing and joint operations to dismantle trafficking networks across borders.

Second, Canada urges expanding victim support, ensuring survivors have access to safe housing, legal aid, mental health care, and reintegration, with special focus on women and children.

Third, Canada recommends closing legal loopholes by updating immigration policies to protect Temporary Foreign Workers and international students from fraud and forced labour.

Fourth, Canada calls for mandatory supply chain transparency, holding corporations accountable for exploitation risks.

Fifth, Canada supports the integration of advanced technology and AI to identify trafficking routes, track suspicious activity online, and analyze cross-border data patterns to detect exploitation faster.

Finally, Canada backs global awareness campaigns, especially in source countries, to educate communities about trafficking risks and promote reporting.

Canada stands ready to share expertise, funding, and technology to help all nations adopt a victim-centered, enforceable, tech-enabled strategy to end human trafficking.
