



The Centre
Canadian Centre to
End Human Trafficking.

May 31, 2023

The Honourable Marco Mendicino, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Public Safety
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

RE: Recommendations for the next National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking

Dear Minister:

On behalf of the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking, I am pleased to share our recommendations on how the federal government can strengthen the next National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking.

First, we want to commend the federal government for launching the *National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking (2019-2024)*. Human trafficking is a complex challenge that requires a whole-of-society response – one that spans different industries, policy areas, and Canadian jurisdictions. We need to be open to new ways to address human trafficking in Canada, while building off the successes of the current strategy.

Since 2019, Canada has made important progress in the fight against human trafficking, including: dedicating funding for the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline, launching a national public awareness campaign, establishing new funding for social service agencies, and creating programs that support survivors.

These initiatives are having a positive impact in the lives of Canadians.

However, much more needs to be done.

The renewal of the National Strategy provides an opportunity to identify where additional measures can be implemented to disrupt trafficking and support survivors. In keeping with this, we are calling on the government to incorporate the following recommendations and action items into the next National Strategy:



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1. Enhance government action, coordination, and training to execute the goals of the National Strategy

Action Items:

- Publicly commit to a *National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking* that takes a human rights based approach and coordinates resources across government. This strategy should be renewed and evaluated every five years.
- Establish an advisory committee comprised of human trafficking survivors within the first six months of the launch of the new National Strategy.
- Establish interdepartmental working group of Assistant Deputy Ministers to guide the whole-of-government response to human trafficking.
- Establish a clear and publicly-available plan to identify, disrupt and punish human trafficking online. This will require collaboration across the public, private, and academic sectors.
- Require a multi-departmental audit among Government of Canada departments and entities (e.g., IRCC, Canada Border Services Agency, RCMP, ESDC, IRB, etc.) to assess how existing processes impact migrant workers, international students, new comers, asylum seekers, and others with precarious immigration status.
- Clearly articulate and address the different forms that human trafficking takes, including: sexual exploitation, labour trafficking, coerced labour, child trafficking, organ and tissue trafficking, forced marriage, domestic servitude, forced or coerced criminal activity and other forms of criminal exploitation.
- Require annual human trafficking training among federal employees and all federally regulated industries and workplaces.
- Mandate annual advanced human trafficking training for the RCMP, CBSA, IRCC, ESDC inspectors, other inspectors under contract with Public Safety Canada and Service Canada staff.
- Facilitate greater collaboration and information-sharing among FINTRAC, law enforcement and Crown attorneys across Canada. These stakeholders should also collaborate on technical training on how to interpret and use digital evidence in human trafficking cases.

2. Increase the Government of Canada's commitment to the National Strategy's empowerment pillar

Action Items:

- Work with ESDC to, at a minimum, restore the \$145M in annual ongoing funding to violence against women emergency shelters across the country.
- Take a leadership role in providing funding to social programs dedicated to human trafficking that the provinces can build on.



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- Dedicate funding to community organizations to create and expand their own human trafficking public awareness campaigns.
- Establish grants that empower marginalized groups to collect human trafficking data on human trafficking that is occurring in their communities, including how it is perpetrated, discussed, understood, and the cultural supports that could assist survivors.
- Fund third-party research that identifies, evaluates, and promotes policy and program best practices that have disrupted human trafficking and supported survivors.

3. Devote more resources to preventing, identifying and disrupting labour trafficking

Action Items:

- Expand the government's national public awareness campaign to include all forms of human trafficking, including labour trafficking.
- Introduce Open Work Permits for all Temporary Foreign Workers, regardless of occupation or national origin.
- Create firm legislation that curbs forced labour in Canadian supply chains by requiring companies to follow diligence practices, enforcing compliance, and penalizing those who do not address exploitation in their supply chains.
- Ensure that program funding that is devoted to settlement agencies indexed to the number of new comers, international students and migrant workers that arrive in Canada each year.
- Make existing settlement and housing supports available to migrant workers and international students.

As you undertake the National Strategy renewal process, we must remember that we all have a role to play in ending human trafficking. As such, we strongly encourage Public Safety to engage victims/survivors, social service providers, provincial governments, municipalities, and other stakeholders as part of this process.

Thank you for taking the time to review my letter. We would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about our recommendations – and how we can support you in bringing them to life.

Yours sincerely,

Julia Drydyk

Executive Director

Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking

cc Miro Froehlich, Regional Advisor, Office of the Minister of Public Safety
Talal Dakalbab, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister