

Joint Statement
On Trafficking in Persons in the Context of Online Scams
delivered during the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on
contemporary forms of slavery and trafficking in persons
at the 63rd Session of the Human Rights Council¹
(11 September 2026)

Version for delivery

Mr. President,

Thailand has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of a cross-regional group of over 40 countries.

We are deeply alarmed by the evolving and industrial scale of online scams and its human rights impacts.

At least 300,000 people from 80 countries work in scam compounds. Many are subjected to confinement, trafficking for forced criminality, physical and sexual violence, torture, and other serious human rights violations.

As the High Commissioner underscored, “Online scams have become a disturbing new form of contemporary slavery and human trafficking².”

Scam networks are expanding globally, linking forced labour, trafficking in persons, and various forms of transnational organized crime. They exploit digital technologies, benefit from corruption, and gaps in the rule of law and across jurisdictions to sustain and expand their operations.

Addressing this crisis requires a coordinated global response, rooted in human rights, while applying a victim-centered approach and the principle of non-punishment for unlawful acts committed as a direct consequence of being trafficked.

We call for enhanced cooperation to promote prevention, prosecute criminal networks, combat corruption, disrupt illicit financial flows, strengthen victim protection, and ensure accountability

Thank you.

(217 words)

¹ List of Co-sponsors as of 14 September 2026: Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Mauritius, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, the Philippines, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Viet Nam.

² Extract from the video message by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at the International Conference on the Global Partnership against Online Scams held in Bangkok in December 2025.

Full Version

Mr. President,

Thailand has the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of a group of countries.

We are deeply alarmed by the evolving and industrial scale of online scams and its human rights impacts.

Recent findings by IOM and the UN indicate that at least 300,000 people from 80 countries work in scam compounds where many are subjected to confinement, trafficking for forced criminality, physical and sexual violence, torture, and other serious human rights violations.

As the High Commissioner for Human Rights underscored, “Online scams have become a disturbing new form of contemporary slavery and human trafficking³.”

Scam networks are expanding recruitment and operations globally, closely linking forced labour, human trafficking, money laundering, cybercrime and other forms of transnational organised crimes, while increasingly exploiting digital technologies to extend their reach. These networks exploit corruption, gaps in the rule of law, and vulnerabilities across jurisdictions to sustain their operations and enable further expansion across borders.

Addressing the transnational nature of this crisis requires a coordinated global response, firmly rooted in human rights, while applying a victim-centered approach throughout the entire process, including screening, identification, protection, repatriation, and rehabilitation, as well as the principle of non-punishment for unlawful activities that victims were compelled to commit as a direct consequence of being trafficked.

We therefore call for enhanced cooperation among States, international organizations, civil society, financial institutions, and technology companies to promote prevention, prosecute criminal networks, combat corruption, disrupt illicit financial flows, strengthen victim protection, and ensure accountability

Thank you.

(278 words)

³ Extract from the video message by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at the International Conference on the Global Partnership against Online Scams held in Bangkok in December 2025.