



## **NGOs celebrate anniversary of National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, call its implementation, enhancement essential**

**OTTAWA, Ont. (June 6, 2013)**—On the first anniversary of the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, the Action Coalition on Human Trafficking Alberta, the Alliance Against Modern Slavery, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, International Justice Mission Canada, the Salvation Army and World Vision, together recognize the Government of Canada's commitment to addressing the heinous crime of human trafficking and highlight the urgent need of its implementation.

The Action Plan was launched on June 6, 2012, as a comprehensive blueprint guiding 18 different federal departments in their fight against the serious crime of human trafficking. The organizations mentioned, along with Beyond Borders and Not For Sale Canada, in addition to other Canadian NGOs, submitted recommendations for inclusion in the Action Plan. Going forward, the NGOs are encouraging the Government of Canada to further strengthen its anti-trafficking efforts.

### **Comments from NGOs:**

**International Justice Mission Canada's executive director Jamie McIntosh said:** "Trafficking in human beings is a multi-billion dollar illicit industry and a violent global phenomenon. Last year, in laudable moves, Canada introduced the National Action Plan and extraterritorial provisions for human trafficking crimes committed by Canadians overseas. We must now ensure the Plan's robust implementation and the law's enforcement so individuals are held accountable and the vulnerable are protected."

**World Vision's senior director of policy and advocacy Elly Vandenberg said:** "Canada should play an active role in protecting children in developing countries from being trafficked into forced labour. We would also like to see the Government of Canada work with businesses to provide greater transparency on international supply chains. Canadian consumers and investors should be able to know more about what companies are doing to keep their factories overseas free from child exploitation and hazardous working conditions."

**The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada's vice president Don Hutchinson said:** "Continuing focused implementation of the Action Plan is essential to Canadians doing our part to put an end to this travesty."

**The Salvation Army's director of federal government relations Michael Maidment said:** "The introduction of a national action plan was an important step in the fight against this terrible crime. It signals to those engaged in trafficking that Canada will not continue to allow this to happen. Of course, there is still much work to be done to prevent human trafficking. We need to educate Canadians about the problem and ensure that law enforcement officials have the resources needed to pursue those who commit these crimes. Comprehensive services are also required to care for those who have been rescued."

**The Action Coalition on Human Trafficking Alberta's Andrea Burkhart noted** that organizations working to help victims of trafficking in Canada are also calling for increased victim support. "Recovery is a really long road for victims, and while we are encouraged at the framework laid out in the Action Plan, we are hopeful that resources will reach the victims that desperately need them."

**The Alliance Against Modern Slavery's president Karlee Sapoznik said:** "Today people from across our country can celebrate the anniversary of a historical milestone for trafficked and enslaved persons in our local and global communities: the release of Canada's National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking. Yet there

remains a crucial lack of research and data on this crime against humanity. In order to make systemic changes to better protect women, men and children, we need sustained research on the nature of human trafficking within and involving Canada: who victims are, patterns and trends of the practice, the nature and extent of services available to survivors, and the significant challenges that exist for organizations providing services to them.”

Each organization anticipates the release of a detailed annual report by the Government of Canada that tracks the achievements of tasks identified in the National Action Plan and demonstrates how the Government is fulfilling its commitments.

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