

## **WUCWO AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING (HT)**

The World Union of Catholic Women Organisation's was founded in 1910 to promote the dignity of women in all aspects of life. It is a Public Association of Faithful of the Catholic Church, with over 100 Member Organisations spread across all continents; at the United Nations it has ECOSOC Consultative Status with representatives in New York and Geneva as well as at UNESCO in Paris, FAO in Rome and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

WUCWO began working on human trafficking (HT) with several of its Member Organisations, more than 10 years ago which prompted a European regional conference in 2008 organized in cooperation with Caritas and USMI, in Verona (Italy). A call to the European Parliament was launched to unify the anti-trafficking strategies connected with the sexual exploitation of women and children. At national level, each of our European Organisations, has worked on raising awareness of this terrible scourge in their communities and urging their Governments to sign, the Council of Europe's, Convention on Trafficking.

In 2013, Latin America with the participation of North America, called another regional conference focusing on the same challenge: "Raise awareness, prevent and act". The participants, from 17 countries, represented organisations with much experience. The meeting was inter-religious and worked with a strong media presence. A small committee was set up and it was channelled through COATNET when WUCWO became part of it.

In June 2014, our Members in Cameroon organized a seminar for awareness raising and training, with the participation of 52 women from 17 African countries, to end HT, not only on the African Continent but in the world at large. This gave rise to a new network called Pan African Network to End Trafficking in Persons (PANTIP) with a view to incorporating representatives from all African countries.

At the international level WUCWO participated in November 2014 in the Youth Symposium Against Prostitution and Trafficking, organised by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, in the Vatican.

WUCWO has produced didactic material such as brochures, magazines, etc. which can be consulted on the website ([http://www.wucwo.org/youth/stay\\_home\\_brochure](http://www.wucwo.org/youth/stay_home_brochure)) as well as a book explaining a successful experience in prevention in Mexico, entitled: Safe Communities, in Spanish. For WUCWO the main focus in combating HT is prevention and awareness raising in the light of its experience on three continents: Europe, America and Africa.

At present the fight against HT is one of WUCWO's priorities. Hence in 2015 a world survey was carried out through its Member Organisations, on all continents, to gather up-to-date information from about 20 countries. WUCWO has shared with all her organisations the document "**Created in the image of God, treated like slaves**" done by COATNET, CI and the Pontifical Council for Migrants.

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