

Thursday, April 19, 2007



Join other business and government leaders to learn about:

Public-Private Partnerships
to End Human Trafficking and Forced Labor:
New Business Solutions
to a Global Challenge



Peninsula Hotel, Hong Kong

Keynote Speech

By

Dr. Aleya Hammad

End Human Trafficking Now

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me begin by extending a warm welcome to all of you. I am delighted to see so many friends, old and new, joining us in this very important event. Your presence here today is a strong show of encouragement for the fight to end human trafficking, not just in Eastern Asia but worldwide.

Our journey with the business community began in January 2006, when we launched the campaign “End Human Trafficking Now” at a successful roundtable in Athens. The last year saw the development of a firm foundation as we participated in many different events. For example, the annual World Economic Forum both at Davos and the regional event at Sharm El Sheikh, the Human Rights Film Festival in Geneva. We contributed to raising awareness by producing campaign materials such as posters, red cards and brochures at the World Cup in Germany. More recently we saw the production of a Vignette that you will get a chance to see a little later; it will be aired on many television channels, airplanes and conferences on a global scale

These are just to mention a few. Furthermore, we are witnessing positive outcomes from the campaign. We now have over 100 companies who have joined us in our struggle to put an end to modern day slavery.

Today in Hong Kong, we are reaching out to a wider international community, a true global scope. But this implies some challenges and new problems. Widening our community allows us to reach companies and businesses that previously had few occasions to participate in such events, lacking the opportunity to meet with others from different parts of the world. By doing this, we contribute to strengthening our fight against this horrendous crime.

While it is possible to understand the causes of human trafficking and even many of its outcomes, it is clear that any solution implies solving a collective action problem. The continuation of this problem depends on the demand and supply chain for cheap labor, prostitution and other forms of exploitation. We will never put an end to the demands of people, but we *can* put an end to the supply of human beings by raising awareness.

Your participation in this summit is a clear indication of the positive effects of raising awareness, and is an encouragement to continue in our efforts. Although we have in no small way made great progress, much still remains to be done – there are communities still ignorant of human trafficking, women and children still falling prey at the hands of these criminals and traffickers who are still getting away with their actions. We will not put an end to their activities overnight, but we must not give up the fight.

I have to thank all our partners and organizers who have made this event possible. This conference is an outcome of regional collaboration and shows how much can be achieved when we join together in tackling the challenges that lie ahead of us.

Thank you.