



PRESS RELEASE

Final call for nominations

The Business Leader's Award to Fight Human Trafficking

GENEVA, 30 September 2010—The deadline for nominations is now drawing to a close. The call for nominees has been airing on the BBC for over four months.

The Business Leader's Award to Fight Human Trafficking is jointly spearheaded by the End Human Trafficking Now campaign, UN.GIFT, and the UN Global Compact. It is the first-ever award in history to honour a business executive for the energy and commitment shown in tackling human trafficking.

The winner will be announced during the International Forum against Human Trafficking, in Luxor, Egypt, on 12 December 2010, by a Jury that will include H.E. Suzanne Mubarak, H.H. the Aga Khan, UNODC Executive Director 2002 – 2010 Antonio Maria Costa, UN Global Compact Executive Director Georg Kell, and President and CEO of Det Norske Veritas Henrik O. Madsen. Chopard – the Swiss-based luxury watch, jewellery, and accessories company – has offered to design the trophy. Chopard is known for its design of the prestigious Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or, a 24-carat gold and crystal trophy.

"Increasingly, business leaders and the corporate world are being evaluated not strictly by their success in the financial markets, but equally by their social performance and the measure of their corporate social responsibility," said Mrs. Mubarak, Founder and President of SMWIPM.

Trafficking in human beings is the second largest growing criminal activity in the world, just behind arms. It is estimated that 2.5 million people are trafficked across international borders every year, the majority being young women and children for sexual exploitation. According to the ILO, forced labour of trafficked persons raises profits of US\$ 32 billion a year, including US\$ 28 billion from the sexual exploitation of women and children, half of which is in industrialised countries. The victims are always the most vulnerable, children and women living in poverty, mostly in developing countries and in countries in transition, which are brought into this illegal traffic through force, deception and violence. This core problem has been exacerbated by globalisation, including the use of the Internet. Illegal trafficking also brings huge and quick benefits. Traffickers can be 'reimbursed' in three months of their 'investment', while the victims can be sold over and over again, making this crime highly lucrative.

Most anti-trafficking initiatives today have been undertaken by governments and NGOs. Very few programmes have actually engaged the business sector and harnessed their global reach and network of connections. "I came to realize that the private sector was one of the major resources to tap into, if we were to successfully combat this terrible scourge," said Mrs. Mubarak.

With the boom in information on human trafficking in recent years, many businesses are now actively engaged in anti-human trafficking efforts – adopting corporate codes of conduct, developing sectoral agreements on issues such as child labour, and addressing problems within the supply chain.

"We should capitalize on the expertise gained in the business world to create an environment in which fewer people are at risk of being trafficked. This means ensuring that living conditions in communities of origin are improved," said Mr. Costa.

It is hoped that the Business Leader's Award will encourage the business community to take on a leadership role in corporate social responsibility initiatives, and engage a wider audience in preventive measures against human trafficking.

About End Human Trafficking Now

End Human Trafficking Now is the first global anti-trafficking campaign to engage the private sector. Whilst striving to put an end to human trafficking altogether, the campaign emphasizes the role of the business community and puts business companies at the forefront of anti-trafficking efforts. The campaign seeks to integrate the business community into the solution of ending this illicit trade. End Human Trafficking Now was created in 2006.

About UN.GIFT

The Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) is a multi-stakeholder initiative providing global access to expertise, knowledge and innovative partnerships to combat human trafficking. This is done by supporting State and non-state actors with capacity development activities focusing on prevention, protection and prosecution so that they can better respond to the human trafficking challenge. UN.GIFT was launched in March 2007 by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Contact

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To download the Nomination Form | <http://businessleaderaward.org/nominations.html>