



**AMBASSADOR PAUL BERESFORD-HILL**  
**SOVEREIGN ORDER OF MALTA**  
**PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**DEBORAH O'HARA-RUSCKOWSKI**  
**DELEGATE AND SPECIAL ADVISOR ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

His Excellency Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus  
Director - General  
World Health Organization  
WHO Headquarters  
Avenue Appia 20, 1211  
Geneva 27 Switzerland

Dear Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus:

We are writing to request that you approve, adopt, and disseminate the new Human Trafficking Policy & Protocol for Healthcare Providers worldwide. Currently, there is nothing like it that exists. These documents were created based on a 3-year Research Study with ten (10) large healthcare systems, half in the United States and half internationally.

For three years the Sovereign Order of Malta and Global Strategic Operatives have developed a protocol to assist health care providers globally identify and assist victims of human trafficking. Until now there has been no universally recognized and approved TIP response procedure framework to guide health care professionals (HCP) when they encounter victims of human trafficking in the course of medical treatment and assistance. The protocol was developed by Global Strategic Operatives in the United States and has been piloted under careful control conditions in the US, India, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Italy. An on-going study is currently underway in Cyprus.

#### Global Strategic Operatives

Global Strategic Operatives (GSO), a non-profit humanitarian organization, was established following a high-level interprofessional meeting on human trafficking at the United Nations in 2018 sponsored by the Sovereign Order of Malta Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations. The primary purpose of GSO is in educating those who work in healthcare systems, providing guidance in the identification of victims of human trafficking. Numerous research studies report that 88-92% of victims sought medical care while being trafficked, and healthcare providers may be the only professional encounter they may have while under the control of the trafficker.

#### The Problem

There is a tsunami of human trafficking victims in the global healthcare system. Estimates are that nearly 30 million people are trapped in this modern-day slavery, which has affected more than 50 million victims worldwide. According to the International Labour Organization, human trafficking is a \$150 billion-a-year worldwide industry, thus making these crimes against humanity one of the biggest global markets. Specifically, \$99 billion of the \$150 billion is earned from commercial sexual exploitation.

Furthermore, women and girls are 72% of all human trafficking victims with 49% women, 23% girls, 21% men and 7% boys. Currently, there are an estimated 16 million persons worldwide exploited in labor trafficking, with 60% being men/boys and 40% women/girls. The type of victim breakdown varies frequently in different areas of the world. The estimate is that forty million people worldwide are trafficked in over 167 countries. Most experts believe this is a gross underestimation given recent migrations to the US borders, into Asia from Afghanistan and throughout Europe in the aftermath of displacement from the Ukrainian war front. Thus, the problem is only getting worse.

### The Policy

Trafficked persons visit healthcare providers for a complex variety of acute and chronic injuries and diseases as well as mental health complaints, oftentimes making repeated visits, without appropriate screening. The purpose of this policy proposal is to present the World Health Organization and their stakeholders with a health care response to TIPs procedure framework for global adoption. The goal of this proposal is to sustainably empower organizations globally in adapting and modifying, (based on local laws, organizational policies, language, geographic regions, and cultural and ethnic norms,) policies and procedures to guide the trauma-informed, survivor-informed response to trafficked persons presenting for treatment in health care facilities.

The proposed *Protocol for Global Healthcare Providers* will define how to recognize, identify, and implement a trauma-informed, survivor-informed, person-centered, culturally appropriate response to trafficked persons seeking health care. Currently, there is no global, universally recommended or available TIP response procedure framework to guide the HCP's response when a trafficking victim presents for medical care. There is a dire need for a trauma-informed, survivor-informed, evidence-based procedural framework that organizations globally can adapt and modify, based on local cultural and ethnic norms.

We appreciate your serious consideration to adopt and disseminate the attached Human Trafficking Policy & Protocol for Healthcare Providers worldwide immediately. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



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H.E. Paul Beresford-Hill  
Ambassador  
Permanent Observer of Sovereign  
Order of Malta to the UN  
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*Deborah O'Hara-Rusckowski*

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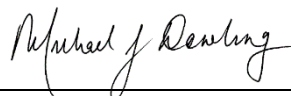
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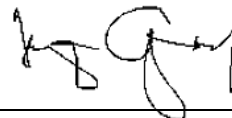
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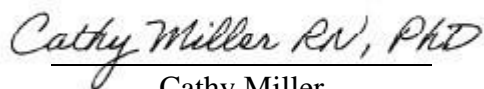
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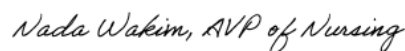
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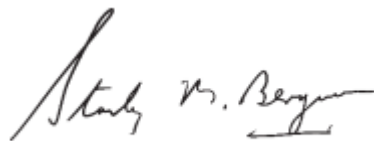
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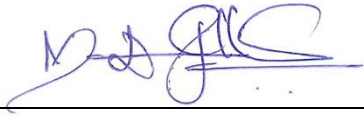
Laurie Cogar,  
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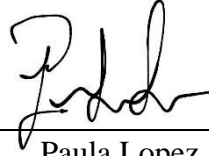
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