

Remarks at a Listening Session on Human Trafficking
February 23, 2017

Thank you, everybody, very nice. Nice to see you. Well, I want to thank Dina and Ivanka and everybody for working so hard to set this up. It's been so important to them, and I want to make it clear today that my administration will focus on ending the absolutely horrific practice of human trafficking. And I am prepared to bring the full force and weight of our Government to the Federal and at the Federal level and the other highest levels, whatever we can do, in order to solve this horrific problem. Getting worse, and it's happening in the United States in addition to the rest of the world, but it's happening in the United States, which is terrible.

Human trafficking is a dire problem, both domestically and internationally, and is one that's made really a challenge. And it's really made possible to a large extent, more of a modern phenomenon, by what's taking place on the Internet, as you probably know. Solving the human trafficking epidemic, which is what it is, is a priority for my administration. We're going to help out a lot. "Solve" is a wonderful word, a beautiful word, but I can tell you, we're going to help a lot.

I'll direct the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, and other Federal agencies that have a role in preventing human trafficking to take a hard look at the resources and personnel that they're currently devoting to this fight. Now, they are devoting a lot, but we're going to be devoting more.

Dedicated men and women across the Federal Government have focused on this for some time, as you know. A lot of you have been dealing with the Federal Government, and it's been much more focused over the last 4 weeks, I can tell you that. I cannot thank each of you enough and the dedicated men and women who run my staff and your staffs. And getting everybody together was terrific. I was so glad I was able to be here.

You start with really a tremendous amount of energy and blood, sweat, and tears. Government can be helpful, but without you, nothing would happen. So again, I want to thank everybody in this room. It's a very, very terrible problem. It's not talked about enough. People don't know enough about it. And we're going to talk about it, and we're going to bring it out into the open, and hopefully, we're going to do a great deal to help prevent some of the horrific—really horrific—crimes that are taking place.

And I can see—I really can say, in this country, people don't realize how bad it is in this country, but in this country and all over the world. So thank you all for being here.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to White House Senior Counselor for Economic Initiatives Dina H. Powell. Also participating in the meeting were Michelle Collins DeLaune, senior vice president, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children; Victor Boutros and John C. Richmond, founding directors, Human Trafficking Institute; Autumn H. VandeHei, member of the U.S. Advisory Council on Child Trafficking, Department of State; Julie Cordua, executive director, Thorn; Brian A. Gallagher, president and chief executive officer, United Way Worldwide; Gary Haugen, chief executive officer, International Justice Mission; Timothy

Head, executive director, Faith and Freedom Coalition; and White House Director of Legislative Affairs Marc Short, Senior Adviser Jared C. Kushner, and Director of Strategic Communications Hope C. Hicks.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Human trafficking, listening session.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Powell, Dina H.; Trump, Ivanka M.

Subjects: Foreign policy, U.S. : Trafficking in persons, efforts to combat; Law enforcement and crime : Trafficking in persons, efforts to combat; White House Office : Assistants to the President :: Economic Initiatives, Senior Counselor for.

DCPD Number: DCPD201700136.