

G20 Leaders Make Historic Commitment to Combat Human Trafficking Following Faith-Based Advocacy

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RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil - In a significant victory for anti-trafficking advocates, the G20 Leaders' Declaration has explicitly committed to “empowering workers and eradicating forced labor, ending modern slavery and human trafficking as well as eliminating all child labor” following sustained advocacy from religious organizations spearheaded by the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) delegation at Brazil's inaugural G20 Social Summit.

This milestone achievement began at the G20 Interfaith Forum Summit in Brasilia in August, where a panel focused on the urgent need to prevent and respond to modern slavery, human trafficking, forced labor and child labor.

At the G20 Social Summit in Rio, the IF20 delegation participated in multiple working groups reviewing and revising proposed recommendations in a final letter from all of G20 Social's civil society representatives to Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Suza. Working in both international and Portuguese-language groups, the IF20 delegates provided both verbal and written submissions and successfully advocated for the inclusion of modern slavery, human trafficking, forced labor and child labor in the document. Later, after being presented to Lula on the final day of the G20 Social Summit, those inclusions made it into recommendation 31 of the G20 Leaders' Declaration at the close of the official G20 Summit.

The progression of this issue - from civil society advocacy to the document presented to President Lula to the final G20 Leaders' Declaration itself - demonstrates the growing influence of religious voices in global policy discussions and advocacy for human rights and justice for the most vulnerable and marginalised in our world.

Through the dedicated efforts of IF20 delegates, including Rodrigo Vitorino Sousa Alves of CEDIRE, anti-trafficking has been stated as a priority of the world leaders who are responsible for over 80 percent of the global economy.

Kevin Hyland, head of the IF20 Human Trafficking Working Group, said this achievement is significant for many reasons:

"This is a real achievement and provides hope that this scourge can be prevented that damages or destroys the lives of almost 50 million children, women and men. It is so encouraging that our work with the G20 has produced a way to develop a pathway to

make sure no one is left behind," Hyland said. "We hope to make progress from here, by establishing a G20 advisory working group on Human Trafficking as we head into the new year and look towards the G20 in South Africa and beyond. We will be advocating for significant funding, resources and political will to reverse the current low levels of prevention, victim identification and prosecutions that exist worldwide as demonstrated in the US Department of State Annual Trafficking Report. "

The G20 Interfaith Forum delegation had proposed four key recommendations during the Social Summit:

1. Including Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking, Forced Labor and Child Labor on the G20 agenda
2. Establishing a G20 working group on Human Trafficking
3. Continuing the G20 Social Summit in future years
4. Protecting rainforests with consideration for indigenous communities

The successful inclusion of anti-trafficking commitments in the Leaders' Declaration provides momentum to establishing a working group on the issue.

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About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum seeks global solutions by collaborating with religious thought leaders and political representatives to help shape the overall G20 agenda. It draws on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting a rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values.

For more information, please visit www.g20interfaith.org