

News story: UK agrees principles for tackling modern slavery in supply chains

The entrapment of people in forced labour is estimated to affect 25 million people worldwide. As part of a new effort to tackle these crimes the UK has developed, alongside the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia, a set of principles for nations to adopt in order to tackle modern slavery in global supply chains. By working together, the UK and its partners can use their \$600 billion of purchasing power as a lever to prevent forced labour in both the public and private sector.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins, added:

Denying people their freedom and fundamental human rights through modern slavery is a global tragedy. We as governments, businesses and citizens must do all we can to stop it.

The UK and our partners are going further, showing leadership and setting out these new principles designed to drive out slavery from the supply chains of the goods and services we all use.

The principles follow the success of the Prime Minister's global call to action launched at the UN General Assembly last year, which now has over 80 endorsements.

In the UK alone it is estimated that modern slavery costs up to £4.3 billion a year. The UK introduced the Modern Slavery Act in 2015, the first of its kind in the world, which helped transform the UK's response to modern slavery on a national and international scale by providing police and law enforcement agencies with the powers they need to bring perpetrators to justice. It was announced in July 2018 that the government has commissioned an independent review of the act to ensure this legislation remains world leading as this crime evolves.

Announced at the UN General Assembly, the UK is encouraging other countries to adopt the 4 key principles.

Governments should take steps to prevent and address human trafficking in government procurement practices

- analyse, develop and implement measures to identify, prevent and reduce the risk of human trafficking in government procurement supply chains
- provide tools and incentives and adopt risk assessment policies and procedures that require their procurement officers and contractors to assess the nature and extent of potential exposure to human trafficking

in their supply chains

- take targeted action, including adopting appropriate due diligence processes, to identify, prevent, mitigate, remedy, and account on how they address human trafficking

Governments should encourage the private sector to prevent and address human trafficking in its supply chains

- work in partnership with business, workers and survivors to set clear expectations for private sector entities on their responsibility to conduct appropriate due diligence in their supply chains to identify, prevent and mitigate human trafficking
- provide tools and incentives to the private sector to encourage meaningful action and public reporting of their efforts, including through programmes policies or legislation

Governments should advance responsible recruitment policies and practices

- advance responsible recruitment practices, including by implementing policies that incentivise and support responsible practice, and by support initiatives such as the 'Employer Pays Principle'
- contribute to the growing knowledge base of promising practices for protecting workers from fraud and exploitation in the recruitment process

Governments should strive for harmonisation

- make reasonable efforts to share information and work with other committed governments to align existing and proposed laws, regulations and policies to combat human trafficking in global supply chains