

Protecting TIP Victims

Under the Palermo Protocol, governments are required to protect the privacy and identity of victims of trafficking in persons, including by making legal proceedings relating to such trafficking confidential.

Governments shall ensure that its domestic legal or administrative system contains measures that provide to victims of trafficking in persons, in appropriate cases:

- (a) Information on relevant court and administrative proceedings;
- (b) Assistance to enable their views and concerns to be presented and considered at appropriate stages of criminal proceedings against offenders, in a manner not prejudicial to the rights of the defence.

In addition, governments shall consider implementing measures to provide for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims of trafficking in persons, including, in appropriate cases, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, other relevant organizations and other elements of civil society, and, in particular, the provision of:

- (a) Appropriate housing;
- (b) Counselling and information, in particular as regards their legal rights, in a language that the victims of trafficking in persons can understand;
- (c) Medical, psychological and material assistance; and
- (d) Employment, educational and training opportunities.

A key feature of protecting trafficked persons is their accurate identification as victims as distinct from being identified as traffickers. This is often accomplished through screening practices.

Other aspects of protection include provision of safety such as witness protection, and opportunities to receive compensation for harm suffered in the trafficking experience. Governments are also encouraged to provide mechanisms for victims of trafficking to remain in the country for varying periods to help in their rehabilitation.

Where the victim is to be returned to their country of origin or other territory, the government must seek to ensure that the victim will be safe and not re-trafficked or harmed by traffickers and their associates.