



**Oral Statement for the 31st Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Clustered Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child
prostitution and child pornography
(Item 3) - 8 March, 2016**

Thank you Mr./Madame President,

The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd and the Sisters of Mercy welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Based on our work and research on human trafficking we affirm the importance of focusing on the demand aspect of trafficking for sexual exploitation as we know that demand fuels trafficking.

An examination of the report on ‘demand’ is consistent with our research with trafficking survivors.ⁱ Their narratives confirm that race, gender discrimination, global inequalities and commodification of the body are core to their exploitation. Survivor advocates also reinforce the complicity of law enforcement and in some cases the collusion of governments and society to their exploitation. They forcibly declare there is an absence of accountability for sexual exploitation of children.

It is systemic oppression which causes cumulative disadvantage over the life course, rendering one vulnerable to trafficking. Perpetrators prey on the most vulnerable.

We thank the Special Rapporteur for highlighting the need to sanction perpetrators and to address the root causes of trafficking. We strongly endorse this direction.

We wish to raise concern that the human rights of victims and survivors are not fully protected across the life course.

Therefore, we urge the Special Rapporteur to;

1. Promote the integration of the Life Course Perspective into a human rights based approach to addressing human trafficking.ⁱⁱ
2. Monitor practices that address the systemic causes of children’s vulnerability to trafficking over the Life Course.

Thank you Mr. President.

ⁱ Reed, A. and M. Latonio, Eds. (2015). *I HAVE A VOICE: Trafficked women –in their own words* Melbourne, Australia, Our Community Pty Ltd.

ⁱⁱ Our organizations consider a Human Rights-Life Course Approach to addressing human trafficking as best practice. This is based on research undertaken by Dr Angela Reed RSM. It concerns the interplay between individual experience and the socio-economic and political environment. This research gives priority to women’s narratives, concluding that cumulative disadvantage over the life course renders people vulnerable to trafficking. We would welcome the opportunity to work further with the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

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