

**End of Mission Statement**

**Introduction**

The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, Tomoya Obokata, visited Costa Rica from the 16th to the 25th of November 2022. He would like to express his gratitude to the Government of Costa Rica for extending its invitation and excellent cooperation, and engaging in open, frank and constructive dialogue throughout his visit.

The main objective was to assess the progress the Government has made in eliminating contemporary forms of slavery as part of its commitment as a Pathfinder Country for Alliance 8.7. In this regard, the Special Rapporteur had opportunities to analyse the nature and extent of labour exploitation in various sectors such as agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and domestic work, as well as commercial sexual exploitation.

In order to obtain first-hand information, the Special Rapporteur met a large number of stakeholders including public and law enforcement officials of the Government, Legislative Assembly and the judiciary. He also met the Ombudsperson (National Human Rights Institution of Costa Rica), civil society organisations, migrant workers, indigenous community, people of African Descent, LGBTIQ+ activists, trade unions, the business community, as well as international organisations and the diplomatic community. In addition to various locations in San Jose, the Special Rapporteur visited Los Chiles.

**Positive Aspects**

To begin with Costa Rica has various legal frameworks applicable to contemporary forms of slavery, which incorporate some of the key international human rights and labour instruments. The Criminal Code has provisions on human trafficking (Article 172) and forced labour (Article 189 bis) with punishments ranging from 6 to 14 years’ imprisonment. Law No. 7899 prohibits commercial exploitation of children, and Article 20 of the Constitution can be relied upon to address slavery. In addition, Articles 56 - 58 of the Constitution oblige the Government to ensure decent working conditions for all, and Law No. 9343 on Labour Reform (2017) has made significant changes in relation to the prosecution and punishment of breaches of labour and social security laws, protection of victims, trade union rights and judicial processes for remedies. If implemented effectively, these legal frameworks can prevent contemporary forms of slavery.

The Special Rapporteur has also been informed of ongoing or planned legislative amendments in the area of labour rights. For instance, the Legislative Assembly at the initiative of the National Coalition against Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons (CONATT) recently approved the modification of the Criminal Code in which the elements of coercion or deception from the trafficking definition are removed for instances where traffickers exploit victims’ vulnerabilities. Bills to address workplace harassment, to promote affirmative action and to strengthen labour inspection are under consideration.

In Costa Rica, there are specialised investigation units on contemporary forms of slavery within the law enforcement authorities, including the immigration police and public prosecution. This is important as complex investigations into these practices require specialist knowledge and experience, which can in turn lead to successful prosecution and punishment. In addition, the Special Rapporteur was informed that the Government is considering a National Action Plan to promote intelligence-led law enforcement, which can be used for contemporary forms of slavery, in order to be able to promote proactive, rather than reactive law enforcement.

The Special Rapporteur also notes that assistance and support to victims of contemporary forms of slavery saw some improvement. Law No. 9095 against Trafficking in Persons and Creation of the National Coalition against Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons (2012) obliges relevant Government Departments to establish a framework for victim protection and assistance. Article 71 of the Criminal Procedure Code in this regard mandates the judiciary, Ministry of Security and other relevant Government departments to provide assistance during criminal proceedings.

During his mission, the Special Rapporteur has been informed that the Government has taken important steps to identity and protect victims of trafficking. It has created the Immediate Response Team in 2009 which is charged with accrediting the victims of contemporary forms of slavery. It consists of relevant law enforcement and government agencies including Immigration Police, Public Prosecution, Ministry of Security, National Child Protection Agency, Ministry of Labour and Social Security Board.

Recognition as victims will allow them to receive a wide variety of protection and assistance measures which include medical/psychological assistance, shelters, educational and vocational training, as well as access to justice and remedies. Provision of these measures is not dependent on victims’ participation in criminal proceedings and there is no time limit in receiving them. Further, victims are able to stay in the country as long as they wish and reintegrate into the Costa Rican society. In terms of funding for protection and assistance, the Government utilises a departure tax by charging everyone departing from Costa Rica USD 1which is put into the National Anti-Trafficking and Smuggling Fund.

In order to enhance coordinated inter-agency responses to contemporary forms of slavery, the Government established CONATT in 2013. Its main purpose is to strengthen all actions aimed at preventing and eradicating these crimes, protecting victims and promoting international criminal justice cooperation. CONATT consists of 22 Government departments including Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior and Public Security, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ministry of Public Education, National Child Welfare Agency, National Institute for Women and the Ombudsperson Office. The Special Rapporteur was informed that international organisations such as the IOM, the UNHCR and the UNICEF, as well as civil society organisations are granted an observer status, enabling them to provide inputs for policy development and implementation.

Costa Rica is a “Pathfinder Country” of Alliance 8.7 and has been demonstrating its commitment to implement Target 8.7 of Sustainable Development Goal 8. Of particular importance are efforts in eliminating child labour and sexual exploitation, and the Special Rapporteur acknowledges that Costa Rica has been making steady progress in this regard. The minimum age for work is set as 15, and the Government regularly updates a list of hazardous jobs which are prohibited for those under the age of 18. The age of compulsory education has been raised to 17, which is higher than other jurisdictions.

In order to effectively monitor the implementation of laws and policies in relation to child labour, the National Steering Committee for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labour and the Protection of Adolescent Workers has been established. It recently approved “Child Labour Vulnerability Index” developed in conjunction with the ILO and the ECLAC. Its purpose is to identify the nature and extent of child labour in various sectors across the country and propose appropriate solutions.

Aside from law enforcement actions, Costa Rica has been implementing a variety of measures to keep children in schools and prevent child labour. One example is a private-public initiative known as Casas de la Alegría (Houses of Joy) which provide a space for education to indigenous and migrant children in the coffee plantations. This is supported by local authorities, the business sector as well as entities including the UNICEF. Since its initiation in 2002, the number of Houses of Joy has increased to 40. The establishment of Civic Centres for Peace, supported by the Inter-American Development Bank, is another good example. These Centres provide space for children to play sports, music and arts, as well as additional services for parents such as dispute resolution. In addition, the “Bridge to Development” Programme has enhanced access to social services by families in marginalised communities, benefitting around 100,000 families in 2021, and cash support has been provided to approximately 248,000 economically disadvantaged students under “Let’s Get Ahead Programme” as of 2021.

These efforts indeed have produced positive results in Costa Rica. In 2011, the recorded instances of child labour amounted to 42,571, but this has been reduced to 6,706 in 2020. A number of interlocutors also highlighted that positive steps are being taken to end child labour. In 2021, the Government has adopted a Roadmap to Make Costa Rica a Country Free of Child Labour and its Worst Forms (2021-2025), which contains detailed actions plans and strategies. This clearly demonstrates its commitment to implement Sustainable Development Goal 8, Target 8.7 which calls for States to end child labour in all its forms by 2025. The ILO, the business sector such as the Unión Costarricense de Cámaras Y Asociaciones Del Sector Empresarial Privado and the civil society organisation Defence of Children International took part in the drafting of the Roadmap in order to promote concerted efforts to tackle child labour.

With regard to commercial sexual exploitation of children, the Government established a dedicated agency, National Commission against Commercial Exploitation of Children and Adolescents. Its aims are to oversee the implementation of laws and polices on the matter, enhance coordination among relevant Government Departments, conduct education and awareness-raising among the general public, and protect victims of commercial sexual exploitation.

The Special Rapporteur has also been informed that, since 2008, tourism companies have signed up to the voluntary Code of Conduct for protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism, which was part of the initiative led by the ECPAT International and the World Tourism Organisation and supported by other entities such as UNICEF. A “Sustainable Tourism Certificate” is issued by the Costa Rican Tourism Institute to those businesses who subscribe to this Code of Conduct. The Costa Rican Chamber of Hotels also requires the implementation of the Code for affiliation to the Chamber.

Aside from child labour, Costa Rica has taken some steps to address forced labour. A good example is the Labour Migratory Traceability System (SITLAM) for temporary migrant workers mainly from Nicaragua and Panama in the coffee and sugar cane plantations which has been implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic in conjunction with the IOM. Under this initiative, migrant workers and their children are granted ID cards which enable them to access vital public services such as health and social security. This has only been applying to a selected number of employers in some coffee plantations, but the Government issued a decree in 2022 with a view to expanding this to other sectors.

The Special Rapporteur had the opportunity to consult the coffee industry to learn more about SITLAM and other labour practices. The Instituto de Café de Costa Rica (ICAFE), the governing body for coffee producers, pointed out that SITLAM promotes transparency and accountability in the sector. ICAFE also issues a separate ID card for coffee producers in order to prevent third parties from intervening and taking advantage of migrant workers. Each producer is encouraged to develop and communicate its due diligence plan though a QR code attached to the ID card to ICAFE, which is widely communicated to buyers and consumers. In addition, 0.4% of the overall profits are channelled to a fund which provides health insurance to workers, including irregular migrant workers, and supports the Casas de la Alegría.

Finally, the Special Rapporteur has been encouraged by the strong presence of civil society organisations and trade unions in Costa Rica. They work tirelessly to enhance the rights of workers and protect victims/survivors of contemporary forms of slavery. Some provide awareness-raising and training for parents/workers to prevent child labour and enhance their literacy and employability, while others provide substantial services to workers victims of contemporary forms of slavery, including food, shelter, education and legal assistance. The Special Rapporteur was also able to visit a shelter in San Jose which provides a safe home for a number of Costa Rican nationals as well as migrant workers from Nicaragua, Venezuela and beyond.

**Challenges**

While the Special Rapporteur acknowledges Costa Rica’ ongoing efforts to prevent contemporary forms of slavery and assist victims, these practices unfortunately continue to exist and a number of challenges remain.

To begin with, there is scope to strengthen legislative frameworks to prevent contemporary forms of slavery. For instance, the Special Rapporteur takes a view that the punishment regime is weak as the maximum for offences such as human trafficking and forced labour is 10 years’ imprisonment. Even with aggravating circumstances, the punishment is 14 years’ imprisonment, and these are substantially lower than other jurisdictions in the world. This may not send a strong message to traffickers, smugglers as well as those engage in contemporary forms of slavery, and Costa Rica should therefore increase various punishments.

The Special Rapporteur also wishes to highlight the need to tighten human rights due diligence among businesses and employers in the plantation and other sectors, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. He met with representatives of the various business sectors and was encouraged to learn that many already have developed and implemented their own human rights due diligence policies. However, a national action plan or policy is needed in order to promote due diligence in all business sectors. This has already been done in an increasing number of States, and some have gone further to implement mandatory due diligence through legislation. Costa Rica should therefore consider and implement human rights due diligence as a matter of priority in order to hold businesses accountable for engaging in contemporary forms of slavery.

Enforcement of the existing legislation also weak as the rate of prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of contemporary forms of slavery is very low. Law enforcement authorities are generally dependent on complaints brought by victims, but the fact remains that many are afraid to report human rights violations due to fear of arrest, detention and deportation (e.g., for irregular migrants). A threat of dismissal by employers also contributes to their reluctance to approach the authorities. Others, particularly migrants, do not have sufficient knowledge about complaints mechanisms. What is needed is more proactive intelligence-led law enforcement which can reduce the need to depend on victims coming forward.

A related issue is labour inspection. A large number of interlocutors stated that labour inspection in Costa Rica is ineffective, bureaucratic and lacks transparency, particularly in the informal economy. In addition to limited human and financial resources, the Special Rapporteur learned that fines imposed are not sufficiently high enough to deter employers. There are also instances of collusion whereby employers are informed of inspection in advance so that they can prepare for inspection and hide malpractice. As an example, workers are given a day off or are sent to remote locations on the day of inspection so that they cannot provide their stories, and this seems to be a common practice. In addition to agriculture, the inspection of other sectors including domestic work, construction, transport, manufacture, the commercial sector and services remains insufficient.

There is also much scope to enhance victim identification and protection. While the role of the Immediate Response Team in identification and accreditation of victims is important, the Special Rapporteur takes a view that it only identifies a small number of victims each year. This casts doubt on the effectiveness of their operation, as the actual number of victims is likely to be much higher. Indeed, the Special Rapporteur learned that civil society organisations in Costa Rica are at the forefront of providing protection and assistance to a large number of victims who are not yet recognised by CONATT, and yet the Government does not seem to support their work by providing financial assistance, for instance. This raises a question as to how the funding collected from departure tax is used.

Similarly, access to justice and remedies for victims is limited as confirmed by a large number of interlocutors, including workers themselves. A lack of resources allocated by the public authorities and of knowledge among victims about their entitlements are among the main reasons for this. Even when they approach bodies like the Ombudsperson and court procedures, it has been reported that their complaints are not taken seriously or take too long to come to a decision. For indigenous peoples, rulings in their favour with regard to their land rights are not enforced due to a lack of political will. Direct discrimination and stigmatisation have also been experienced by women and LGBTIQ+ victims. Workers are also afraid to approach the authorities due to a fear of unemployment or threat/harassment. In the end, many victims have lost their faith in the system. There is therefore an urgent need to strengthen reporting channels and to ensure that all workers, including migrants, have access to them. The relevant authorities should work collaboratively with civil society organisations and trade unions in this regard. In addition, a more proactive intelligence-led law enforcement is desirable.

Due to the factors mentioned, contemporary forms of slavery continue to thrive in some sectors of the country’s economy. While Costa Rica’s steady progress towards elimination should be acknowledged, child labour still exists particularly in the informal sector, including street vending, construction domestic work and agriculture where laws and regulations are not always enforced effectively. The Government’s Child Vulnerability Index also refers to certain vulnerability of migrant, indigenous and minority children to child labour, and the Special Rapporteur agrees with this assessment.

One of the reasons for the persistence of child labour is poverty exacerbated by inequality and discrimination, which particularly affects migrants, indigenous peoples, people of African descent and other vulnerable populations. Some parents may encourage their children to work, but the Special Rapporteur was informed that many children also feel a sense of duty to assist their parents. Early warning/follow-up systems for identifying and protecting children at risk of exploitation exist at the elementary school level, but its impact is limited at the secondary level. Prevention programmes promoted by the Government are also said to be weak, and there are no robust monitoring mechanisms to evaluate their effectiveness.

Another reason is limited access to quality education. In theory, all children are entitled to quality education without discrimination as per Costa Rica’s Constitution, but this not the case in practice because of discrimination affecting certain children. For instance, the quality of education, including qualified teachers as well as access to adequate teaching materials and technology such as the internet, is said to be low in areas populated by people of African descent. There are reports of migrant children being turned away from schools, and the temporary nature of their stay in Costa Rica makes it difficult to access public schools. Education for indigenous children does not always respect their cultural heritage and sensitivity, and they can be excluded or even punished when they speak their own language rather than Spanish. There are additional hurdles such as remote locations of schools and bureaucratic requirements.

These factors naturally discourage children from attending school and increase the risk of child labour sexual exploitation. In this regard, it has been reported that the drop-out rate is high among children of African descent and indigenous children, who end up working in agriculture, the services sector and domestic work. A similar picture emerges for children with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. Some are forced to leave schools due to bullying and direct discrimination in schools and some are also abandoned by their families, thereby becoming homeless. This pushes them into precarious employment to survive, including sex work. Even if these children stay in school, access to higher education is said to be limited and therefore they are more likely to end up with jobs in the informal economy where the risk of exploitation is elevated. The situation became worse during the COVID-19 pandemic as vulnerable children have not been able to access quality education, and it seems that problems continue to exist.

In addition, despite some efforts by the business community to promote human rights due diligence, forced labour occurs in a number of sectors such as agriculture (e.g., coffee and fruit plantations), domestic work, as well as the public sector. As an example, in many plantations, workers’ wages are unit-based. While employers do not generally set a minimum daily target, this in effect encourage them to work long hours, like 12-15 hours. Serious concerns have been expressed about this system by a number of interlocutors, including workers. Low wages and long working hours can be observed in other sectors including construction, services, transport, and security. The Special Rapporteur is also concerned by the ongoing discussions on a bill which aims to restructure the working patterns to 12 hours of work for 4 consecutive days followed by 3 days of rest due to its potential negative impact on mental and physical health, as well as on caring responsibilities.

In relation to other aspects of working conditions, the risk of exposure to toxic chemicals as well as occupational accidents is high in sectors such as agriculture and construction. However, access to healthcare is limited because the premium for health insurance is high and many workers cannot afford it. By law employers have to make contributions to social security but a number of interlocutors pointed out that this does not happen in many cases. In some instances, employers do not pass their contributions to the Social Security Board. Moreover, it has been reported that many workers are not given annual/sick leave and wages are deducted if they are absent, and that access to rest areas and toilets are extremely limited or non-existent in some cases, which has a particularly negative impact on women. These conditions clearly demonstrate indicators of forced labour.

In addition, although trade union rights are guaranteed by the Constitution and other laws, they are extremely limited in practice. It has been reported that some employers discourage or even prevent the formation of trade unions. As an example, the Special Rapporteur has been informed of a failed attempt to establish a workers’ organisation in the coffee plantation sector because of a lack of support in the industry. Some employers also fire workers or move their operations elsewhere when workers try to negotiate their working conditions. The trade union representatives the Special Rapporteur met also pointed out that their work is not recognised or supported by the Government or employers in many cases. Consequently, many workers and trade unions are excluded from decision-making processes. This is exacerbated by the existence of deep-rooted racism, xenophobia and discrimination on grounds of gender identity and sexual orientation, and there does not seem to be a political will to improve the situation.

Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to contemporary forms of slavery in Costa Rica. Some have temporary work permits prior to arrival, but many others do not and work irregularly. The Special Rapporteur met with migrant workers and organisations representing their interests who confirmed that they are paid much less than Costa Rican nationals. This is in contravention of General Law on Migration and Foreigners (No. 8764) 2009 which established the principles of equality, equity and non-discrimination.

According to the information provided by interlocutors, workers with an irregular migration status constitute the majority of the workforce in some plantations, and they are in a worse situation. They are hired by sub-contractors who work with employers and are known to exploit workers by charging high fees, deducting their salaries, or not providing insurance. The Special Rapporteur is concerned that currently there is no legal framework to regulate these sub-contractors. Irregular workers only have access to emergency healthcare as they do not contribute to social security due to their status. They do not report instances of exploitation and abuse as they are very afraid of losing their jobs and being sent back to their countries. This highlights the need to regularise their status so that they can be integrated socially and economically with equal rights guaranteed.

Asylum-seekers and refugees are also vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. According to UNHCR there are currently 236,000 asylum-seekers, most of whom are from Nicaragua. It is important to highlight that asylum-seekers are not entitled to work until 3 months after their asylum application. This raises concerns as they can easily be exploited by employers and criminals in the meantime. Indeed, they often end up with jobs in the informal sector characterised by precariousness, exploitation and abuse. While granting the right to work to asylum-seekers is a positive feature, they face various difficulties in practice, such as opening a bank account, purchasing certain goods and accessing some services. The Government claims that asylum-seekers can access these, but the fact is that this is not always the case as inequality and discrimination exist. A number of interlocutors stated that the refugee status determination often takes a very long time. According to one asylum-seeker the Special Rapporteur met, he was told to wait until after 2030 to receive a decision by the Government and this does not seem to be an isolated case. This means that asylum-seekers are left in a precarious situation for a long time, significantly enhancing the risk of contemporary forms of slavery. Problems can persist even when a person has been recognised as a refugee, as this status is reportedly not recognised by many employers in practice.

The Special Rapporteur is also very concerned about the situation of indigenous peoples in Costa Rica. Their access to ancestral lands has seriously been limited despite the existence of legal frameworks and policies, including the most recent National Action Plan to Recovery of Indigenous Territories 2016-2022. This threatening their very survival and render them vulnerable to labour and sexual exploitation due to limited livelihood options. These lands have been taken, controlled and commercialised by non-indigenous peoples with the acquiescence of the Government, and indigenous peoples have to work for them without sufficient and independent access natural resources in the absence of meaningful consultation and the provision of Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

According to the indigenous representatives the Special Rapporteur consulted, no satisfactory progress has been made to return the occupied lands. Similar to migrant workers, the working conditions for indigenous peoples demonstrate clear indicators of forced labour in various cases, such as low pay, long working hours, explore to health hazards, no access to health and social care, paid and sick leave, and physical/sexual violence in sectors such as agriculture and livestock. The only alternative is to seek employment in the informal sector. Indigenous children’s limited access to quality education exacerbates this problem and perpetuate poverty unemployment. Many also live constant fear of conflicts and violence.

Gender pay gaps exist in a number of sectors. Intersectional forms of discrimination based on race, ethnicity and nationality have also been highlighted by interlocutors. In this regard, domestic work, which is highly gendered, is taken up by many irregular migrants, indigenous peoples or members of other minorities in Costa Rica. Poverty and unemployment affect women more and this also seems to be the case in Costa Rica with an increased risk of exploitation and abuse. Instances of sexual harassment and violence have been reported.

In addition to labour exploitation, the Special Rapporteur is concerned about commercial sexual exploitation of Costa Rican and foreign nationals. While this affects predominantly women and girls, a number of interlocutors pointed out that men, boys, including LGBTIQ+ people are also victimised. Instances of survival sex have been reported where those who lost their jobs or need more income resort to sex work to support themselves and their families economically. Many are under strict control of pimps and criminals, some of whom are highly organised, which greatly enhances exploitation and abuse as the threat and use of violence occur regularly.

It was pointed out by a number of interlocutors that those involved in commercial sexual exploitation, including the tourism industry, hotel operators, transport providers as well as tourists themselves, are not properly prosecuted and punished with appropriate penalties. The preventive impact of the Code of Conduct is weak because of its voluntary nature. The industry was among the hardest hit during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it has been reported that the implementation of the Code is not seen as a priority by many. The use of social media in facilitating commercial sexual exploitation is another concern, and allegations of direct involvement by public and law enforcement officials have been raised by a number of interlocutors. All of these cast some doubts on the current legislative and institutional frameworks to tackle this serious crime.

There is much scope to strengthen the Office of the Ombudsperson which is the National Human Rights Institution in Costa Rica. The Special Rapporteur learned that the Office addresses issues of contemporary forms of slavery by conducting research and awareness-raising, as well as receiving and investigating complaints. However, a large number of interlocutors have expressed their concerns over support provided by this Office. Among others, a lack of resources has been raised as an issue, and this should be rectified. Building trust with various stakeholders is also regarded as an important step which must be taken.

Finally, the Government should formalise the informal work with a view to enhancing the rights of workers. Populations in vulnerable situations such as marginalized women, minorities, indigenous peoples and migrant workers are disproportionately represented in the informal economy where the risk of exploitation and abuse is heightened. There is therefore a need to transition from the informal to the formal sector by properly regulating informal employment through legislation, guaranteeing workers’ rights and entitlements, promoting financial inclusion, and encouraging informal employers and employees to make appropriate tax and social security contributions.

The Special Rapporteur would like to finish by highlighting Costa Rica’s commitment to leave no one behind as part of the SDG Agenda. To achieve this, more needs to be done as too many marginalised groups are currently at risk of contemporary forms of slavery because they remain invisible and do not have adequate protection. The Government therefore should promote an inclusive society, including by recognising the significant economic contribution made by migrant workers, and to extend the same rights and protections to everyone in this beautiful country.

**Recommendations**

* Strengthen the legislative frameworks on contemporary forms of slavery and labour law violations;
* Develop and implement a National Action Plan for human rights due diligence to begin with, and consider making this mandatory through legislation;
* Promote proactive intelligence-led law enforcement in order to enhance investigation and prosecution of contemporary forms of slavery;
* Strengthen awareness-raising among potential victims about the means of reporting contemporary forms of slavery and labour law violations. Work collaboratively with civil society, trade unions and other stakeholders in this regard;
* Enhance labour inspection by allocating sufficient human and financial resources, by granting additional powers such as imposition of on the spot sanctions and by adopt Bill No. 21.707 on the strengthening of the National Directorate of Labor Inspection. Involve trade unions or other third parties to labour inspection in order to increase transparency;
* Strengthen the Immediate Response Team of CONATT to enhance victims identification and protection;
* Allocate funding to civil society organisations which provide direct support to victims/survivors;
* Secure access to justice and remedies to all victims without discrimination of any kind. Allocate sufficient resources in this regard, through CONATT as well as proactive confiscation of criminal proceeds generated from contemporary forms of slavery and related practices;
* Provide sufficient and timely information to victims with regard to access to justice and remedies;
* Effectively implement the Roadmap to Make Costa Rica a Country Free of Child Labour and its Worst Forms (2021-2025);
* Ensure access to quality education for all children without discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity and sexual orientation;
* Provide comprehensive human rights education to promote inclusion and respect for diversity among students, as well as training for teachers to eliminate discrimination of any kind;
* Reinforce an early warning system for identifying children at risk of labour and sexual exploitation in schools;
* Enforce labour and health/safety laws to improve working conditions of all workers in the area of wages, working hours, safe and healthy environment, and sick/annual leave;
* Ensure equal and timely access to health care and social security without discrimination of any kind. Consider and implement non-contributory schemes for particularly vulnerable individuals;
* Ensure that employers contribute to social security by strengthening oversight mechanism, and punish them with proportionate sanction in case of a breach;
* Carefully consider gender dimensions of labour practices and eliminate discrimination and gender-based harassment and violence at work;
* Enforce trade union rights without discrimination and impose appropriate sanctions on employers who do not recognise them;
* Ensure the rights of all migrant workers without discrimination. Ratify and implement the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families 1990;
* Regulate the conduct of sub-contractors who exploit the vulnerability of migrant workers;
* Regularise the immigration status of irregular workers so that they can pay appropriate tax and social security contributions and have access to public services without discrimination;
* Grant the right to work to asylum seekers as soon as they make an asylum claim in order to prevent contemporary forms of slavery and other forms of exploitation;
* Strengthen the refugee status determination procedures by allocating sufficient resources so that recognition decisions are reached as expeditiously as possible. Continue to work collaboratively with relevant stakeholders such as civil society and the UNHCR;
* In order to address structural causes of labour and sexual exploitation return ancestral lands to indigenous peoples as soon as possible and fully involve them in decision-making. Provide appropriate financial compensation and other remedies to rectify injustice suffered by indigenous peoples strengthen measures to prevent invasion of indigenous territories;
* Strengthen actions against commercial sexual exploitation by enforcing the Code of Conduct and prosecuting and punishing those responsible with sufficient sanctions, including tour operators, transport provides, hotel workers and tourists;
* Proactively reach out and protect children at risk of being victimised in commercial sexual exploitation in close cooperation with relevant authorities and caregivers;
* Address the root causes of contemporary forms of slavery such as poverty, inequality and discrimination through legislative and other means. To this end, work collaboratively with the business sector, civil society, trade unions and regional/international organisations;
* Where appropriate, adopt temporary special measures particularly with regard to access to education, decent work and public services in order to address inequality and discrimination;
* Promote transition from the informal to the formal economy in order to protect the rights of all workers and prevent contemporary forms of slavery. Measures such as regulation of informal work through legislation, financial inclusion, and implementation of creative ways to encourage informal employers and workers to pay tax and social security contributions should be considered as appropriate;
* Include all stakeholders, including workers, civil society, trade unions, and victims, in all decision-making processes relating to actions against contemporary forms of slavery;
* Compile and provide comprehensive data on contemporary forms of slavery other than child labour, including the profile of vulnerable populations such as migrant workers, indigenous peoples, minorities and LGBTIQ people.