



Too many migrants continue to be victims of rights violations – top UN official



18 December 2009 – The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights marked International Migrants Day today by drawing attention to the plight of an estimated 200 million migrants worldwide, many of whom are exposed to violations of their basic rights and continue to be treated as commodities.

“Despite the increased efforts of the international community, including civil society, in promoting sound, equitable, humane and lawful conditions of migration, the human rights of migrants often remain out of sight,” Navi Pillay said in a **statement**.

The situation of migrant domestic workers and children, she stressed, is particularly worrisome.

All nations – whether of origin or destination – must implement gender-sensitive laws to ensure that international labour standards’ protections are extended to migrant domestic workers, Ms. Pillay said.

“We also call on governments to curb abuses of recruitment agencies, enhance legal channels for migration and open up judicial mechanisms to victims of abuse, regardless of their immigration status,” she said.

With no international convention that is specific to domestic workers in existence, the official voiced hope that the protection gap can be closed.

The situation of migrant children, especially those who are unaccompanied and at risk of being smuggled or trafficked, is worrisome, she pointed out.

“We urge all States to integrate a child rights-based approach in migration laws, policies and programmes,” Ms. Pillay said, urging nations to provide access to education, health care and birth registration to all children.

"It is important to recall that all migrants are protected by human rights and labour standards," she emphasized, with migrant children being equally entitled to all the rights granted under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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