

CDA Press Statement concerning Trafficking  
October 30, 2019, 10 a.m.

The United States Government is pleased to partner with the Gabonese Government and the Warnath Group to offer this three-day training for over 50 magistrates on dealing with human trafficking.

Human trafficking is a scourge that touches every country on the globe, including the United States. We can only fight this global problem by working together.

In 2018, Gabon fell to the lowest category based on an assessment of the government's efforts to combat human trafficking, and as a result, U.S. government assistance and cooperation is blocked. However, thanks to the Gabonese government's efforts in the past year, Gabon returned to second category and we resumed full cooperation. Here are some of the key actions that Gabon undertook in the past year:

- Gabon signed agreements with Benin and Togo in 2018 to fight child trafficking.
- In the latest Criminal Session, the Court in Libreville tried three suspected traffickers, the first such trials in several years.
- In July, President Ali Bongo Ondimba signed the new Penal Code into law, which makes all forms of trafficking a crime.

We want to continue to work with Gabon. I urge the Gabonese government to intensify efforts against trafficking in three key areas:

- 1) Investigate and prosecute suspected traffickers;
- 2) Identify victims of trafficking and refer them to services;
- 3) Coordinate government actors to ensure everyone does their part.

I am confident that, working together, hand in hand, we will prevail in the ongoing struggle to roll back the tide of human trafficking. Thank you, Mr. Minister of State, for joining us in this endeavor.