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JUSTICE NEWS

**Attorney General Eric Holder Speaks at the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons Meeting**

Washington, D.C. ~ Tuesday, February 1, 2011

Thank you, Secretary Clinton. It's an honor and privilege to join my colleagues to mark the many breakthroughs we've made over the past year – and the momentum we've generated for the year ahead – in our fight to end human trafficking.

This past year – for the third year in a row – the Department of Justice prosecuted more human trafficking cases than ever before. This modern-day slavery is an affront to human dignity, and each and every case we prosecute should send a powerful signal that human trafficking will not be tolerated in the United States.

Our prosecutions have brought long-overdue justice to victims from Nigeria, Togo, Ghana, the Philippines, Thailand and Mexico, as well as from our own country. We have liberated adults, children, men and women exploited for sex and labor in virtually every corner of our nation. We have secured long sentences against individual traffickers. And we have dismantled large, transnational organized criminal enterprises that have exploited victims across the United States, depriving them of freedom and dignity.

But we have more to do – and farther to go. On the Tenth Anniversary of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act last fall, I committed that the Justice Department would be launching a Human Trafficking Enhanced Enforcement Initiative to take our counter-trafficking enforcement efforts to the next level by building on the most effective tool in our anti-trafficking arsenal: partnerships.

Today, I'm pleased to announce the launch of this initiative, which will streamline federal criminal investigations and prosecutions of human trafficking. The Department of Homeland Security and Department of Labor have collaborated closely with the Justice Department in this historic effort, and I want to thank Secretaries Napolitano and Solis for their expertise and shared commitment.

As part of this fight against human trafficking, specialized Anti-Trafficking Coordination Teams, known as ACTeams, will be convened in a number of pilot districts nationwide. Under the leadership of the highest-ranking federal law enforcement officials in the districts, these teams will bring together federal agents and prosecutors across agency lines to combat human trafficking threats, dismantle human trafficking networks and bring traffickers to justice.

The launch of these ACTeams will enable us to leverage the assets and expertise of each federal enforcement agency more effectively than ever before. But we will not rest until this unprecedented collaboration translates into the results that matter most: the liberation of victims and the prosecution of traffickers.

We are all inspired by the courage of survivors who have escaped from bondage and energized by the strength of our partnerships. But, above all, we are firm in our resolve to do more than ever before to end human trafficking. The efforts announced today – and the work being undertaken across the government – are an important step forward toward winning this fight.

Thank you.