



## A message in a scarf and a blue heart

By Francesca Lorusso-Caputi, Visitors Services Section, Outreach Division, Department of Public Information

Every day is a special day at the United Nations' [Guided Tours Unit](#). This week has been a very special one. I had the chance to wear a beautiful scarf by the luxury fashion label Beulah London who has entered into a joint venture with the [UNODC Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking](#).

Every day my tour starts in the General Assembly Hall where I talk about its work and the work of the Organization; I continue by talking about disarmament and then stop at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights exhibit. All 30 articles are in front of the visitors' eyes. I pause for a moment and say: "Today I am wearing a special scarf to bring awareness about United Nations Blue Heart Campaign. Does anybody know it?" Stunned faces look at me as if I asked the most difficult question in the world. "It is about the awareness campaign on human trafficking". I continue by asking: "What is human trafficking?"

"Sexual slaves" one visitor says. "People looking for a better future," says another. Yes, "it is the trade in humans, most commonly for the purpose of sexual slavery, forced labour or for the extraction of organs. Often victims don't realize they are going to be exploited when they are approached by friends or family members with the false promise of employment in a faraway country. Trafficking is a lucrative industry, representing an estimated \$32 billion per year in international trade. The International Labour Organization estimates that there are 2.4 million people throughout the world who are victims of forced labour as a result of human trafficking. Half of the victims are children. More stunned faces. "How many millions?" one visitor asks. Silence. "2.4 million" I say.

And I think to myself: "One more person who might google human trafficking and the blue heart campaign later today".

I continue my talk: "Almost every country in the world is affected by human trafficking, as a country of origin, transit or destination for victims. UNODC (the United Nations office on drugs and crime), is the guardian of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols. Its job is to assist governments in their efforts to implement the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons".

At this point my tour group and I have been standing in front of the Universal Declaration of Human rights for about 15 minutes. I am going to be late again, I tell myself! And I cannot leave just yet as suddenly, women and young girls in the group comment on the scarf by saying how beautiful it is and ask if they can touch it. It is a bright wool and silk blend scarf with blue hearts printed on it and soft to the touch.

The visit continues and ends within one hour. By the end of the tour, I share my [twitter](#) address (@visitunfrancesc) with my visitors and invite them to like and follow the [Visitor Centre's Facebook](#) page. "It was a pleasure to guide you today. Thank you for visiting the United Nations' Headquarters".

And, off I go for my next tour where I hope to continue raising awareness about human trafficking and the Blue Heart Campaign.



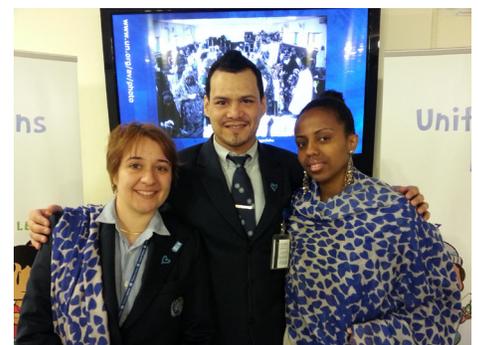
Francesca, a United Nations Tour Guide, gives tours in English, French and Italian. Here she is seen wearing the blue scarf.



Francesca giving a children's tour.



Francesca gives her talk at the Human Rights exhibit on tour route, where all 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are displayed.



Francesca and her colleagues wear the blue scarf and the blue heart pin on tour to raise awareness on the global issue of Human Trafficking.