

## RESEARCH REPORT

Forum: The Human Rights Council

Topic: Finding measures against human trafficking

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Position: President

### **Description of the problem:**

The act of human trafficking violates some of the most fundamental human rights. Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), article 3, it violates the right to life, liberty and security of person. The Declaration and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) proclaim that “no one shall be held in slavery and servitude”. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in its articles 6,7 and 9 recognizes the right to work as well as favorable working conditions. Some of the main causes of human trafficking are the weak rule of law, environments which are plagued by conflict and natural disaster as well as adherence to traditional law.

Weak law enforcement is an incentive to be engaged in human trafficking, since the probability to be caught is very low. In addition, due to the high profitability bearing from this activity, traffickers are able to bribe the local authorities.

Groups formerly active in specific routes or regions have expanded the geographical scope of their activities to explore new markets. Some



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have merged or formed cooperative relationships, expanding their geographical reach and range of criminal activities making the crime more globalized than ever.

Government policies are often engaged to further victimizing the victims. Once the trials are over, they are sent to their home countries without further support and assistance for their re-integration to society making them more vulnerable. On the other

hand, in areas where human trafficking is rife, local authorities lack policies with the potential of reducing human trafficking.

Countries like the United Kingdom, which has low trafficking rates, has been proved to implement successful anti-

trafficking laws. On the other hand, countries like Moldova, which have very high rates of human trafficking have implemented similar policies but have failed to implement them due to high corruption and low budget allocations. Most government's traditional policies give priority to detention, prosecution and expulsion of trafficked persons as they were engaged in prostitution and/ or begging and have entered the country in an illegal manner.

Backward societies actually encourage women and child trafficking as can be found in their caste and tribal systems. Such violations take forms in forced marriages, sale to labour and sex slavery. In addition, child and forced marriages are still tolerated in the context of informal or "traditional" legal systems in many countries.

Areas where natural disaster and conflict are eminent are where slavery can be most rife. It is where the government is most focused on fighting an internal or external enemy or recovering from a disaster. Human rights violations can occur in these circumstances only if conflict and natural disaster is accompanied with a weak rule of government.



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Economic systems such the United States and Canada, prey on economic migrants due to high demand for cheap labor attracting workers mainly from low economically developed countries. Developed countries like the United States, though not a destination for human trafficking themselves; are a harbor for other transatlantic and transpacific destinations.

### **Background information:**

#### **Facts and Statistics:**

According to the Global Slavery Index, over 29.8 million people are currently victims of human slavery. 80% of victims are women, while 50% are minors (below the age of 18).

The majority of victims' age ranges from 18 to 24.

After drugs trafficking, human trafficking is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest source of illegal income worldwide.

The US Department of State claims that from 600000 to 820000 men, women and children are being trafficked across international borders every year.

161 countries have been reported by being either the source or the destination place.

In 2006, there have been 6000 prosecutions and 3160 convictions. Meaning for every 800 victims, one person was convicted.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), 9.2 million people worldwide are victims of forced labor.

### **Countries involved:**

The top five countries engaged in modern slavery according to the global slavery index are:

1. Mauritania
2. Haiti
3. Pakistan
4. India
5. Nepal

At least 20% of the Mauritanian population is enslaved. The government has formally prohibited slavery since 1961, which proves the ineffectiveness of government authority.

In Haiti, one in 10 children are enslaved since the 2010 earthquake and the increased vulnerability in displacement camps and the inability of the local population to escape poverty.

Pakistan hosts approximately 4 million slaves, holding one of the highest rates in the world. Countless poor farmers have been reported by the Walk Free foundation working for wealthy landowners, who persuaded them to borrow money for medical expenses and dowries.

India mostly struggles with regional inequality, as women and young girls are kidnapped from remote villages and taken to Delhi and sold to the sex or labor trade.

Russia, although not in the list, has ranked terribly in the global slavery index. Researchers revealed that it hosts 50000 children in involuntary prosecution as well as 1 million people are exposed to exploitive working conditions for instance, in non-payment of services. A good example of this is the preparation for the Sochi Winter Olympics.

Moreover, China also harbors trafficked victims, most of them women, who are abducted from the rural areas and taken to the cities and forced to enter the sex industry or manufacturing in many times, of which multinational companies take advantage of.



### **What has the UN done so far?**

The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UNGIFT) has been launched in March 2007. It urges state and non-state actors to reduce the vulnerability of trafficking by ensuring adequate protection and support in a legal, psychological and physical manner. It endorses the efficient and transparent prosecution of traffickers, as well as respecting the fundamental human rights of all persons involved.



The Secretary-General has founded the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons especially women and children to provide for all the rescued victims' needs in countries all over the world.

Another endeavor to mitigate the problem of human trafficking is the prominent "Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons" which has been adopted and ratified by 154 countries. This protocol has been in force since 2003 and is currently overseen by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

It attempts to set official legislation to prevent, investigate and prosecute offenses to human trafficking.

The victims shall be given all forms of privacy, secrecy of identity and be allowed to present their views and concerns in court. It is the only protocol

addressing human trafficking as a crime and therefore assists in the review and the revision of domestic legislation concerning assistance and protection of victims, as well as training justice practitioners.

The physical, social and psychological needs of victims shall also be covered. It promotes cooperation between states' in order to meet their objectives. The Trafficking Protocol advances international law by providing, for the first time, a working definition of trafficking in persons and requires ratifying States to criminalize such practices.

Furthermore, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, article 35, states that "States Parties shall take all appropriate, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of and traffic of children.

### **Key terms:**

The definition on trafficking consists of three core elements:

1) The action of trafficking which means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons.

2) The means of trafficking which includes threat of or use of force, deception, coercion, abuse of power or position of vulnerability.

3) The purpose of trafficking which is always exploitation. In the words

of the Trafficking Protocol, article 3 "exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.



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### **Relevant resolutions:**

UN Human Rights Council 11/3 adopted without a vote

UN Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish in 2000

United Nations Global Plan against Trafficking in persons draft resolution  
A/64/L.64

### **Helpful Links:**

<http://www.globallslaveryindex.org/findings/?gclid=CJ2Qh9a3gL8CFa2WtAodanEASQ#overview>

[www.stophetraffik.org](http://www.stophetraffik.org)

[www.ungift.org](http://www.ungift.org)

<http://www.theguardian.com/law/human-trafficking>

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Traffickingen.pdf>

<http://www.kyprisnews.com/2012/12/10/slavery-of-the-21st-century/>

### **Sources:**

<http://www.tinyhandsinternational.org/human-trafficking>

[http://www.stopvaw.org/trafficking\\_violates\\_women\\_s\\_human\\_rights](http://www.stopvaw.org/trafficking_violates_women_s_human_rights)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_Global\\_Initiative\\_to\\_Fight\\_Human\\_Trafficking](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Global_Initiative_to_Fight_Human_Trafficking)

<http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/538-sex-trafficking-is-a-grave-violation-of-human-rights-and-a-form-of-violence-against-women-and-children.html>

[www.globallslaveryindex.org](http://www.globallslaveryindex.org)

<http://www.policymic.com/articles/82347/the-world-s-worst-countries-for-modern-day-slavery>



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<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/06/a-fascinating-map-of-the-worst-countries-for-modern-slavery/277037/>