

BACKGROUND GUIDE



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Agenda: Deliberation upon Upholding the Rights of Marginalised and Vulnerable Populations impacted by slavery and trafficking.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the UN Human Rights Council! I hope you enjoy your time committee, indulge in intellectual discussions, augment your understanding of this prominent issue of global significance, and leave the committee as international-minded global citizens.

We are Raoul D'Cunha and Dhruvi Agarwal and we will be serving as members of the executive board for the UN Human Rights Council at NVMUN. As your chairs, we are extremely excited to see the unique arguments, thoughtful debate, and discussion you will have to offer! We hope to make your experience at NVMUN one of your most memorable conferences.

Our committee will be addressing the important issue of violation of Human Rights regarding the Marginalised and Vulnerable Populations impacted by slavery and trafficking, a critical issue that demands our immediate attention. The continued human rights violation through unilateral coercive measures is unacceptable and demands action. The UN has a crucial role in addressing this issue, and I am confident that our committee will contribute to the global effort to end such abuses. Every nation must uphold human rights and ensure respect and dignity for all individuals. This responsibility is amplified during times of emergencies and member states need to take up an active role in preventing such violations. In our discussions, we must deal with this issue with sensitivity and respect. We must work together to develop meaningful solutions that take into account the unique experiences of these groups and provide them with the protection they need and deserve. During the conference, we expect delegates to work collaboratively to come up with realistic solutions that are effective in achieving this objective. Moreover, we could not stress the importance of collaboration and cooperation in the policy-making process at the UN enough. These values form the bedrock of the UN system and a guiding principle of a Model UN conference.

Furthermore, please have fun! A Model UN conference differs from other forms of public discourse or intellectual activities. This is an opportunity to learn and forge relationships that you shall cherish for a long time. Please use this opportunity because you are fortunate enough to have such platforms to ameliorate your skills and augment your network. Overall, this issue holds immense endowment for policy action at the global level and is something we found

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particularly cognizable. We expect all of you to learn and grow intellectually at the conference and make new friends! We couldn't be more excited to meet all of you!

Kindest regards,

Raoul D'Cunha

Chairperson, UNHRC

Dhruvi Agarwal

Vice Chairperson, UNHRC



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ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Human Rights Council is the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by its States parties.

The Council's work promotes the enjoyment of civil and political rights, resulting in numerous changes of law, policy and practice. As such, it has improved the lives of individuals in all parts of the world. It continues to strive to ensure all the civil and political rights guaranteed by the Covenant can be enjoyed in full and without discrimination, by all people.

WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL?

No country's record of protecting and promoting civil and political rights is perfect and free from criticism. As a result, the Council's task is to encourage each State party:

1. To maintain in place those laws, policies and practices that enhance the enjoyment of these rights;
2. To withdraw or suitably amend those measures that are destructive or corrosive of Covenant rights;
3. To take appropriate positive action when a State party has failed to act to promote and protect these rights; and
4. To consider appropriately the effects in terms of the Covenant of new laws, policies and practices that a State party proposes to introduce in order to ensure that it does not regress in giving practical effect to Covenant rights.

One of the great strengths of the Council is the moral authority it derives from the fact that its membership represents all parts of the world. Instead of representing a single geographical or national perspective, the Council speaks with a global voice.

The Council's work has a real effect in promoting the enjoyment of civil and political rights in many countries, even though the cause and effect relationship is at times difficult to identify. There are numerous instances of an individual complaint leading to positive results for the individual concerned, be it in the form of a payment of compensation, a commutation of a death sentence, a retrial, an investigation into particular events, or a number of other remedies, in the State party concerned.

Over the years, the Council's work has resulted in many changes of law, policy and practice, both at the general national level and in the context of individual cases. In a direct sense, therefore, the Council's discharge of the monitoring functions entrusted to it under the Covenant has improved the lives of individuals in countries in all parts of the world. It is in this spirit that the Council will continue to make its work relevant and applicable to all States parties, and to strive for the enjoyment of all civil and political rights guaranteed by the Covenant, in full and without discrimination, by all people.



KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Human Rights - Inalienable entitlements that are inherent to all human beings, irrespective of status, nationality, or circumstance. Codified through instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), these rights are applicable to migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees alike and include the right to life, non-discrimination, liberty and security of person, access to basic healthcare, and protection from torture or degrading Treatment.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) - A branch of international law that regulates the conduct of armed conflict and seeks to limit its effects. IHL protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare. The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols are its primary legal sources.

International human rights law (IHRL) - is a body of international law designed to promote human rights on social, regional, and domestic levels. As a form of international law, international human rights law is primarily made up of treaties, agreements between sovereign states intended to have binding legal effect between the parties that have agreed to them; and customary international law. Other international human rights instruments, while not legally binding, contribute to the implementation, understanding and development of international human rights law and have been recognized as a source of political obligation.

Please note – International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) are distinct yet complementary frameworks. While IHRL applies at all times (in peace and conflict), IHL is specifically applicable in situations of armed conflict. Delegates must be careful not to conflate the two.

ABOUT THE AGENDA

The agenda talks regarding the struggles that the marginalised and the vulnerable population faced when it comes to slavery and human trafficking, which is over 11,000 years old and still prevails in today's modern society.

- **What is slavery?**

Slavery, a condition in which one human being was owned by another. A slave was considered by law as property, or chattel, and was deprived of most of the rights ordinarily held by free persons.

- **The history of slavery**

The slave was a species of property; thus, he belonged to someone else. In some societies slaves were considered movable property, in others immovable property, like real estate. They were objects of the law, not its subjects. Thus, like an ox or an ax, the slave was not ordinarily held responsible for what he did. He was not personally liable for torts or contracts. The slave usually had few rights and always fewer than his owner, but there were not many societies in which he had absolutely none. As there are limits in most societies on the extent to which animals may be abused, so there were limits in most societies on how much a slave could be abused. The slave was removed from lines of natal descent. Legally, and often socially, he had no kin. No relatives could stand up for his rights or get vengeance for him. As an “outsider,” “marginal individual,” or “socially dead person” in the society where he was enslaved, his rights to participate in political decision making and other social activities were fewer than those enjoyed by his owner. The product of a slave's labor could be claimed by someone else, who also frequently had the right to control his physical reproduction.

TIMELINE OF SLAVERY

Slavery's Roots: War and Economic Domination 6800 B.C to 1641

- 6800 B.C. The world's first city-state emerges in Mesopotamia. Land ownership and the early stages of technology bring war—in which enemies are captured and forced to work: slavery.
- 2575 B.C. Temple art celebrates the capture of slaves in battle. Egyptians capture slaves by sending special expeditions up the Nile River.
- 550 B.C. The city-state of Athens uses as many as 30,000 slaves in its silver mines.
- 120 A.D. Roman military campaigns capture slaves by the thousands. Some estimate the population of Rome is more than half slave.
- 500 Anglo-Saxons enslave the native Britons after invading England.
- 1000 Slavery is a normal practice in England's rural, agricultural economy, as destitute workers place themselves and their families in a form of debt bondage to landowners.
- 1380 In the aftermath of the Black Plague, Europe's slave trade thrives in response to a labor shortage. Slaves pour in from all over the continent, the Middle East, and North Africa.
- 1444 Portuguese traders bring the first large cargo of slaves from West Africa to Europe by sea—establishing the Atlantic slave trade.
- 1526 Spanish explorers bring the first African slaves to settlements in what would become the United States. These first African-Americans stage the first known slave revolt in the Americas.
- 1550 Slaves are depicted as objects of conspicuous consumption in much Renaissance art.
- 1641 Massachusetts became the first British colony to legalize slavery.

Abolition Spreads Worldwide 1909 to 1949

- 1909 The Congo Reform Association, founded in Britain, ends forced labor in the Congo Free State, today the Democratic Republic of the Congo. After years of anti-slavery activism, the association's Red Rubber Campaign stops the brutal system of Belgium's King Leopold II, whose officials forced local people to produce rubber for sale in Europe and terrorized those who refused, cutting off their hands and burning down their houses.

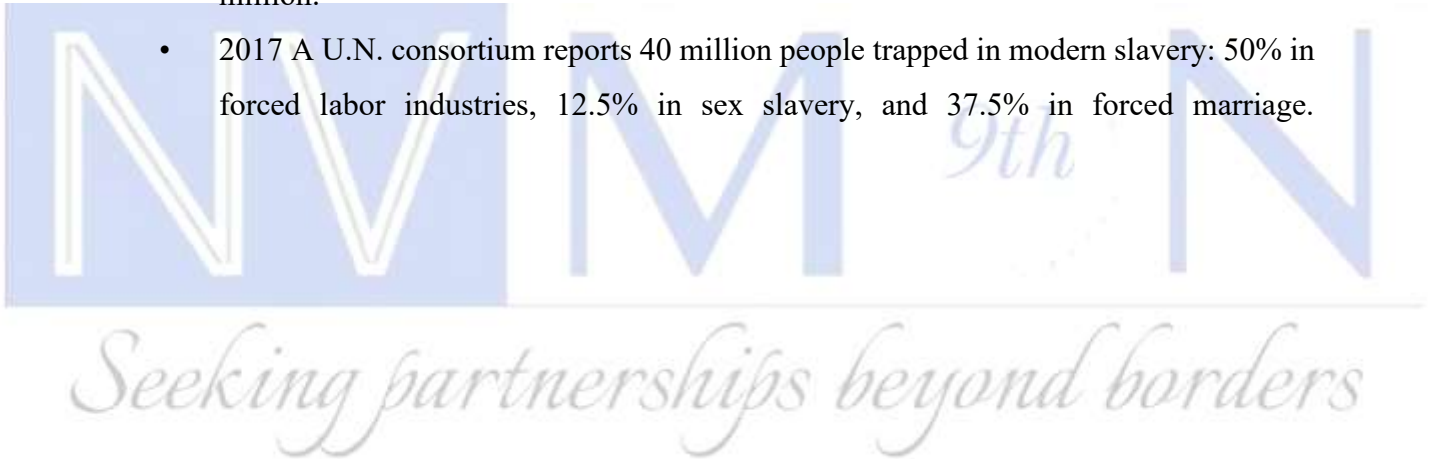
- 1910 The International Convention for the Suppression of the White Slave Trade, signed in Paris, is the first of its kind, obligating parties to punish anyone who recruits a woman or girl under age into prostitution, even if she consents.
- 1913 After a public outcry galvanized by media reports and subsequent peoples' petition, the British Parliament shuts down the Peruvian Amazon Company, a British entity that was torturing and exploiting indigenous Indians in Peru.
- 1915 The colonial government of Malaya officially abolishes slavery.
- 1918 The British governor of Hong Kong estimates that the majority of households that could afford it keep a young child as a household slave.
- 1919 The International Labor Organization (ILO) is founded to establish a code of global labor standards. Headquartered in Geneva, the ILO unites government, labor, and management to make recommendations concerning pay, working conditions, trade union rights, safety, woman and child labor, and social security.
- 1923 The British colonial government in Hong Kong bans the selling of little girls as domestic slaves.
- 1926 The League of Nations approves the Slavery Convention, which defines slavery as "status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised." More than 30 governments sign the document, which charged all member nations to work to suppress all forms of slavery.
- 1926 Burma abolishes legal slavery.
- 1927 Slavery was legally abolished in Sierra Leone, a country founded as a colony by the British in the 18th century to serve as a homeland for freed slaves.
- 1930 The U.S. Tariff Act prohibits the importation of products made with "forced or indentured labor." (In 1997, the Sanders Amendment clarified that this applies to products made with "forced or indentured child labor.")
- 1936 The King of Saudi Arabia issues a decree that ends the importation of new slaves, regulates the conditions of existing slaves, and provides for manumission—the act of slave owners freeing their slaves—under some conditions.
- 1938 The Japanese military establishes "comfort stations"—actually brothels—for Japanese troops. Thousands of Korean and Chinese women are forced into sex slavery during World War II as military "comfort women."
- 1939-1945 The German Nazi government uses widespread slave labor in farming and industry. Up to nine million people are forced to work to absolute exhaustion—then they are sent to concentration camps.

- 1941 The Adoption of Children Ordinance Law in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, requires the registration of all children who are adopted and regular inspections to prevent adopted children from working as slaves.
- 1948 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, created by the United Nations, provides: “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.”
- 1949 The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others prohibits any person from procuring, enticing, or leading away another person for the purposes of prostitution, even with the other person’s consent. This forms the legal basis for international protections against traffic in people still used today.

Abolition in the 21st Century 2000 to Present in various countries

- 2000 Free the Slaves forms as an independent organization. Nepal bans all forms of debt bondage. The U.S. Congress passes the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, increasing penalties for traffickers and supporting victims. The U.N. adopts the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, establishing a global legally binding definition of trafficking.
- 2001 The documentary Slavery: A Global Investigation is released, exposing slavery and forced child labor in the cocoa industry.
- 2002 The Economic Community of Western African States agrees on an action plan against slavery and trafficking. The International Cocoa Initiative is created to address slavery across the chocolate supply chain.
- 2004 Brazil launches the National Pact for the Eradication of Slave Labor, involving civil organizations and businesses to eliminate forced labor within supply chains. The U.N. appoints a Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking.
- 2005 The U.N. International Labor Organization’s Global Report estimates 12.3 million slaves worldwide.
- 2007 Kevin Bales publishes Ending Slavery, outlining a \$10.8 billion, 25-year plan to eradicate modern slavery globally, highlighted by President Bill Clinton.
- 2008 The Special Court for Sierra Leone convicts forced marriage as a crime against humanity. The International Labor Organization estimates human trafficking profits at \$32 billion.

- 2010 Free the Slaves publishes Slavery, featuring humanitarian photographer Lisa Kristine's images of slaves and survivors.
- 2011 California enacts the Transparency in Supply Chains Act, requiring firms to disclose anti-slavery efforts publicly.
- 2012 The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission passes the Conflict Minerals Rule, mandating companies to disclose use of minerals linked to armed conflict.
- 2013 The first Walk Free Global Slavery Index estimates 29.8 million people enslaved worldwide.
- 2014 The Walk Free Index updates the estimate to 35.8 million enslaved individuals.
- 2015 Free the Slaves announces having liberated over 10,000 people. The U.N. adopts Sustainable Development Goals, including targets to end modern slavery by 2025.
- 2016 The Walk Free Index increases estimated enslaved people globally to 45.8 million.
- 2017 A U.N. consortium reports 40 million people trapped in modern slavery: 50% in forced labor industries, 12.5% in sex slavery, and 37.5% in forced marriage.



THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

Acknowledge the past. Repair the present. Build a future of dignity and justice.

The transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans, which operated between the fifteenth and late nineteenth centuries, involved the horrific trafficking of millions of women, men and children, mostly from West Africa to the Americas. This forced displacement enriched imperial and other powers. It also gave rise to false narratives of white supremacy and racial inferiority, which were used to justify this shameful practice and which continue to plague our societies today. Because the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans had a direct effect on our modern conceptions of race, an understanding of this period is necessary to fight its legacies, including racism and prejudice. The International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is, therefore, not just about remembering the past. It is about taking action today to dismantle the structures that continue to hold back people of African descent.

The transatlantic slave trade was a significant and tragic aspect of global history, involving the forced transportation of an estimated 10 to 12 million enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to the Americas from the 16th to the 19th centuries. This trade was part of a larger triangular trade system, which included the exchange of goods such as arms, textiles, and wine from Europe to Africa, enslaved people from Africa to the Americas, and products like sugar and coffee from the Americas back to Europe.

Origins of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

The origins of the transatlantic slave trade can be traced back to the late 15th century. By the 1480s, Portuguese ships were already transporting Africans to work as enslaved laborers on sugar plantations in the Cape Verde and Madeira islands. The Spanish began taking enslaved Africans to the Caribbean after 1502, but for the next century and a half, Portuguese merchants dominated the trade, primarily operating from the Congo-Angola region along the west coast of Africa.

In the 17th century, the demand for enslaved labor surged due to the growth of sugar plantations in the Caribbean and tobacco plantations in North America. The Dutch emerged as significant traders of enslaved people during parts of the 1600s, and by the 18th century, English and French merchants controlled about half of the transatlantic slave trade, sourcing a large

percentage of their human cargo from West Africa, particularly between the Sénégal and Niger rivers.

A pivotal moment occurred in 1713 when an agreement between Spain and Britain granted the British a monopoly on the trade of enslaved people to Spanish colonies. Under the Asiento de negros, Britain was entitled to supply these colonies with 4,800 enslaved Africans annually for 30 years, with the South Sea Company managing this supply, in which British Queen Anne held a significant stake.

Economic Impact on Africa

The transatlantic slave trade had profound economic effects on western Africa. Coastal states that engaged in the trade became wealthy and powerful, while inland savanna states were destabilised as their populations were captured and sold into slavery. The trade created economic incentives for warlords and tribes to engage in the capture of enslaved individuals, fostering an atmosphere of lawlessness and violence. This led to depopulation and a pervasive fear of captivity, making agricultural and economic development nearly impossible in many regions.

A significant portion of those captured were women of childbearing age and young men, who would typically be starting families. The European enslavers often left behind the elderly, disabled, and other dependent individuals, who were least able to contribute to the economic health of their societies.

Capture and Transportation

Historians have debated the roles of European and African agents in the capture of enslaved individuals. Initially, the Portuguese purchased Africans who had been enslaved during tribal wars. However, as demand grew, they began to venture into the interior of Africa to forcibly capture individuals. Other European traders generally remained on the coast, purchasing captives from Africans who had brought them from the interior.

Once captured, enslaved Africans were marched to the coast, a journey that could span up to 300 miles (485 km). Captives were often chained together at the ankles, and columns of individuals were tied together by ropes around their necks. It is estimated that 10 to 15 percent of captives died during this journey to the coast.

The Middle Passage

The Middle Passage, the journey across the Atlantic, was notorious for its brutality and overcrowded, unsanitary conditions. Enslaved Africans were packed tightly into ships, often chained together, with low ceilings that prevented them from sitting upright. The heat was unbearable, and oxygen levels were so low that candles could not burn. Due to fears of insurrection, captives were allowed on deck for only a few hours each day. Historians estimate that between 15 and 25 percent of enslaved Africans died during the voyage, with death rates directly proportional to the length of the journey.

The autobiographical account of West African Olaudah Equiano, published in 1789, is well-known for its graphic descriptions of the suffering endured during these transatlantic voyages. Atrocities and sexual abuse were widespread, although the monetary value of enslaved individuals may have mitigated some of the mistreatment. Ship captains were incentivized to keep their human cargo alive, as they were only paid for enslaved persons delivered alive.

In a notorious incident aboard the slave ship Zong in 1781, Captain Luke Collingwood ordered the drowning of more than 130 Africans when both captives and crew members were dying from disease, hoping to claim insurance on the lost lives. Occasionally, enslaved individuals successfully revolted against their captors, with the most famous incident occurring in 1839 when Joseph Cinqué led a mutiny aboard the Amistad, resulting in the deaths of the captain and two crew members. The U.S. Supreme Court eventually ordered the return of the Africans to their homeland.

Banning the Slave Trade

During the American Revolution (1775–83), there was considerable support in the Northern American colonies for prohibiting the importation of more enslaved individuals. However, after the Revolution, Southern states insisted on delaying action, and it was not until 1808 that Congress made the importation of enslaved people illegal. Even then, Caribbean smugglers frequently violated the law until it was enforced by the Northern blockade during the American Civil War in 1861.

After Great Britain outlawed slavery throughout its empire in 1833, the British navy actively opposed the transatlantic slave trade, using its ships to disrupt slave-trading operations. Brazil outlawed the trade in 1850, but smuggling continued until the country finally enacted emancipation in 1888.

Contemporary Discussions

The legacy of the transatlantic slave trade continues to influence contemporary discussions about reparations for the descendants of enslaved individuals and the importance of educating future generations about this dark chapter in history. Institutions like the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana focus on teaching the history of slavery, ensuring that the stories of those who suffered are not forgotten.

In summary, the transatlantic slave trade was a complex and devastating system that had lasting impacts on both Africa and the Americas. Its legacy continues to shape discussions about race, inequality, and justice in modern society.



LAWS REGARDING SLAVERY

Purpose of the mandate

Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that ‘No one shall be held in slavery or servitude: slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms’. Slavery was the first human rights issue to arouse wide international concern. Yet it continues today and slavery-like practices also remain a grave and persistent problem.

Contemporary forms of slavery often involve hidden populations, some of whom perform illicit work. Slavery often occurs in isolated areas and access can be challenged or compromised when workers are involved in illegal activities, when they are geographically isolated, or when they work in violent or politically unstable countries or regions. The majority of those who suffer are the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalised social groups in society. Fear, ignorance of one’s rights and the need to survive do not encourage them to speak out.

About the mandate

The mandate on contemporary forms of slavery includes but is not limited to issues such as: traditional slavery, forced labour, debt bondage, serfdom, children working in slavery or slavery-like conditions, domestic servitude, sexual slavery, and servile forms of marriage. As a legally permitted labour system, traditional slavery has been abolished everywhere, but it has not been completely eradicated. It can persist as a state of mind—among victims and their descendants and among the inheritors of those who practised it—long after it has formally ended. In order to effectively eradicate slavery in all its forms, the root causes of slavery such as poverty, social exclusion and all forms of discrimination must be addressed. In addition, we need to promote and protect the rights of all, especially the most vulnerable in our society. Where human rights violations have already been committed, we are called upon to help restore the dignity of victims.

- **MODERN SLAVERY**

The International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Walk Free estimate that in 2021, there were 50 million people living in conditions of modern slavery, including 28 million being subjected to forced or compulsory labour. The Asia-Pacific region has the highest prevalence of forced labour of any region in the world, with four out of every 1000 people estimated to be subjected to forced labour.

Modern slavery in its many forms — forced labour, debt bondage and the worst forms of child labour, among others — continues to affect millions around the world. Whilst global supply chains generate financial growth, employment, skill development and technology transfer, the presence of pervasive human rights violations, such as modern slavery, significantly hinders Sustainable Development.

Modern slavery is a global problem. Despite increasing awareness about modern slavery, the number of those trapped in modern slavery is increasing.

Modern slavery is a relationship based on exploitation. It is defined by a range of practices that include: trafficking in persons; slavery; servitude; forced marriage; forced labour; forced marriage, debt bondage; deceptive recruiting for labour or services; and the worst forms of child labour and is visible in many global supply chains. Each of these terms is defined in treaties and documents of the United Nations and the International Labour Organization.

Regular revelations about modern slavery show that it can reach into every aspect of a company's operations and supply chains, as well as into consumers' lives through our daily consumption. Modern slavery is found in a range of sectors including (but not limited to) domestic work, manufacturing, construction, mining, agriculture and fishing. It poses uncomfortable truths for businesses and individuals.

Modern slavery occurs in every region of the world in both developing and developed countries and affects women disproportionately (accounting for 71% of the estimated 40 million victims).

Modern slavery is best understood as existing on a continuum of exploitation. Such an outlook recognises that people can be exposed to working conditions that gradually worsen, sometimes leading to modern slavery.

Forced labour is a form of modern slavery often considered most relevant to workplace exploitation and is a feature of many global supply chains. Forced labour refers to work that people must perform against their will under the threat of punishment. The International Labour Organisation estimates that forced labour in the private economy generates US\$150 billion in illegal profits each year (ILO 2014). Of the 25 million people estimated to be working as forced laborers, 16 million of these are working in global supply chains and half of those are experiencing debt bondage (where individuals work to pay off a debt while losing control over working conditions and repayments).

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a global crime that trades in people and exploits them for profit. People of all genders, ages and backgrounds can become victims of this crime, which occurs in every region of the world. Traffickers use violence, fraudulent employment agencies, and fake promises of education and job opportunities to trick, coerce and deceive their victims. The organized networks or individuals behind this lucrative crime take advantage of people who are vulnerable, desperate or simply seeking a better life. Human trafficking is defined in the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol, which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation".

The definition of trafficking consists of three core elements:

The act of trafficking, which means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons.

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

The purpose of trafficking is always exploitation.

HOW IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING DIFFERENT FROM MIGRANT SMUGGLING?

These are two distinct but interconnected crimes. Both are illegal activities that treat people as commodities. While trafficking in persons is a crime that aims to exploit a person who may or may not be a migrant, smuggling of migrants does not, by definition, involve the exploitation of the migrant. Trafficking victims can be trafficked within their home country or internationally, whereas migrant smuggling always crosses national borders. Some trafficked people might start their journey by being smuggled into a country illegally, not knowing the intention of the trafficker to exploit them, or find themselves deceived, coerced or forced into an exploitative situation later in the process, for example being forced to work for no or very little money to pay for their transportation. Criminals may both traffic and smuggle people, employing the same routes and methods of transporting them.

WHO ARE THE VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Victims of trafficking can be any age, any gender and from anywhere in the world. According to UNODC's 2022 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons which is compiled using official figures from over 141 countries, female victims continue to be the primary targets. The Report shows that in 2020 42 percent of detected victims were women and 18 percent girls. For male victims, the Report shows that 23 percent of detected victims were men and 17 per cent were boys. The Report shows that the share of children among detected trafficking victims has tripled while the share of boys has increased five times over the past 15 years. Globally, one in every three victims detected is a child. Girls are mainly trafficked for sexual exploitation, while boys are used for forced labour. The share of detected male victims has risen from around 10 per cent in 2003 to 40 per cent in 2020.

WHY ARE PEOPLE TRAFFICKED?

Traffickers target people who are marginalized or in difficult circumstances. Undocumented migrants and people who are in desperate need of employment are vulnerable, particularly to trafficking for forced labour. Victims may be forced or tricked into an exploitative situation which constitutes trafficking after the traffickers use violence, deception or blackmail. Criminals trafficking children target victims from extremely poor households, dysfunctional families or those who are abandoned and have no parental care.

HOW WIDESPREAD IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Statistics show that human trafficking occurs in every region of the world. States can be the origin, transit or destination country for victims, or even a combination of all. The collected data provides information on victims who were in contact with authorities and does not reflect the actual prevalence of the crime or the hidden number of victims. The data collected for the 2022 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons shows that in 2020 about 50,000 human trafficking victims were detected and reported by 141 countries. Europe, the Middle East, North America and some countries in East Asia and the Pacific are destinations for trafficking victims from a wide range of origins. In 2020, 65 percent of the victims detected in Western and Southern Europe were foreign-born trafficked from a wide variety of origin countries. During the same period, victims from East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa were detected in a large number of countries in almost every region of the world. Central and South-Eastern European victims were detected in large numbers but mainly in European destinations.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMONLY IDENTIFIED FORMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking has many forms. These include exploitation in the sex, entertainment and hospitality industries, and as domestic workers or in forced marriages. Victims are forced to work in factories, on construction sites or in the agricultural sector without pay or with an inadequate salary, living in fear of violence and often in inhumane conditions. Some victims are tricked or coerced into having their organs removed. Children are forced to serve as soldiers or to commit crimes for the benefit of the criminals. The 2022 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons shows that 38,7 percent of detected victims in 2020 were trafficked for sexual exploitation, 38,8 per cent were exploited for forced labour, 10,2 per cent were subjected to forced criminal activity, while 0,9 per cent were trafficked for forced marriage and smaller numbers were coerced into begging, organ removal, and other purposes. The detected forms of exploitation vary widely across different subregions. The share of detected victims trafficked for forced labour has steadily increased for more than a decade.

WHAT TYPES OF INDUSTRIES ARE AFFECTED BY HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

No industry or economic sector is immune to human trafficking. There are high-risk sectors, in which victims are most frequently found, such as agriculture or horticulture, construction, the garment and textile industries, catering and restaurants, domestic work, entertainment and the sex industry.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME GROUPS IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

The criminals who engage in trafficking range from organized criminal groups to individuals operating on their own or in small groups on an opportunistic basis. The more organized groups are commonly involved in other serious crimes, such as trafficking in drugs, arms and other illicit commodities, as well as corruption and the bribery of officials. When organized criminal groups are involved, many more victims are trafficked, often for longer periods, across wider distances and with more violence.

DO MANY TRAFFICKERS GET CAUGHT AND CONVICTED?

While most countries have had comprehensive trafficking in persons legislation in place for some years, the number of convictions has only recently started to grow. The increased number of convictions broadly follows the increases in the number of detected and reported victims,

which shows that the criminal justice response is reflecting the detection trend. However, several areas continue to have very low numbers of convictions for trafficking, and at the same time detect fewer victims. Limited numbers of detected victims and few convictions does not necessarily mean that traffickers are not active in these countries. Victims trafficked from regions with low detection and conviction rates are found in large numbers in other regions.

IS THERE A LEGAL INSTRUMENT TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

The main international legal instrument is the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000. The Trafficking Protocol, which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, is the only international legal instrument addressing human trafficking as a crime. The purposes of the Protocol are to prevent and combat trafficking, protect and assist the victims, and promote cooperation among countries that have ratified the Protocol to meet these objectives. The Trafficking Protocol provides the world's first definition of human trafficking, and it requires ratifying States to criminalize such practices.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Traffickers have integrated technology into their business model at every stage of the process, from recruiting to exploiting victims. Many children are approached by traffickers on social media. UNODC has identified two types of strategies, “hunting” involving a trafficker actively pursuing a victim, typically on social media and “fishing”, when perpetrators post job advertisements and wait for potential victims to respond. Technology can be misused by traffickers to launder or transfer illicit profits. It can also have a positive use in helping to combat trafficking, such as by aiding investigations, enhancing prosecutions, raising awareness, and providing services to victims.

PROTOCOL ADOPTED IN 2000

The adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish the Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in 2000 was a milestone that provided the first internationally agreed definition of “trafficking in persons”: “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”



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