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**The Institute for Trafficked, Exploited,  
and Missing Persons (ITEMP)**  
*Until the Last One Comes Home*

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## HUMAN TRAFFICKING & CONTEMPORARY SLAVERY

### **Definition of slavery:**

“The status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised”

### **INTRODUCTION**

Slavery is a part of our history, but never disappeared; instead it has taken a different form. An increase in world population and global traveling, as well as rapid social and economic changes have made moving people around the world easier, but have also changed slavery into a different form – human trafficking.

Human trafficking is the modern-day form of slavery and involves the movement of people by means of violence, deception or coercion for the purpose of forced labor, servitude or slavery-like practices.

Today, human trafficking is the third largest criminal industry in the world, after arms and drug dealing. It is also the fastest growing. Traffickers generate billions of dollars in profits every year while victimizing millions of people around the globe.

### **TRAFFICKING**

Human trafficking exists in two forms:

**Sex Trafficking:** the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person forced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years.

**Labor Trafficking:** the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery.

### **SMUGGLING vs. TRAFFICKING**

#### **SMUGGLING:**

- Consented
- Ends with the arrival
- Always transnational

#### **TRAFFICKING:**

- Never consented
- Involves ongoing exploitation that usually generates profits
- Not always transnational

### **WHAT IF THE VICTIM CONSENTS?**

If coercion, fraud or deception has been used any consent is irrelevant. In addition, children under 18 years old cannot give a valid consent. Therefore, any kind of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation is a form of trafficking.

### **TRAFFICKING VICTIMS**

According to the U.N., every year approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims are trafficked across international borders worldwide. 80% of these are women and 50% are children.

### **ORIGIN & DESTINATION**

The victims often come from developing countries and regions such as Russia, Thailand, China, India, Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America and are usually sent to developed countries like the USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, and Western Europe.



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### **HOW VICTIMS ARE TRAFFICKED**

Many trafficking victims are exploited for purposes of commercial sex, including prostitution, stripping, pornography and live-sex shows. However, trafficking also takes the form of labor exploitation, such as domestic servitude, sweatshop factories, or migrant agricultural work.

Human traffickers are slave traders. They deceive their victims by offering the victims a better life, employment, educational opportunities or marriage. Violence is often involved and victims are often subjected to debt-bondage, usually under the pretext of an exaggerated debt that resulted from transportation fees and food costs. Traffickers often threaten victims with personal injury or death, or the safety of the victims' families back home. Also, traffickers commonly take away the victims' travel documents and isolate them to make escape more difficult.

### **CAUSES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

**Poverty** and **inequality** are important factors in making people more vulnerable to being trafficked but are rarely the primary causes.

Trafficking is a criminal industry driven by 1) large **profits** and 2) the low risk of **prosecution**. As long as the **demand** is high and the risks are low, trafficking will exist regardless of other contributing factors.

### **RESULTS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING & SLAVERY**

Victims of trafficking suffer from a variety of physical and mental health problems such as physical abuse; psychological effects of torture and shame, humiliation, shock, denial, disorientation, and anxiety disorders including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), phobias, panic attacks, and depression.

### **RESULTS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING & SLAVERY (continued)**

Drug and alcohol addiction are common as well as sexually transmitted diseases (e.g., HIV/AIDS, gonorrhea, syphilis), sterility and miscarriages.  
**WHY IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING GROWING?**

#### **Globalization:**

Creates conditions leading to greater transnational crime of all types, including trafficking.

#### **International organized crime:**

Trafficking is the "perfect" crime with high profits and low penalties and risks.

#### **The population explosion:**

Continues to flood the labor market, leaving millions of people poor and vulnerable.

#### **Greed – Violence – Corruption:**

Changes created by economic change in many developed countries have destroyed the social rules and traditional bonds of responsibility. In the absence of law, violence trumps human rights.

### **DIFFICULTIES OF VICTIM RESCUE**

Little public funding makes it hard to fight trafficking. Public opinion also often stigmatizes prostitutes as criminals and holds that it was their choice to enter the

prostitution business. Trafficking victims are further deterred because of the risk that police officers or other governmental officials might abuse or send them to prison.

Lack of accountability and a coherent international plan on how to deal with trafficking also greatly contributes to the difficulty in rescuing victims of human trafficking and contemporary slavery.



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**COMBATING TRAFFICKING**

**Eliminate extreme poverty:**

In the long term, wiping out slavery requires helping the world's poor gain greater control over their lives. Mandatory primary and secondary education and social protection against poverty are the first steps.

**Criminalization & Sanctions:**

While there are often laws in place prohibiting sexual exploitation and criminalizing trafficking, stronger penalties and increased enforcement are imperative. Prosecutors need more assistance and protection developing cases against traffickers while victims must be given public assistance in the form of protection, rehabilitation shelters, health-care and residency status.

**Prevention:**

Training programs for officials, public awareness, a warning system (like Amber Alert), and media campaigns have all proven successful in preventing and stopping human trafficking.

**Communication and Cooperation:**

Borders need to be strengthened and international law enforcement coordination and cooperation must become a priority. Furthermore, international cooperation of NGOs fighting human trafficking is essential because when corrupt public officials and criminals know they are being observed from abroad, this gives power and protection to those who are fighting human trafficking. Political lobbying, legal aid and funding for non-governmental groups are also vital.

**Decrease corruption:**

Corruption is one of the primary reasons human trafficking and slavery continues to this day. Therefore, public officials must be regularly investigated, held accountable and punished for corruption.

**CONCLUSION**

Slavery and human trafficking are evolving and erupting wherever the conditions are ripe.

In fact, every ten minutes a child is forced into some form of slavery. Public awareness and improved legal mechanisms are important for ending trafficking and slavery, but political will and the resources needed to protect and rehabilitate the victims are also necessary.

Human trafficking and other forms of slavery are global problems that need to be stopped. Please join us in fighting human trafficking, slavery, and other forms of exploitation ***'Until the Last One Comes Home.'***

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