



UCMUN 2023
SOCHUM Committee
Human Trafficking

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Letter from the Chair

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee at UCMUN 2023! My name is Aeryn Northway, and I'm looking forward to meeting you all as your Chair this November.

I am a Freshman in the ACES program here at UConn with interests in international relations, history, languages, and linguistics. I was a member of my high school Model UN for about two years, and was lucky enough to have the chance to participate in some amazing experiences with Permanent Representatives to the United Nations. In my free time I enjoy reading about a myriad of subjects, attempting to maintain my language skills, and finding the best food on campus (a difficult endeavor). I'm part of the Cycling Club, and have been racing for almost 10 years now. I've been joining a few clubs here and there, so we'll see what I'm doing when we reach the conference.

I know the format might not be the most invigorating, but I wanted to make it easily accessible. Feel free to use the Table of Contents below to peruse through information as you see fit. I encourage you to ask questions and reach out on any content that you are unsure of. Please additionally expand upon your knowledge of this complicated international issue in order to have the most successful experience, and truly grasp how to consider solutions to the problem. I'll see you there!

Until next time,

Aeryn Northway

Chair, SOCHUM

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Introduction to the SOCHUM Committee

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Issues Committee is the Third Committee of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. Founded in 1945, the Committee is in its 78th Session, and is chaired by His Excellency Alexander Marschik of Austria. With a focus on social, humanitarian, and cultural issues, the Committee seeks to make the world a more hospitable place for people of different genders, creeds, ethnicities, ages, and backgrounds. In the sessions since its creation, SOCHUM has dealt with issues of individual rights, social development, and cultural conflicts. Succeeding the creation of the Third Committee, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations Assembly in 1948. In 2006, the Human Rights Council was founded, and has since dealt with expanding the promotion of human rights and speaking on human rights violations.¹

SOCHUM since its creation has been a force on the frontier of global human rights affairs. The focus of our committee this convention is human trafficking. This means we will be dealing with topics of gravitas over the coming days. These are grave situations to experience, and to be impertinent in these discussions is unacceptable. When going over the information included in detail, please remember the variability of statistics on this issue. According to the US Department of State, “It is hard to find reliable statistics related to human trafficking. The quality and quantity of data available are often hampered by the hidden nature of the crime, challenges in identifying individual victims, gaps in data accuracy and completeness, and significant barriers regarding the sharing of victim information among various stakeholders. For these reasons, data and statistics may not reflect the full nature or scope of the problem.”²

¹ “Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues”, United Nations, 2023, <https://www.un.org/en/ga/third/index.shtml>

² US Department of State, “About Human Trafficking”, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/humantrafficking-about-human-trafficking/>

Topic A: Human Trafficking

Introduction

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit.³ Human traffickers take advantage of language barriers, fear tactics, abuse, manipulation, and destruction of personal assets to control their victims. Human trafficking is occasionally mentioned as trafficking in persons. It is a crime on a global scale, and is characterized by three core elements: the act, the means, and the purpose.⁴ The act is commonly associated with five possible actions by traffickers: recruiting, transporting, transferring, harboring, and receiving. The means are used to subjugate people who would otherwise fight against the conditions being pressed upon them, and maintain a fearful or docile environment. For example, traffickers will use threats, force, deception, abuse of people in vulnerable positions (ex. homelessness), promises of payments, or abduction as a means of silencing. With the advent of technology, online manipulation has become another method of “the act”; where traffickers lure vulnerable people into compromising positions or a false sense of security. The purpose of this is to make people easily exploitable in a multitude of ways. These efforts by traffickers can pull individuals into the world of transnational crime, or lives of suffering not far from their community.

Human trafficking happens in every country, and in any circumstance. The crime falls under the jurisdiction of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.⁵ The UNODC deals

³ “Human Trafficking”, *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, United Nations, 2023, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/human-trafficking.html>

⁴ “The Crime: Defining Human Trafficking.” *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, United Nations, 2023, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/crime.html>

⁵ “UNODC: who we are and what we do”, *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, 2023, https://www.unodc.org/documents/Advocacy-Section/UNODC-at-a-glance_PRINT.pdf

with crimes beyond human trafficking, but it is important to mention that trafficking generally demands involvement in other criminal activity. In 2007, on the 200th anniversary of the end of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, the UNODC initiated the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, or UN.GiFT.⁶ As an ongoing program, its aim is to reduce vulnerability of victims, the demand for exploited individuals, protecting and supporting victims, and supporting trafficker prosecution.

The UNODC passed the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. This document lays the foundations of an internationally accepted term of human trafficking, and how cases in international law can be filed in regard to the issue.⁷ The UN response to human trafficking is to aid countries in establishing adequate laws to prevent against human trafficking or encourage prosecution of traffickers, to train individuals to use those resources to prosecute traffickers and support victims, to provide tools for research, and to form partnerships with governments, non-governmental organizations, and support investigations into human trafficking crimes.⁸

⁶ “United Nations Global Initiative To Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GiFT)”, *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, 2010, <https://www.unodc.org/documents/overview.pdf>

⁷ UN General Assembly, *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime*, 15 November 2000, https://www.unodc.org/res/human-trafficking/2021the-protocol-tip_html/TIP.pdf

⁸ “Our Response”, *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, 2021, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/our-response.html>

Background

Human trafficking, in layman’s terms, can be identified first in modern times as a part of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. As the first large-scale international movement of people by coercion and force in conjunction, this leg of the Triangular Trade carried peoples from Africa to the New World to use as forced labor. However, suffered by these peoples additionally was physical abuse at the devices of handlers, involuntary starvation, and sexual abuse. Such tactics to enforce a fearful environment, limit the movement of individuals or their willingness to escape, or to take away essential human necessities, are still used by traffickers today. As such it is a form of slavery.

The next large scale human trafficking movement in the West would be of “white slavery”. This is not specifically discussing white individuals being enslaved, but the kidnapping of women and girls at a large scale into prostitution; hence, the name of white to resemble purity. The incidence of this kind of crime reached such levels that the Mann Act, formerly known as the White-Slavery Act, was passed in 1910. It by no coincidence was pushed by white men who wanted to protect the purity of white women, and fell short in addressing the wrongs suffered by women of other races. The next such change in trafficking laws came in 1921 with the League of Nations International Convention to Combat the Traffic in Women and Children, and the adjustment of the term “white slavery” to “traffic” as a racially neutral term.⁹ In 2000, 52 years after the UDHR was published, the United Nations passed the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons. It introduced a victim-centered approach to human trafficking,

⁹ Lammasniemi Laura, “White slavery’: the origins of the anti-trafficking movement”, openDemocracy, 16 November 2017, accessed 28 Sep 2023, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/beyond-trafficking-and-slavery/white-slavery-origins-of-anti-trafficking-movement/>

and has been ratified by 180 parties since then.¹⁰ It was the first international document specifically outlining the crime of human trafficking. In 2009, the youth-led campaign Start Freedom was launched to bring young people into the solutions and considerations of the problem of human trafficking.¹¹ Its purpose was to increase awareness among youth while also examining their thoughts and creating a space to share objections to human trafficking.

Of those affected by human trafficking anywhere from a 20%¹² to a little under 30% are under the age of eighteen.¹³ All together, minors who are victims of human trafficking number nearly 4 million. In certain countries, more than 50% of trafficking victims are minors such as Romania.¹⁴ This international web of the crime of exploitation spans many categories. Children pulled into trafficking are generally forced into labor jobs, and about 65% of identified child victims are girls.¹⁵

Human trafficking can not just be generalized to sex trafficking, as it is commonly portrayed in the media. As mentioned previously, it can consist of forced labor, removal of organs, debt bondage, forced criminal activities, domestic servitude, child soldiers, forced marriage, and sexual exploitation.¹⁶ Forced labor and enslavement are components of human trafficking, but not all slavery is a result of human trafficking. This is a point of discussion when

¹⁰ Dearnly, Ruth. "Prevention, Prosecution and Protection - Human Trafficking." *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/prevention-prosecution-and-protection-human-trafficking>

¹¹ "Press Conference on START FREEDOM Civil Society Anti-Trafficking Initiative," *United Nations Coverage and Press Releases*, 2009, https://press.un.org/en/2009/091014_sf.doc.htm

¹² "Age of Victims: Children and Adults", The Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative, Initiative by the International Organization for Migration, accessed 27 Sep 2023, <https://www.ctdatacollaborative.org/story/age-victims-children-and-adults>

¹³ "Child Trafficking Statistics", World's Children, accessed 28 Sep 2023, <https://www.worldschildren.org/child-trafficking-statistics/>

¹⁴ "Romania - United States Department of State." *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 5 Aug. 2021, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-trafficking-in-persons-report/romania/>

¹⁵ "Child Trafficking: Myth vs. Fact," Save the Children, accessed 26 Sep 2023, <https://www.savethechildren.org/us/charity-stories/child-trafficking-myths-vs-facts>

¹⁶ "What is modern slavery?," anti-slavery, Anti-Slavery International, date accessed 25 Sep 2023, <https://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/modern-slavery/>

regarding modern slavery today, and its complexities. However, this report is purely focused on human trafficking, so as a note, human trafficking is considered a form of modern slavery.

Forced marriage is especially common in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where rates anywhere from 45% to about 20% of all marriages respectively. The reasons for forced marriages are variable with some naming cultural traditions, financial distress, or religious beliefs.¹⁷ There are more women and girls present in the trafficking world, especially in certain regions where education and work is difficult to find for girls, placing them in vulnerable positions.

There have been efforts to uncover or end this issue in certain industries, but the international supply chain's reliance on human trafficking and forced labor is much larger than many think. The Chocolate Campaign, for example, was focused on spreading awareness in hopes of eradicating child labor in the cocoa industry present in Côte d'Ivoire. A third of the world's cocoa comes from this country, where child labor is well documented. The problem there is of large chocolate companies, up until very recently, refusing to get their products Fair Trade Certified or put under the Rainforest Alliance.¹⁸

Questions to Consider on Background

- a. In the US Department of State Global Report on Trafficking in Persons for 2023, what tier does your country fall in? What are the reasons for this? Consider the circumstances of culture, economics, and state of society in your country.

¹⁷ "Report on the Practice of Forced Marriage in Canada: Interviews with Frontline Workers", Government of Canada, 2021, <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/fm-mf/p2.html>

¹⁸ Dearnly, Ruth. "Prevention, Prosecution and Protection - Human Trafficking." *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/prevention-prosecution-and-protection-human-trafficking>

- b. Why is it that the Asia-Pacific region sees such high instances of human trafficking?
What countries are outliers in these statistics, both negatively and positively?

Current Status

Human trafficking saw a marked decrease in 2020 and following years due to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on both supply chains and movement. Every two years, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime publishes a report on the conditions of the trafficking crisis. In the 2019 report, the UNODC noted an 11% decrease in detected victims.¹⁹ It is important to note the distinction of detected for those victims as it is evident that trafficking decreased due to COVID restrictions, but said detection of victims was also more difficult in the circumstance of COVID. In 2022, the Human Trafficking Institute estimated there were 24.9 million victims of human trafficking. Of those, 20.1 million were labor trafficking victims, and the remaining 4.8 million were sex trafficking victims. Labor trafficking victims were estimated to sit around 9.2 million males and 10.9 million females, of which 3.3 million are children. Sex trafficking victims are estimated to be composed of around 3.8 million adults, and 1 million children. On an international scale, nearly 99% of sex trafficking victims were women and girls.²⁰

It is critical to discuss the occurrences of human trafficking, and the locations where it is most prevalent. This does not go to say that certain countries do not have human trafficking occurring in their borders; every country has some form of human trafficking without exception. Nevertheless, some nations or regions have higher instances of human trafficking than others.

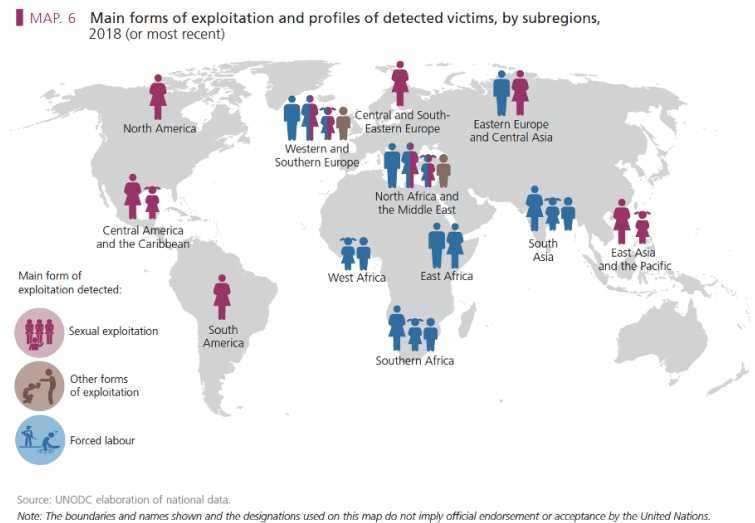
¹⁹ UNODC, Global Report on Tracking in Persons 2022 (United Nations publication, Sales no.: E. 23. IV. 1), https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2022/GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf

²⁰ Ecker, Emma. “Breaking down Global Estimates of Human Trafficking: Human Trafficking Awareness Month 2022.” *Human Trafficking Institute*, 12 Jan. 2022, <https://traffickinginstitute.org/breaking-down-global-estimates-of-human-trafficking-human-trafficking-awareness-month-2022/>

For instance, the Asia-Pacific region has the highest incidence of forced marriage and labor trafficking with 29.4 million people trafficked according to the International Labor Organization.²¹ The Middle East on the other hand has the highest rates of exploitation and prevalence within the population at 10.2% and 10.1% respectively. Essentially more people per capita are trafficked in the Middle East, although more people as a whole are trafficked in Asia due to its large population.

The kind of exploitation that people are trafficked for differs from region to region.

Sexual exploitation as a reason for trafficking is common in the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, and South-eastern Europe. Labor exploitation is common in South Asia, and Africa excluding the Northern regions to some degree. These statistics are shown on the diagram to the right.



The countries with the worst human trafficking records are generally destabilized, low-income, or corrupt in some fashion. There are occasional shifts in these countries due to outside circumstances, but in the past five years they have stayed relatively similar. The countries are Afghanistan, Eritrea, Yemen, Cambodia, United Arab Emirates, and Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. There are many more countries that have high rates of trafficking, but this is to give context to the variations in trafficking by country. Libya, Eritrea, and Yemen have all

²¹ “Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage,” International Labour Organization, 2022, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_854733.pdf

been impacted by conflict and lack of a regulating government. This destabilizes the region making it easy for organized crime among other actors to force people into precarious positions. Some countries also use forced government labor, those being DPRK and Eritrea. Eritrea's government forces children to participate in military training associated with national service, forced agricultural labor, and has a large-scale issue of forced recruitment by state armed groups for use in armed conflict.²² The country also has no laws prohibiting child prostitution or pornography. In the United Arab Emirates, human trafficking violations stem from their recruitment of a global workforce and restrictions of visas or wages by employers.

Bloc Positions

Countries with Implemented Laws:

The Active Communities Against Trafficking, or ACT, is an offshoot organization of Stop The Traffick, a coalition group based in the UK. It has active chapters in cities around the world, but is heavily focused in Europe. Its purpose is to create local action networks to combat human trafficking, and replicate that small-scale success across the globe. It was first launched in Portugal through grant work, and has since expanded.²³ Stop The Traffick itself was named the UN Special Advisor on Community Action against Trafficking in 2008.

In the United States, the National Human Trafficking Hotline is a reporting service for any crime of a coerced or trafficked nature. The line has received nearly 400,000 calls since its opening in 2007; it has helped uncover 82,000 cases of human trafficking, and 165,000 victims

²² "Ranking by Human Trafficking," Global Organized Crime Index, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, accessed 30 Sep 2023, https://ocindex.net/rankings/human_trafficking

²³ "Active Communities against Trafficking," EAA Grants, date accessed 29 Sep 2023, <https://eeagrants.org/archive/2009-2014/projects/PT05-0017>

have been identified as a result. Data from their calls shows higher trends of trafficking in states with large immigrant populations, especially from Latin America and the Caribbean.²⁴

Countries with Minimal or Increasing Implementation:

Mexico for instance, has now been ranked a Tier 2 country for human trafficking by the US Department of State. The Mexican Government has made significant efforts to improve its response to human trafficking on the ground. According to the US Department of State, “Mexican authorities continued law enforcement cooperation with the United States, including the apprehension and extradition to the United States of a trafficking suspect, prosecution training that led to successful convictions in three states, and ongoing information assistance on three transnational trafficking cases”.²⁵

Committee Mission

The goal of this committee is to develop projects that combat all types of human trafficking: labor, sex, forced marriage, debt bondage, forced criminal activity, and organ removal. It is important to consider the UN Protocol for victims of human trafficking, the basis of international law at this moment in time, and the desire to keep migrants out of the sphere of human trafficking.

²⁴ “National Statistics”, National Human Trafficking Hotline, Polaris, accessed 29 Sep 2023, <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/en/statistics>

²⁵ “Mexico - United States Department of State.” *U.S. Department of State*, U.S. Department of State, 5 Aug. 2021, <https://www.state.gov/reports/2021-trafficking-in-persons-report/mexico/>

Final Questions

- a. How does your country address human trafficking?
- b. Is human trafficking prevalent in your country? Does the level of trafficking influence your country's negligence in addressing the issue?
- c. Does your country have its own domestic projects that are aimed toward human trafficking? If so, how effective are they?
- d. Do the solutions for human trafficking have validity or could there be better alternatives.
- e. How should the United Nations approach educating at-risk populations? In your country, who would those at-risk populations be?
- f. What is your country's policy on locating, removing, and aiding victims out of their trafficking environments? How does law enforcement deal with the issue? Is your country effective at attempting to combat the issue?
- g. What would be the economic implications globally, if human trafficking was significantly curbed or ended? How much would it impact your country's economy?

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