

STOP 8

The trade in human persons constitutes a shocking offense against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights. Already the Second Vatican Council had pointed to “slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children, and disgraceful working conditions where people are treated as instruments of gain rather than free and responsible persons” as “infamies” which “poison human society, debase their perpetrators” and constitute “a supreme dishonor to the Creator” (Gaudium et Spes, 27). Such situations are an affront to fundamental values which are shared by all cultures and peoples, values rooted in the very nature of the human person.

--Pope John Paul II, Letter to Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran on the Occasion of the International Conference “Twenty- First Century Slavery-the Human Rights Dimension to Trafficking in Human Beings,” May 15, 2002



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STOP: Trafficking NOW!

Chapter Acts

We are called to listen to the mourning of our fragmented world, of those impoverished by the growing divide between rich and poor and of the sexually exploited, trafficked, marginalized and abused women and children – especially girls. --2008 Chapter Calls

The Story of Lena



You can't use my real name. Or even the name they gave me in China. I don't even know what my name should be. I am not the same person who left this village two years ago. My body came back but my soul is somewhere else. No one recognizes me anymore and everyone who comes to see me.... I think they come to stare at me because I am dirty now. I am filthy inside and my soul is empty. I don't know if I can live this way. My mother comes to my room and says 'Lena, you were such a friendly person. I miss you the way you were,' and I say, 'Mama, I am different. Something died in me. I think it was happiness.'

I never thought this would happen to me. I was sixteen when they came to the village. They looked very nice and offered jobs to the girls here in China as cooks. The program looked very good. Three months of cooking school with all expenses paid. Then guaranteed work for one year in an expensive Chinese hotel. Nine other girls and I signed their contracts. They didn't give us time to read them or take them to our parents. I thought our parents would have to sign because we were still in school but they said it was no problem. They were in a hurry and we signed their papers before all the places were gone.

We were so excited when we got our tickets and visas to China and the nice people who came to the village escorted us to the plane. Our families thought we would make good money and be able to help at home. But then, everything was different. Our escorts on the flight treated us like we were criminals. In China they burned our passports.

When Masha tried to fight them, they beat her and raped her in front of us. There was no cooking school or jobs. There was only a whore house. The first day in China they took us to a morgue to show us the bodies of two girls who had jumped out of the window to try and get away. They told us there was no way out until we had worked as prostitutes long enough to pay back our debts for tickets and expenses. But then they kept all the money.

I am home because our brothel was raided by police six months later and I was deported. You might think I am lucky but I am not. Someday they will come back for me and if I do not go, they will kill me and maybe my family. Once they come to your village and you sign their paper your life is over. I wanted to be a teacher.

What is Trafficking?



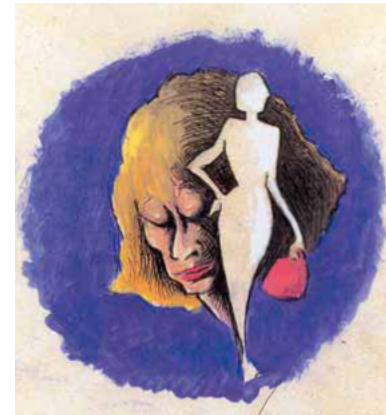
“Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving 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 the 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. --Article 3, paragraph (a) of the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons*.

SOME Key Numbers

from the 2010 TIP Report (Trafficking in Persons)

- **12.3 million adults and children** in forced labor, bonded labor, and forced prostitution around the world; 56 percent of these victims are women and girls
- **\$32 billion** annual trade for the traffickers
- 49,105 victims identified worldwide, a **59 percent increase** over the last reporting year (2008)
- Prevalence of trafficking victims in the world: **1.8 per 1,000 inhabitants** (in Asia and the Pacific: 3 per 1,000)



- **4,166 successful trafficking prosecutions** in 2009, a 40 percent increase over 2008

- **62 Countries have yet to convict a trafficker** under laws in compliance with the Palermo Protocol

- **104 Countries are without** laws, policies, or regulations to prevent victims' deportation

- **23 countries received upgraded rankings** in the 2010 TIP Report; **19 countries received**

downgraded rankings

- Two countries, the **United States and Kiribati, are ranked for the first time in the 2010 TIP Report**

Why is sex trafficking allowed to exist in the United States?

In 2000 Congress passed the **Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA)** to “combat human trafficking by punishing traffickers, protecting victims, and mobilizing U.S. government agencies to wage a global anti-trafficking campaign.”

In December 2005 the **End Demand for Sex Trafficking Act** passed, which seeks to lower the demand for sex trafficking. However, despite these laws, there are still many problems that inhibit effective prosecution of sex traffickers:

- **A failure to identify victims.** There is an appalling difference between the estimated number of victims trafficked into the U.S. and the number of victims found.
- **A failure to prosecute traffickers.** Many states remain unable to address adequately the problem, because of poor coordination among agencies, poor education about sex trafficking and limited support from the federal government.
- **A failure to provide rehabilitation services to victims.** Even after the passage of the 2005 Act, NGOs and social service agencies still bear the primary responsibility for identifying survivors, attending to their immediate needs for physical safety and housing, referring them for health care, facilitating their access to protection and rehabilitative services, and helping foreign victims to return to their countries of origin or begin new lives in the United States.
- **A failure to educate the public about sex trafficking in the United States.** Most Americans do not know what sex trafficking is, or if they do, they think it is a problem that occurs in other countries. --Adapted from *Education for Justice*



The Causes of Trafficking

Looking at both the supply and demand factors that foster the growth of trafficking can identify some of the causes of trafficking. Such causes can be further categorized into different aspects of life such as socio-cultural, economic and political.

Some trafficking techniques

- **local contacts:** traffickers enlist the help of local persons and villagers to identify vulnerable families. They make contacts with unsuspecting women and children around bus and train stations
- **direct sale:** women and children are sold to traffickers by parents or other family members
- **deceit:** unscrupulous agents deceive parents, lure women and girls with false promises of well-paid work in cities or marriages to rich partners
- **debt bondage:** economic incentives to parents and arrangements which bind children and young women into sex-slavery or other exploitative forms of labor, though details of these debt terms are ill defined
- **bribes:** commonly paid to various officials or police to procure false documents, or at border crossings
- **transportation:** women and children are transported by foot, motorcycles, mini-buses and pick-up vans, and boats.





Who are trafficked?

- **women and children** are the key target group, because of their marginalization, limited economic resources and predominance in the “invisible” informal sector
- **people from impoverished and low income households** in rural areas and urban slums, especially women engaged in small farming, petty trading, vending, as laborers, scavengers and in other low status work and services
- **ethnic minorities, indigenous people, hill tribes, refugees, and illegal migrants**
- **people with low levels of education**, a few years of formal schooling, some primary school education, or illiterate
- **young girls running away from home**, or girls from families that expect their daughters to contribute financially to their support are easy targets for traffickers
- **people who lack awareness of their legal rights**, their exploited situation, and have no channel for seeking redress
- **women and children of varying ages**, ranging from babies to women in their seventies.

Trafficked for what?

A wide range of purposes: a large percentage for prostitution; the entertainment industry; sweatshops; illegal adoption of children; organ transplants; forced marriages; mail-order brides; domestic work; forced labor e.g. in construction; drug trafficking; begging; other exploitative forms of work.

Expectations?

Promise of higher incomes to

- improve economic situation;
- support parents and families in villages;
- escape from conflict situations.



Working environment:

Deplorable conditions

- physical facilities are often below acceptable standards;
- conditions of work and treatment often involve slavery-like practices and prison-like environments,
- long working hours, little rest or recreation; low wages or no wages;
- earnings are often unknown to workers and withheld by traffickers or employers;
- prolonged indebtedness to traffickers, employers, brothel owners, and lack of knowledge of debt terms;
- exposure to hazardous work;
- almost non-existent access to health and medical facilities;
- physical and sexual abuse is common.

Harmful Effects on Women and Children

(Both Short and Long Term)

- **health**: women and girls risk repeated pregnancy, maternal mortality, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS
- **drug and other addictions**: associated physical and mental deterioration
- **threat to emotional well-being**: constant fear of arrests, isolation, deprivation of family life and social support systems; humiliation and abuse result in serious emotional scars and many psychological consequences
- **threat to physical safety** by unscrupulous agents, police, customs officials, employers and others
- **apprehension by authorities**: detention, prosecution, forced deportation
- **difficulties in social integration** for those returning to their communities
- **economic slavery**: women have to pay the money which the traffickers demand for their travel and documentation.

