

**SIDMUN**  
**XVIII**  
**SOCHUM**

Kaitlyn Gioia (HFC)

Kevin Konzelman (FPM)

Stacy Pierre-Louis (ELM)

Paige Sferrazza (NHP)

Katrina Simon (SHS)

### **History of Committee:**

SOCHUM, the Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee, is the third of the six General Assembly committees established by the United Nations. Since its beginning in 1948, it has been designated with the task of upholding the fundamental human rights and freedoms of people throughout the world. It discusses issues relating to the protection and advancement of women and children, indigenous peoples, racism, discrimination, criminal treatment, drug control and social development questions. Because it is so heavily involved in a broad spectrum of problems, SOCHUM works in collaboration with other agencies including UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNHRC, UNODC, WHO as well as others. SOCHUM is such a vital piece of the entire UN body because nearly every international issue involves a “social aspect,” whether it be displaced people or illegal labor, that must be focused on separately from the main problem. Without the Third assembly to hone the United Nations in on the humanitarian aspect of international problems, we would be much less able to efficiently tackle many of the pressing issues that humans face daily.

### **History of topic:**

Human trafficking is defined as the illegal trading of human beings for reasons of commercial sexual exploitation or forced labor. Basically, human trafficking can be thought of a modern day slavery tactic. As one of the fastest growing criminal industries in the world, it is important for us to know it’s history in order to stop the associated problems.

One of the most prevalent forms of human trafficking is in the sex trade. While victims of sex trafficking can be anyone, women, men, girls, or boys, the majority of victims tend to be women and children (majority young girls).

Sex traffickers use a variety of methods in order to ‘condition’ their subjects. Such conditions can physically, as well as mentally harm their victims. These conditions can include starvation, threats of violence, confinement, physical and sexual abuse, rape and forced drug use.

The victims of sex trafficking are exposed to many health risks. Among these are drug/alcohol addiction, physical injury(such as broken bones, concussions etc.), sexually transmitted infections (such as HIV/AIDS, syphilis, gonorrhea, urinary tract infections), menstrual problems, sterility and forced abortions. While these are some of the main health risks victims are exposed to, many more exist.

While some victims of trafficking are easily seen in operations such as street prostitution, there are many underground facilities that can operate in places even as unexpected as a residential home.

Human trafficking in the sex trade is a problem that occurs worldwide. While many countries operate in order to stop it, many still need to comply with the idea that it needs to be prevented and victims need to be treated.

### **Block Positions:**

#### Latin America

Sex Trafficking has become a \$16 billion a year industry in Latin America. While these nations have historically been considered source nations for the sex trafficking industry, they have recently emerged as destination and transit nations. All states in this area have been given Tier 2, Tier 2 watch list or Tier 3 status according to the Trafficking in Persons Report 2010 because their governments have failed to fully commit themselves to fighting human trafficking. As the magnitude of the issue inflates, so does the need for public policies that focus on the intense lack of border regulation and neglect of immigration that exists in this region. Moreover,

the rise of the sex industry has led to the rise of sex tourism in Latin American nations and red light districts have grown around various tourist locations. It is especially difficult to prosecute traffickers in this region because many nations have yet to incorporate trafficking legislation into their national agendas. Although some nations have criminalized trafficking, their governments have done little to enforce it. In general, the Latin American region suffers from a lack of prevention, protection, and integration strategies. However, various states, including Colombia and Brazil have begun to make efforts in spreading awareness about the severity of the issue.

### African Bloc

Human trafficking in African countries is a severe problem today, and little is being done to right this issue. All across Africa, especially in South Africa, impoverished girls have been forced to sell themselves to profit slave traders. Young women who have been forced into this illicit trade often sleep with multiple partners a night who have exposed many of them to the rampant HIV crisis. Even though slavery is illegal, and has been declared so by international conventions, in many countries little has been done to stop the ongoing prostitution and sexual slavery, which is at the highest it's ever been. The only aid that these victims have received is from smaller organizations such as nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) and other groups within the affected countries. In Uganda, thousands of children from small villages migrate to urban areas at night in fear of being kidnapped while they sleep by rebel raiders. They hope that these higher populated places will provide protection for them, and then return to their homes during the first hours of light. Human trafficking thrives in the poorest regions of Africa. A major thing that needs to be done is to gain government support and prosecute offenders. Until governments enforce sex trade laws, human trafficking will remain a growing issue in Africa.

## Middle Eastern Bloc

Illegal sex trade is a rising issue in the Middle East in recent years due to the war-ridden state of many of the countries. In numerous countries, such as Iraq, girls are often sold by their families in the hope of them becoming domestic workers; however they often are forced into the sex trade. Not only are women forced into this, but so are children and men. NGO's such as Women's Freedom have estimated 3,500 missing women due to sex trade in Iraq since 2003. A main focus of humanitarian agencies is not only countries where the victims are from, but also their destination countries; in the M. East Syria is a major destination of Iraqi women. Even though trafficking is illegal in Iraq, Syria and many other Arabic countries, few governments focus on this and turn a blind eye. They believe that there are greater issues that need attending to such as stabilizing the economy. However, there is some hope for the Middle East; Qatar is pushing for human trafficking prevention to be a part of school curriculums in Arab countries. Education is a major preventative method against sex trade, and Qatar's proposed idea is greatly supported by the U.N. It is programs like this that are effective against human trafficking.

## United States

Laws exist at all levels throughout the United States to prevent human trafficking. U.S. Code Title 18 Section 1584 states that it is a crime to force any person to work against their will through the use of force, threat, etc. Section 1581 of the same title makes forced labor illegal for paying off debts. Human trafficking also applies to the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution as a form of slavery. At the state level, similar laws exist. For example, in Florida, the government has specified specific types of forced labor and trafficking; the sex trade, prostitution, and domestic servants were all included in this. In the state of Washington, the first state law in the country banning human trafficking was enacted in 2003. In fact, human trafficking is specifically

illegal in half of all states, as of 2010. All of these laws are enforced by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division.

### Canada

Prostitution itself is not illegal in Canada, but the Canadian government has made many actions involving prostitution illegal. However, the general fight against sex trafficking and prostitution by the Canadian government has been highly criticized by groups inside and outside Canada. Future Group, a Calgary-based NGO calls Canada an “embarrassment” on fighting human trafficking; of the eight developed countries that were included in Future Group’s report, Canada was one of two that failed to meet standards. On the other hand, the U.S. State Department’s Trafficking in Persons Report concluded that Canada clearly met international standards on the subject and received the highest rating.

### Asian/Pacific bloc:

Sex trafficking has become a huge industry within Asia and the Pacific Islands. Some of the most common destination for victims are located in this area, including Japan and Thailand. With this, many major sources of victims come from these countries, including China and Thailand. In areas such as Japan and Hong Kong, the trafficking is mainly controlled by large organizations. The majority (although not all) of countries in this region are on the Tier 2 Watch list, meaning a) The absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing; or b) There is a failure to give evidence of rising efforts to conquer severe forms of trafficking in persons from the prior year; or c) The determination that a nation is making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take further coming steps over the next year. Many of those who are victims of human trafficking are moved within different parts of Asia. However,

there are some countries, including Australia as well as many Indonesian islands, either fully comply or significantly attempt to comply with the efforts of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

### Euro Bloc

161 countries out of 192 are involved with human trafficking. Human trafficking, as an organized crime, is approximated to generate 32 billion dollar revenue annually. Amongst the 161 countries Europe is latest to the crowd with the collapse of communism. Political adjustments in the past decade have added to the increase of trafficking into the EU from Central and Eastern European countries. The fall of the Soviet Union and the wars in the Balkans resulted in a vast displacement of workers. In Eastern Europe with the breakup of the Soviet Union several countries fell into political and economic uncertainty without the protection of the Kremlin. Women seeking jobs quickly become naive targets who are hasty to agree to an opportunity of employment abroad while children are also seen as a high risk for the sex trade. Though less common, Gypsies are also targeted for labor exploitation because of their low social status in many countries, as well as the money trade around organs add to the disgust of the trade. In 2001 European Commission estimates show that about 120,000 women and children are smuggled into Western Europe each year. It is important that we not only look towards prevention but also prosecution. Not enough resources are being directed towards the fight against human Trafficking and women and children continue to become the source of revenue for this multibillion dollar industry.

### **Current Status:**

Today, the sex trade is a prominent issue in almost every country. Although more information is getting out regarding how, where, who, etc. of the sex trade, the global community has not been able to slow down this trade. New groups are getting into the business every day, making it nearly impossible for law enforcement to track down the latest leaders of the sex trade.

Many times, the extent of the sex trade in a country is much deeper than is known by officials, and new information leads to drastic changes in the way the sex trade is dealt with. For example, an August 18, 2010 report in the United Kingdom's *Daily Telegraph* reports that more than half of the country's prostitutes are foreign, and a quarter of all prostitutes were brought into the country through illicit trafficking; these numbers are much higher than initially thought.

In addition, over 20 countries allow prostitution by law; over 44 countries have not made prostitution legal, although certain actions surrounding prostitution have been made illegal. Many of these countries that allow prostitution are in the developed world; some governments are making no effort to regulate the sex trade and prostitution.

### **Past/Possible Solutions:**

Human trafficking in the sex trade is a major worldwide issue that has been, and continues to be, a topic of heated debate in many countries, and in the United Nations. The U.N. has come up with three major facets to reduce this problem: Prevention, Prosecution, and Protection. To prevent further spread of this problem the U.N. wishes to raise awareness and reduce the chances of the trafficking of people. To do this more programs, such as ACT (Active Communities against Trafficking) and Start Freedom, have been put in place to educate communities, since a majority of the victims are under the age of eighteen. It is important to inform the youngest members of society of the problems they are to inherit so they can put an

end to them in the future. Another preventative method could be to raise the salaries of law enforcement in neighboring countries to limit the chances of bribery in cross-country trafficking. The second part of this three-P campaign is the prosecution of traffickers. The ACT program has just recently gathered information through a survey that could possibly help bring criminals guilty of this abhorrent crime to justice. The last P of the U.N's solutions is protection. Even though kidnappings are just as common, voluntary entrance to sex trafficking is a major issue. Many women sell themselves because there is no other way for them to support themselves, or their families. Trafficking and other related organized crimes often rise in impoverished areas; therefore the way to protect possible victims is to stop the underlying cause. Job training and increasing education can open more opportunities to find work. There are also cases of people being kidnapped and sold into sex trade. Protecting victims, and support programs for those who have already been used against their will, are two ways to bring an end to this problem. Human trafficking involves the country a person is from and his/her destination, so all countries must cooperate to cease this issue.

**Questions a position paper should answer:**

1. Why has human trafficking develop into such a flourishing industry in your Country?
2. At any point, has your country has a large population of human trafficking?
3. If so, what has your country done to aid this population?
4. Has your nation strengthened efforts for the protection of women and children?
5. Is your country a major destination for Human trafficking?
6. What solutions has your country implemented in the past to aid women and children?
7. How can these victims gain the rights as well as aid in your country?
8. How can these solutions be adopted on a global basis?

9. In what way has your nation developed research projects or awareness towards the public?

10. How can Human trafficking be reduced amongst your population?