

Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

January 2008 Vol. 6 No. 1

This issue highlights examples of the global trafficking of children.

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Belgium: Center of Child Trafficking

On the Brussels Metro, two women were entertained by a grubby boy, eight or nine years old. He pestered them for money until one woman finally handed him a few Euros. After the women left, the boy, no longer smiling, ran to the other end of the platform and dropped the coins into the open palm of a waiting man.

Such scenes are not unusual in Brussels. The children are easy to recognize: playing an accordion on a train, squatting by a battered cup on a street corner, or trailing an adult companion hovering by the bank machine while passersby stop to withdraw cash. Sleeping pills are being used to sedate infants held by 'mothers' who beg in stairwells and on station platforms. Roma girls (i.e. gypsies) living on the streets are giving birth to babies who 'die' with startling frequency (the babies are, in fact, sold into the illegal adoption market or used as accessories to begging).

End Purposes for Child Trafficking

- Domestic work
- Carpet, garment, embroidery, shoe factories
- Waitress/waiter
- Commercial sexual exploitation
- Construction work
- Circus performance & camel jockeying
- Soldiers in armed conflict
- Clearing minefields
- Brick kilns and stone quarries
- Fireworks production
- Agricultural labor or off-shore fishing
- Criminal activity (burglary, drug trafficking)
- Organized begging
- Mail-order brides (dowry)
- Forced marriages

(Source: International Labour Organization)

Victims are forced to beg, steal, and work as domestic servants; many are used as drug peddlers or prostitutes, and some fall into the illegal adoption and organ markets. Europe's 10 million Roma people are particularly vulnerable, and their children -- particularly those in state care and orphanages -- are prime targets for traffickers. The disappearances of unwanted Roma orphans are often overlooked.

Belgium, the capital of Europe, is also its unofficial capital of child trafficking from Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Roughly 2,000 unaccompanied minors (UAMs) enter Belgium every year, many sent by family members or led astray by traffickers. Many of these children disappear within a few hours of their arrival, and little is done to trace them.

Trafficked children tend to fall into two categories: adolescent girls who

Belgium cont. pg. 3

UNICEF reports up to 1.2 million children are trafficked every year. **Asia and Eastern Europe:** Girls as young as 13 are trafficked as mail-order brides.

Lithuania:

Children as young as 11 work as prostitutes. Children from orphanages, some 10 to 12 years old, were used to make pornographic movies.

Southeast Asia:

Surveys indicate that 35% of sex workers in the Mekong region are between 12 and 17 years of age.

Mexico:

There are more than 16,000 children engaged in prostitution, many at tourist destinations.

West and Central Africa:

Many children, mostly girls, are trafficked mainly for domestic work, but also for sexual exploitation and work in shops or on farms. (<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L18213814.htm>)



Awareness

'Baby Factories'

A British newspaper uncovered a 'baby factory' in Athens run by the Albanian and Russian mafia. The operation caters to the demands of Western women unable to have children of their own. From Britain, Europe and America, they hand over huge amounts of cash and take a child back home. Customers generally pay more for a light-skinned, blue-eyed child.

Gangs recruit young, attractive, healthy women, promising false passports and papers to enable them to enter Greece. Many Bulgarian and Romanian gypsies (i.e. 'Roma people') are recruited. The girl recruited is then given a huge bill. She is told the debt will be written off if she gets pregnant and gives up her baby. The girl is impregnated by mafia racketeers and then looked after, housed, fed and clothed. Rather than deliver in a hospital where there would be questions, she delivers in a makeshift maternity suite in a house rented by the mafia. A trained midwife, hired by the mafia, ensures a safe delivery, since up to \$40,000 is at stake.

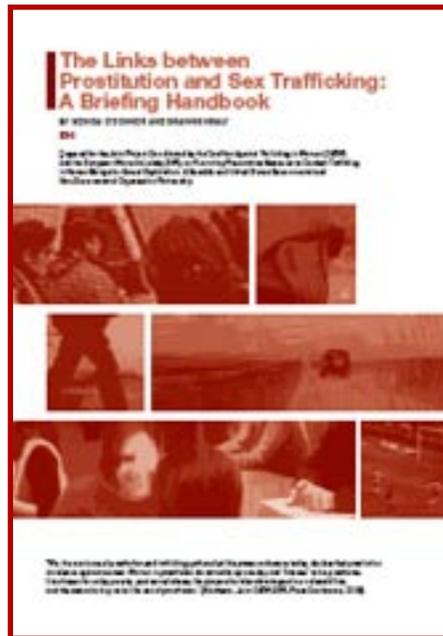
The Greek authorities admit the 'babies-for-sale racket' is worsening. They had traced nine sales of Bulgarian infants in the first six months of 2007 and arrested 33 suspected mediators - 24 Bulgarians, seven Greeks (including doctors and lawyers) and two Albanians. They arrested five Albanians near the Greek-Albanian border for the alleged sale of eight Roma infants.

"The girls have no option but to comply," say the police. "You would not want to upset these people."

(http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/femail/article.html?in_article_id=424450&in_page_id=1879)

Handbook to Help Combat Sexual Exploitation

In 2006 the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) and the European Women's Lobby (EWL) prepared a report on promoting preventative measures to combat trafficking for sexual exploitation. Entitled 'The Links between Prostitution and Sex Trafficking: A Briefing Handbook' and written by Monica O'Connor and Grainne Healy, the Report's purpose is to serve "as a resource



for writing, for education, for work with women and men who wish to combat trafficking and to curb the growth of the sex industry, whether locally or globally. It can also be used as an information resource for those dealing with media - many of whom fail to focus on the essential 'demand' factor, preferring instead to keep their gaze on the woman in prostitution or provide a partisan voice for those who promote the alleged 'right to prostitute' and romanticize prostitution as 'sex work,' in essence defending the vested interests of the sex industry." (pg. 3)

The report presents startling statistics. Internationally the median age for the entrance of girls into prostitution is 14 years of age. Studies in the late 1990s on child prostitution in Eastern Europe indicated that in Russia there were 129 convictions of minors for prostitution, with children making up 25% of Moscow prostitutes. Of 750 girls in a drop-in center, 85% had been sexually abused and forced into prostitution. Moscow boasted a 'nympho' club where minors did strip tease and were tattooed with their owners mark. When they reached 14 their virginity was sold to the highest bidder. Romania had 129 convictions of those under 18 for prostitution offenses. Lithuania reported over 200 children in prostitution. In Latvia 40-50% of those in prostitution were minors, while in Estonia the percentage was 20-30%. Poland reported roadside prostitution flourishing along the border, where minors involved lived like prisoners in barracks at the border crossings. (pg. 19)

"Some European estimates suggest that, in 1990-1998, more than 253,000 women and girls were trafficked into the sex industry of the then 12 EU countries. The overall number of women in prostitution in these countries has grown to more than half a million. In Vienna, Austria, almost 70% of prostituted women come from Eastern Europe. There are about 15,000 Russian and Eastern European women in Germany's red-light districts. Many are in brothels, sex clubs, massage parlors and saunas under the financial control of criminal groups from the Russian Federation, Turkey and the former Yugoslavia, according to a survey of the International Organization for Migration."

"In the region of South Eastern Europe, comprising Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, FYR Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, 90% of foreign women in the sex business are alleged victims

Handbook cont. pg. 3



Awareness

“We, the survivors of prostitution and trafficking gathered at this press conference today, declare that prostitution is violence against women. Women in prostitution do not wake up one day and “choose” to be prostitutes. It is chosen for us by poverty, past sexual abuse, the pimps who take advantage of our vulnerabilities, and the men who buy us for the sex of prostitution.” (Joint CATW-EWL Press Conference, 2005)

Handbook *cont. pg. 2*

of trafficking, 10% to 15% of these women and girls are under the age of 18 years. The majority of victims are recruited in Albania, Bulgaria, Moldova and Romania. The women and girls are often initially trafficked on the local market. They are being moved from one place to another and after a while sold abroad.” (pg. 3)
 Total annual revenues of traffickers as of 2004 were estimated to range from US\$ 5 to 9 billion. (pg. 25)
 (Find the Handbook at: <http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=89931>)

Belgium *cont. pg. 1*

are used for prostitution, and boys and girls under 13 who are forced into begging and criminal activity.
 The causes of child trafficking are complex. Poverty is a big factor, particularly following the breakup of the Soviet bloc (in 15 years, almost a million people left Moldova, abandoning or selling children and leaving them open to criminal exploitation). Globalizing economies, faster transportation and open borders make it easier for traffickers to keep their victims on the move.
 Trafficking is usually viewed more as an issue of border control and a fight against organized crime rather than as a violation of human rights. (<http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/news/story.html?id=16f1696d-67c3-45d7-a6b7-0d590e2b744b>)

Enslavement Techniques

*“The methods that enable one human being to enslave another are remarkably similar. The accounts of hostages, political prisoners and survivors of torture and incarceration from every corner of the globe have an uncanny sameness.
 The methods and techniques of violence are similar to those that are used to subjugate women in prostitution, in pornography and in the home. They include: systematic and repetitive infliction of psychological trauma; organized techniques of disempowerment and disconnection; constant inducement of fear by inconsistent and unpredictable bursts of violence; threats to family and others; convincing the victim that the perpetrator is omnipotent and destroying the victim’s sense of autonomy.”*
 (pg. 8, Handbook)

Four Phases of Entrapment into Prostitution for Young Women

(‘Whose Daughter Next? Children Abused through Prostitution’, Ilford, Barnardos - a children’s organization in the U.K., 1998, in Handbook, pg. 8)

<p>A. Ensnaring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impressing the young woman • winning her trust and confidence • making her think he is the only one who truly understands her • ensuring she falls in love with him, giving her presents, usually including a ring • claiming the status of her boyfriend 	<p>C. Taking control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deciding where she goes, who she sees, what she wears, eats and thinks • using threats, and if necessary violence • enforcing petty rules • being inconsistent and unreliable • demanding that she prove her love
<p>B. Creating dependence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • becoming more possessive • convincing her to destroy important objects and / or reject those she is close to • changing her name • destroying her connections to her previous life • isolating her 	<p>D. Total dominance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating a willing victim • ensuring she is compliant to his wishes • convincing her to have sex with his friend • convincing her to agree to be locked in the house • convincing her that he needs her to earn money, and that the best and easiest way is through selling sex



Awareness

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Forced Marriages

Despite international agreements and national laws, marriage of girls under 18 years of age is common worldwide and affects millions. Poverty plays a central role in perpetuating child marriage. Parents worry about ensuring their daughters' virginity and chastity. A common belief is that child marriage protects girls from promiscuity and, therefore, disease; the reality is quite different.

Facts:

In 2002, about 52 million girls under 18 years of age were married. With about 25,000 girls under 18 years being married each day, an estimated 100 million will be married by 2012. Child marriages occur most frequently in South Asia, where 48% of women aged 15–24 have been married before the age of 18; these figures are 42% for Africa and 29% for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Although the definition of child marriage includes boys, most children married at under 18 years of age are girls. For example, in Mali the girl:boy ratio of marriage before age 18 is 72:1;

Forced Marriage *cont. pg. 5*

Mozambique: Organ Trafficking

Members of the *Servants of Mary* in Mozambique discovered mutilated bodies of children with open bellies, robbed of their organs. Some of these dead children had appeared near the Monastery Mater Dei in Nampula, where the sisters care for more than 60 orphans. Other corpses, found near an abandoned airfield, were also missing organs and eyes. *“There had been an increase of night activity at the airfield – at first we thought it was the trafficking of drugs. Then we realized it was the trafficking of persons,”* one sister said.

The case went public in 2006 after 800 of Mozambique’s children had already disappeared. The statements by the Sisters managed to attract the attention of the local and international mass media. *Amnesty International* investigated and reports reached the *UN Commission on Human Rights* and the *European Parliament*. Because of this effort no one has disappeared for two years. But the population distrusts strangers and lives in tension.

The Sisters are fearful also. *“We suspect who the people are that did this and know where they live. We are afraid it happened because of the involvement of powerful people.”* (http://www.elpais.com/articulo/Comunidad/Valenciana/investiguen/ninos/desaparecidos/van/trafico/organos/elpepuespval/20070308elpval_3/Tes)

Uganda: Orphans Trafficked

Ugandan orphanages are suspected of being involved in trafficking of children out of the country. *“Uganda is considered a source and transit route, as well as a destination, for children being trafficked from the Great Lakes countries,”* the state minister for internal affairs reported. He attributed the causes to poverty, gender inequality, lack of birth registration, exploitative sex, cheap labor and armed conflicts.

The ministry had been alerted to the increasing number of passport applications for fostered children, mostly by foreigners on short-term visits. *“Such foster orders issued to foreigners by temporary immigration arrangements undermine the capacity of law enforcement to monitor the welfare of foster children living abroad,”* the minister said.

He also spoke about the abduction of children by rebels. About 30,000 girls and boys had been abducted and recruited into rebel forces in Uganda in the last 20 years. Some of the abducted children ended up in Sudan, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, the DR Congo, and the Middle East.

To address the problem of child trafficking, the minister urged neighboring governments to tighten adoption procedures, amend laws, and design common guidelines on adoption of children from the region. He hoped every Ugandan would have a national ID card by the end of 2008. (<http://www.newvision.co.ug/detail.php?mainNewsCategoryId=8&newsCategoryId=12&newsId=571618>) Contributed by Ugandan, John V. Muweesi, SDS



Girl-Child: Soldier by Force

In this video, one former girl-child soldier tells of the horrors she experienced in a personal interview with *Everywoman TV*. She also spoke about her experience before the *UN Commission on the Status of Women* in New York in 2007. (<http://womennewsnetwork.vodpod.com/video/551489-girl-child-soldier-by-force-everywoman-tv-production?autoplay=false&c=sort.latest>) (To start video, click arrow in center of screen.)



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Awareness

West Africa

UNICEF pointed to the myriad forms enslavement takes in West Africa.

A 10-year old child was sent from Togo to Benin to work as a domestic servant. Her employer beat her and twice forced chili peppers into her vagina to punish her. Once rescued and back home in Togo, she was raped at age 12. Traumatized, she tried to take agricultural chemicals to commit suicide.

A tradition of “placing” young children with families of wealthier relatives to receive an education or learn a trade has changed. Many children are placed with unrelated strangers, thus becoming victims of abuse.

Many trafficked children from Togo went to Nigeria - girls generally as domestic servants and boys working in agriculture, markets or serving food.

Police in tiny Guinea-Bissau uncovered a trafficking network where young boys, headed to Senegal to attend Koranic schools, ended up begging for coins on street corners. Police found 52 exhausted children ages 4 to 21, many barefoot, poorly clothed, or naked from the waist up.

Child slave farm labor has been exposed in Ivory Coast and Ghana, which together produce most of the world’s cocoa beans.

In Chad, French humanitarian activists were arrested on child kidnapping charges. They tried to fly 103 children, posing as orphans from Darfur, to Europe. Most turned out to be from villages in the Chad/Sudan border area and had at least one living parent. (<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L18213814.htm>)

Forced Marriage

cont. from pg. 4

in Kenya, 21:1; and even in the United States, 8:1.

In many countries, the legal age for marriage is 18, yet some governments enforce these laws loosely. For example, the percentage of girls married before age 18 in Niger is 77%, in Chad 71%, in Mali 63%, in Cameroon 61%, and in Mozambique 57%. In parts of Ethiopia, 50% of girls are married before the age of 15, and in Mali, 39%. Some marriages even occur at birth; in such instances, the girl is sent to her husband’s home at the age of 7.

Detrimental Effects of Child Marriage:

Child marriage is a human rights violation that prevents girls from obtaining an education, enjoying optimal health, bonding with others their own age, maturing, and ultimately choosing their own life partners.

Child marriage has far-reaching health, social, economic, and political implications for the girl and her community. It truncates a girl’s childhood, creates grave physical and psychological health risks, and robs her of internationally recognized human rights. Girls are financially dependent on their husbands and therefore lack the power to make demands upon them.

Pregnancy poses many challenges for young girls. Because pregnancy suppresses the immune system, pregnant girls are at increased risk of acquiring diseases like malaria. They have increased risk for sexually transmitted diseases, cervical cancer, death during childbirth, and obstetric fistulas.

Child marriage affects more than the young girls; the next generation is also at higher risk for illness and death. Adolescent mothers have a 35%–55% higher risk than older women for delivering infants who are preterm and of low birth weight.

In 2000, eight *Millennium Development Goals* outlined a vision that committed member countries to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, educate all children through primary

school, empower women, reduce childhood death, improve mothers’ health, combat HIV/AIDS and malaria, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development by the year 2015. Most of these goals directly affect child marriage. (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/vol12no11/06-0510.htm>)

Sigma Huda, the *Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons*, concluded in her report (UN General Assembly Distr. A/HRC/6/NGO/43, 5 September 2007) that in order to eradicate forced marriages in the context of trafficking in persons, it is necessary to *target the demand*. She proposed that a complete legal prohibition on the demand for forced marriages would function as a deterrent to those who acquire and use the most vulnerable and powerless women and girls for forced marriage. (http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/sdpage_e.aspx?b=10&se=69&t=7)

Jordan Middle East

“There is no end to the abuse and suffering, caused by employers and by fellow migrants, who exploit by gambling and prostitution. We have now developed different programs and have many contacts, working with the embassies (SL, Philippines, Indonesia), immigration and human rights organizations. We visit in the Safe Houses, prisons, and hospitals. We use our own apartment as a safe house for extreme situations, when necessary. The Embassies also have safe houses mainly for runaways, where we visit to do counseling, etc.

Prostitution is a big problem. This past year we had so many women who threw themselves from buildings. Many died or are badly injured.

We have good lawyers and Caritas has some funds, which helps. We also get some donations, which we use for medical problems and repatriation/deportation fees.” (Contributed by SDS Sisters working in Jordan)



Advocacy

A PDF version of the Report is available by e-mailing to: savealbania@savealbania.org

Children Speak Out

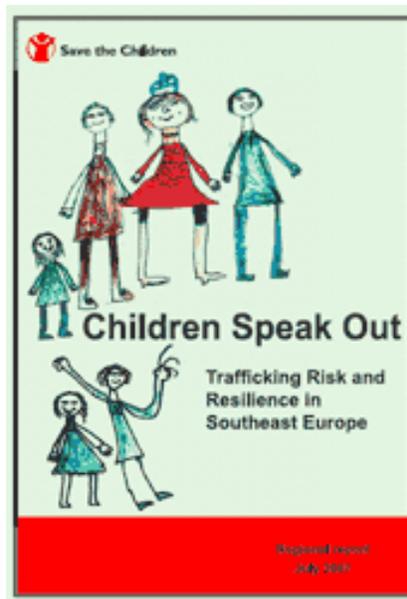
In July 2007 'Save the Children in Albania' published a 200-page report entitled, "Children Speak Out: Trafficking Risk and Resilience in Southeast Europe". The study examined literature describing factors that play into the trafficking of children. These included 'macro risk factors' such as poverty, migration and cultural factors. In addition interpersonal and individual risk factors, as well as gender, educational achievement, age and risk-taking behaviors were analyzed.

Following a detailed description of the methodology used in the study, the Report interviewed 618 children (ages 7 to 18) "identified as 'at risk' ...because they are living and or working on the streets, living in institutions or shelters, are in conflict with the law and/or living in socially marginalized and poverty-stricken communities."

The report then, in 100 pages, allowed children to speak for themselves regarding their experiences and perceptions about:

An understanding of trafficking messages (being tricked and cheated; being asked for information; their age in relation to decision-making, freedom and trust);

Being offered more interesting options: e.g. the offer of material goods or employment; the offer of travel abroad [for adventure; to escape poverty; to flee war or persecution; because of running away from home; to seek a better life; because of trust of strangers; because of involvement by parents or relatives; because of migration or trafficking]; the offer of a boyfriend or husband; the offer of attention [to children in institutions or working on the streets]; the offer of education or freedom from education;



Invitations or directives from persons claiming to be or know a relative or friend.

Based on their insights, the children made recommendations about the following: children's rights; child rearing practices; recreation; education; employment; poverty; migration; marriage; institutions and shelters; social workers and psychologists; law enforcement; NGOs; and peer-to-peer counseling.

Conclusions (pgs. 191-96):

Fundamentally children from Eastern Europe perceived that childhood was much better in the West.

"Children do not simply accept or automatically believe the messages that they receive but evaluate them in light of their own experiences, belief and value systems."

Children saw both coercion and deception (i.e. being "tricked" or "cheated") in trafficking. They believed children could be tricked because they

were young and naïve or because they perceived that they would get something they really needed.

They realized traffickers knew how to target children based on what children most wanted. Traffickers withheld information that children felt would have helped them make better decisions. *"Children place great importance in feeling in control and exercising power in a given situation, exhibiting courage and bravery, acting with forethought and/or taking advantage of an opportunity to cope, survive and/or escape. However, these examples of resiliency and the actions that accompany them often have a range of unintended, negative consequences that may place children more at risk of being trafficked."*

"Furthermore, they do not turn to others for support if they feel that they are not listened to. It is evident, that many children felt that adults (parents, relatives, teachers, social workers etc.) were not listening to them, and often neglected and abused them. As a strategy, they sought alternative sources of support. ...Children who felt that they had few supports said they often relied on strangers for assistance and advice, even though this was widely recognized by children as a risky strategy."

"As a general conclusion, it is evident that instead of focusing only on scaring children, anti-trafficking messages and accompanying interventions should be based on children's perceptions, enhance children's strengths, develop their decision-making skills and thereby help them to develop survival strategies in situations that might increase the risk of trafficking."



Advocacy

Resources:

Stolen Smiles:

A Summary Report on the Physical and Psychological Health Consequences of Women and Adolescents Trafficked in Europe

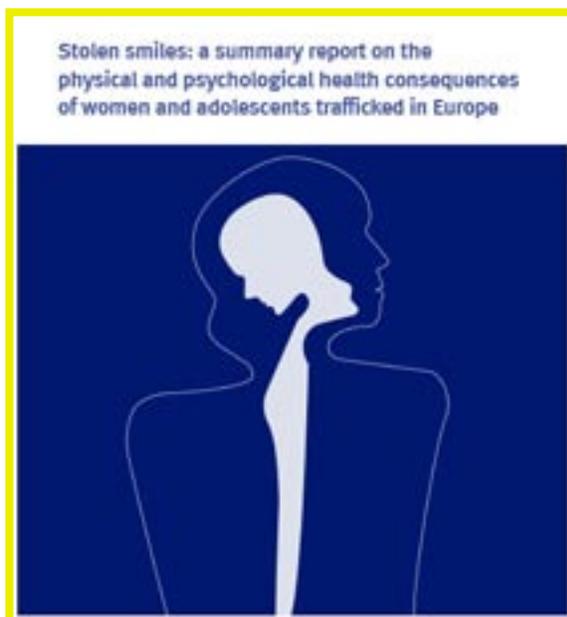
Primarily from Eastern Europe or the European Community, 207 women were interviewed on three occasions from immediately after rescue to three months into their long-term care. They were all between 15 and 45 years of age and had all experienced sex trafficking or sexual abuse during domestic trafficking.

They were asked to describe the myriad symptoms that affected their physical and mental health. The most prevalent and severe symptoms over time included *headaches, fatigue, dizzy spells, back pain, stomach or abdominal pain, and difficulty remembering*. They exhibited many forms of *depression, anxiety and hostility*. The majority suffered varying degrees of *post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)*.

An obvious conclusion is that trafficking causes complex health issues for its victims. These health problems directly influence the victims' ability to cooperate effectively with law enforcement and follow legal procedures. This awareness must become part of the methodology used to rescue victims and enable them to become survivors.

Still Dreams: Child Trafficking in India

This is a short video in which rescued girls speak of their fears and hopes. (<http://womennewsnetwork.vodpod.com/video/551401-children-and-trafficking-still-dreams?c=sort.latest>) (To start video, click arrow in center of screen.)



"I feel like they've taken my smile and I can never have it back."
Lithuanian woman trafficked to London



Action

Thank You

We wish to gratefully acknowledge those who provided generous monetary support for the *Salvatorian Sisters Anti-Human Trafficking Project* during 2007:

NEW SPONSORS

- Dominican Sisters Mission San Jose, CA
- Felician Sisters, Rome Italy
- Servants of Mary, Ladysmith WI
- Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union USA-East and

DONORS

(after the 5/12 publication)

- Sisters of St. Francis, Dubuque IA
- Alice Bouchard OSU New Rochelle, NY

Action Needed

Monitor how your legislators vote(d) on HR 3887.

Urge your Senator to pass this bill. You may call the Capitol switchboard number: 202-224-3121 or find your member's contact information at <http://www.house.gov>

To track the bill's progress and list of co-sponsors, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov> and type in the bill number.

TVPRA Reauthorization Process Continues

Congressman Tom Lantos (D-CA), Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, co-authored the *William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2007* (H.R. 3887) with Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Judiciary Committee Chairman John Conyers (D-MI).

The TVPRA 2007, a third reauthorization, is named for the parliamentarian whose work led to the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in the early 19th Century. Its intent is to assure that efforts to combat the global scourge of human trafficking continue.

The legislation requires a comprehensive analysis of trafficking data to yield new information about where victims are going and how to free them. It also provides help for countries to inspect locations where forced labor occurs, to register vulnerable populations and to provide more protection to foreign workers. It ensures that U.S. assistance programs are both transparent and effective. It urges the Administration to work with other countries to reach agreements between labor exporters and labor importers so that vulnerable workers have more, rather than less protection.

Within the United States, H.R. 3887 offers additional protections for victims, takes steps to prevent the trafficking of children, and ensures that foreign labor recruiters do not engage in modern-day slavery.

The bill passed the House and went to the Senate on Dec. 5, 2007.

Informative Web Sites:

(Each contains information related to human trafficking)

'Global Eye on Human Trafficking'

The International Organization of Migration's (IOM) quarterly newsletter on human trafficking
<http://www.iom.int>

(Comments from readers and contributions may be sent to globaleye@iom.int)

Stolen Smiles

<http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/hpu/docs/StolenSmiles.pdf>

**Toll-Free 24/7 Hotline
National Human Trafficking
Resource Center
1.888.3737.888**

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is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

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