HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE STUDY GUIDES

by the Committee Directors
Dear ACMUN Delegates,

The study guides that follow are written by the directors of your committee in order to help you in your preparation for the conference. Remember that your own research on the topic area and your country’s policy is essential. The main purpose of this document is, as its name suggests, to simply guide you in your personal research.

Each delegate should come to the conference with a working paper for each topic area. In brief, a working paper is a one-page list of proposals addressing the different aspects of the problem, in accordance with the position of the delegate’s country on the issue. For more information on preparation and the rules and procedures of the conference, please consult the online Delegate Preparation Guide. Also, keep in mind that the directors are more than willing to answer any questions you may have, which you can send to the email addresses provided.

I hope that you will benefit from reading these well prepared and thorough study guides.

Sincerely,

Argyris Tsiaras
Secretary-General

Line B. Kristensen
President of the General Assembly

Bürge Abiral
Deputy Secretary-General

Ioanna Pervou
Deputy President of the General Assembly
Dear ACMUN delegates,

My name is İrem Bilgiç and I have the honor to serve as the President Director of the Human Rights Committee. I am a junior at Robert College, İstanbul. I have been enrolled in Model United Nations for four years. These four years have been a significant part of my life. MUN conferences provided the friendly atmosphere in which I could meet many people and discuss serious world issues. I have broadened my vision in these conferences and I hope that all of you will learn a lot in this conference by contributing to the debates. I am looking forward to meeting you and wish the best of luck to all.

İrem Bilgiç
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Hello everyone!

My name is Ellie Melliou, I am 18 years old and I study Law at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. My MUN experience is not as long as I would wish it to be, as I have been a delegate only twice. However, I have been involved in four European Youth Parliament sessions, three times as a delegate and once as an organizer. I am very excited to be the Deputy Director of the Human Rights Committee, as I have always been interested in issues like the ones we are about to discuss. I wish everyone good luck, fruitful debating, and for any questions, don’t hesitate to ask me!

Ellie Melliou
Deputy Director
elliemelliou@hotmail.com
Human Rights Committee

**Topic Area A**
The Question of Freedom of Press

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**Topic Area B**
The Question of Illegal Trafficking of Women and Children

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TOPIC AREA A

I) THE LACK OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers”. The declaration clearly indicates the right to express oneself through the means of mass media. Freedom of the press plays a vital role in the process of democracy. However, many citizens around the world cannot enjoy this fundamental right and have qualified independence in expressing their opinions. Laws that theoretically affirm the freedom of the press are in fact not implemented. The existence of censorship restricts the freedom of the press which is not even covered by laws in some nations. The existing laws restrain people’s rights to gather information and distribute it publicly. Governments restrict access to information services, printing and broadcast facilities. Although the media has a crucial impact on society during election periods, information about the electoral process is inaccessible to journalists. There are countries where an independent media does not exist. In those countries, government media is the only source of information. In countries where independent media exists, governments discriminate by providing fewer facilities to independent media than the facilities provided to the government media. As a result, the public is exposed to biased information. The rights of the press are violated mostly in countries where there are deficiencies in the democratic system. Non-democratic governments especially have strict control over publicized information in order to maintain political strength and to repress any endeavors against the government. A more concerning fact is that in addition to the boundaries they face, members of the press are not given full protection of the law. They are exposed to such violent acts that there have been many losses in the past. In conclusion, in many countries neither independence nor security of the press is guaranteed.

HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

Censorship began soon after the invention of printing facilities. After the church authorities started to require the printers to submit a copy to them, the question of the freedom of press arose. Publications were scrutinized and censored when necessary in order to prevent heresy. Any document that was considered to be against the government was censored. The struggle for freedom of the press first started in England. There was a licensing system which only enabled the printing of material that was granted by the government. Criticizing the government was considered a crime but later the idea that an individual has the right to expression as long as he does not harm others was developed. Unlike England, the United States enacted the First Amendment that prevented the prosecution of people who criticized the government or any authority. During war times, there have been attempts to restrict the freedom of press; for example, during World War I, German publications were severely censored. In almost all nations, the main restraint on freedom of the press was the media that was controlled by the state, which had a totally biased point of view. The establishment of independent media enhanced the freedom of the press greatly. However, there are still countries in the world which only have media that is controlled by the state.

CURRENT SITUATION

Freedom of the press is a problematic issue in non-democratic governments. In the countries with democratic deficiencies, information and printing facilities are hardly accessible. These countries have a great control of information that is publicized in order to prevent anything that contradicts government policies. The control of information strengthens political power and suppresses any attempt to challenge the government. Journalists who are working on controversial issues are fired and even forced into exile in some countries. Laws of the states do not guarantee the right to freedom of expression. In many states where the laws cover the right to freedom of the press, these laws are not put into practice. Citizens, who are not accustomed to having access to publications that criticize an authority, do not react to such publications moderately. Moreover, states do not guarantee full protection to the members of the press making them vulnerable to violent attacks.
II) THE LIMITS TO THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

CASE STUDY: THE CARICATURES OF PROPHET MOHAMMED

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A conflict that seems to deteriorate as years pass arises from the boundless right to freedom of expression and concerns both the Western world and the Islamic world. The publication of drawings that depicted Prophet Mohammed in a Danish newspaper in 2005 and the strong response that came from the Islamic world, aggravated relations between these societies and further increased the misperceptions about Islam and the Islamic culture. The Islamophobic caricatures published in a Danish newspaper became a global problem and triggered the violent reaction of the whole Islamic world. The issue went beyond a conflict between Denmark and the Islamic world and it transformed into a conflict among countries which have different views about the limits of publications which relate to religious issues. The Danish cartoons were a result of the lack of the true understanding of the Islam religion. However, the outrageous reaction of the Islamic world did not combat Islamophobia but further prevented the correct understanding of the Islamic ideas by failing to reflect them in their response to the Danish cartoons.

HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

Freedom of press in Denmark

The Danish Constitution approved in 1849 guaranteed the freedom of speech. It was suspended during the German occupation of Denmark in World War II. Since then freedom of expression has been in full practice. According to the Worldwide Press Freedom Index for 2005 by Reporters Without Borders, the greatest press freedom is found in northern Europe, particularly in Denmark. Independent media of Denmark often have publications about religious issues which may be considered blasphemy in other societies.

Islamic Tradition

The Quran directly condemns idolatry but there is no direct reference to pictorial arts. Islam started being acknowledged as Prophet Mohammed narrated the revelations he received about this religion. Islam and the doctrines of Quran spread with rapidity among people who were polytheists. The idea behind the prevention of idolatry was related to the refusal of polytheism and the adoption of a monotheistic religion, which in this case was Islam. The Quran states "There is no god but God" and this belief could not have spread rapidly if objects related to belief in many gods and worship of other forces existed. Unlike the Quran, several faiths refer to pictorial arts and condemn the images of people and animals. However, all Muslims have different perceptions of pictorial representations.

CURRENT SITUATION

In September 2005, twelve cartoons that depicted Prophet Muhammed were published in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten. Flemming Rose, the editor of paper, stated that his aim was to test the limits of press freedom but there was no intention to insult Muslims over their religious beliefs. He said that he would treat a Christian or Jewish figure the same way he treated a Muslim figure and his depictions of Prophet Muhammed did not exceed the boundaries of taste. In contrast to his statement about the cartoons, some of the cartoons published were offensive. For example, the cartoon that depicted Prophet Muhammed wearing a bomb with a lit fuse for a turban and the Islamic creed written on the bomb would surely be offensive to the majority of Muslims. Many Muslims claimed that this particular cartoon associated Prophet Mohammed with terrorism. They felt that the association of themselves and their religion with terrorism meant a war against Islam and the Islamic unity.

The Initial reaction to the cartoons came only from the Muslims living in Denmark and a few other Muslim countries. Demonstrations throughout the world did not turn violent initially after the publication of the cartoons. However, after other newspapers published the cartoons, the dispute intensified. An Egyptian newspaper was first to republish the cartoons and denounce them, but the publication did not receive any condemnations. Later, several European newspapers from Norway, Germany, France, Netherlands and Belgium published the cartoons aiming to show that the free press had the right to publish such things. A few editors from both Western and Muslim papers were fired from their positions because they intended to publish the caricatures. Papers of the United States and United Kingdom refrained from publishing the caricatures and only referred to them in the articles. The editor of Jyllands-Posten apologized for having offended the Islamic world and stated that the drawings were misinterpreted and misunderstood.
Muslim people living in Denmark accepted the apology unlike the rest of the Islamic world. In fact, some Muslim groups were determined to accuse the entire Western world of its lack of respect for Islam. Ambassadors from some Muslim countries were recalled. The Danish government stated that no action could be taken because the press had freedom and the newspaper’s publication was within the limits of law. The Regional Public Prosecutor concluded that the cartoons concerned a subject of public interest and the Danish law ensures freedom of the press to express opinions about subjects of public interest. The Director of Public Prosecutors agreed that there was no violation of the law. Many leaders from the Islamic world wanted the Danish government to state the obligation to respect all religions and religious symbols to prevent such a conflict that would have serious consequences globally.

Jyllands-Posten reported that the violence was not stirred up by their caricatures but the falsified caricatures distributed in the Middle East by the radical imams from Denmark. It was also stated by other publications that some Islamist extremists triggered the violence by circulating more offensive cartoons to raise the tension. In a few months the protests turned violent and got more outrageous as no political action was taken by the Danish government. Offices of the European Union were stormed and European workers were threatened with death. The Danish embassies were stormed, burned down and destroyed. Danish flags were burned outside the embassies. Demonstrations took place in Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan, Indonesia, Syria, the Palestinian territories, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Iran, Jordan, Israel, Gaza, Kashmir, India, Bangladesh, Egypt, Malaysia, Libya, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Nigeria. Thousands of people protested and clashed with security forces and several people were killed during the clashes. In Nigeria, the demonstrations escalated to such extremes that some extremist Muslim groups burned down churches and attacked the homes of Christians, accusing the entire Christian world of insensitivity to Islam. In reaction, disorderly Christian crowds attacked Muslims killing them and burning down mosques and homes. Some Muslim countries took economic measures, including economic boycotts, responding to the absence of punishment by the Danish government. Different Muslim communities responded to the cartoons in various ways. Unlike the Arab world, some Muslim countries had a muted response.

Many political leaders of the Muslim world stated that the cartoons were an attack on Islamic values and they aggravated the chasm between the Western world and the Muslim world. They said that Western society was inclined to equate the Muslim world with violence and to blacken Islam. The Vatican also stated that freedom of expression should be put into practice with full respect to all religions. After the immense increase in violence, the United Nations, Organization of the Islamic Conference and the European Union expressed the need for restraint while governments which had initially been unable to prohibit the demonstrations started to take action. The publication of the caricatures and the response that followed it substantiated the need for considering the relation of religion and certain rights once more.

**Bloc Positions**

1) Reporters Without Borders announced in its Third Annual Worldwide Press Freedom Index that freedom of the press was most threatened in East Asia and the Middle East. Out of 167 countries Iran was 158th, Syria was 155th and Iraq was 148th. Iraq was found the most insecure place for journalists in recent years.

In most of the Middle East states, an independent media does not exist or is censored every day. An independent media does not exist in Libya, which is ranked 154th. In Syria, journalists
who refuse to be censored are expelled from the country. In Saudi Arabia the media is directed by the royal family. Iran, ranked 158th, suspended most of the reformist newspapers and put journalists into prison. Although Israel ranks 36th, the Israeli army has committed violent acts against the press in the Palestinian territories, ranked 127th, and threatens the journalists who prefer the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as their subject. In India, ranked 120th, political activists act violently against the press. The increased army pressure on the local press dropped Pakistan to the 150th place. The lack of freedom of national press within the Middle East states corresponds to the violent actions taken in response to the Danish cartoons in these states.

II) All EU members are among the first forty countries where the freedom of the press is in practice. According to the Reporters Without Borders, the greatest press freedom is found in Northern Europe. Denmark is the place where the press has the most freedom. Finland, Ireland, Iceland, Netherlands and Norway follow Denmark. Several European newspapers, in which a Norwegian newspaper was the first, republished the cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad after the Danish newspapers. They claimed that it was their right to publish the cartoons in free societies where the right to freedom of speech was guaranteed. The records show clearly that there is great freedom of press in these countries. However, the boundless freedom in Denmark and other European states resulted in global reaction against the lack of limitations in the freedom of expression. The outrageous response to the Danish cartoons came mainly from the Arab nations. Islamist extremists triggered the violence in these nations by their demonstrations which led to the death of hundreds and aggravation of the gap between the Muslim world and the Western world. However, slightly different reactions came from the Muslim world. For example, demonstrations did not turn violent in the tropical Southeast Asian countries. The fact that Arab nations are the most threatening nations for journalists confirms the extreme response to the cartoons in these nations.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER

I)

- How can relevant UN bodies foster the work of independent media and promote freedom of expression in the Middle East countries?
- How can states be encouraged to allow the establishment of independent media?
- In what context, should the right to freedom of expression be exercised?
- What measures should be taken to enhance the accessibility of information, printing facilities and distribution systems?
- How should legislative changes be made so that security of the press is guaranteed by law?
- How can public awareness be raised in order to inform the public about its right to freedom of expression?
- How can the efficiency of the press be increased during the electoral processes?

II)

- Is there a need for a universal code of ethics for the media that would respect all religions?
- How can the inaccurate public opinion and misconceptions of the Western world about the realities of Islam be corrected?
- What is the correct way of expressing resentment for publications like the cartoons depicting Prophet Muhammad?
- Should there be a political response to publications that are considered offensive to religious beliefs? Should there be specific sanctions?
- How can the spread of prejudice toward the Muslim culture be stopped?
- What deterrent measures must governments take in order to prevent the arousal of violence in response to such publications?
- What is the moderate expression of feelings and thoughts about religious values?
- How can international organizations cooperate and collaborate in ameliorating relations between communities of varying religions?
- How can the Western press be encouraged to reflect the positive aspects of the Islamic world in publications?
- How can communication between the youth of the Western world and the Islamic world be enhanced?
CONCLUSION

There are distinctions in the countries’ perceptions of the freedom of the press. Varying policies and laws of states reflect the thoughts of nations in different ways. In some regions, the only source of information is the government media which is censored on a daily basis; whereas in others people have access to a great amount of publications from numerous sources. The freedom of the press is ensured fully in some states in contrast to those where journalists are forced into exile because they have opposing views with the government. There are no universal standards for the media that determine ethical values. Laws are not comprehensive enough either to provide certain rights or to ensure that the rights guaranteed do not violate other rights. The satirical cartoons published by a Danish newspaper and the outrageous behavior that followed have demonstrated the need for alterations in the laws covering the freedom of press. This incident has also shown that the gap between the Western world and the Islamic world is widened. Global action must be taken in order to prevent such tragedies that are likely to happen in the future. Our committee must come up with applicable ideas that will solve such a conflict by not violating the fundamental right to freedom of expression.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

I believe that this study guide will assist you in acknowledging the conflict and taking appropriate measures in your resolutions. However, I propose that you learn more about the policy of your assigned country on this issue and the laws covering the freedom of press. It would be helpful for you to learn where your country stood in the conflict involving Denmark and the Islamic world. You can take a look at the following links:

www.rcfp.org
www.oic-oci.org
www.cpj.org
www.stanhopecentre.org
www.worldpress.org
www.freedomhouse.org

BIBLIOGRAPHY

www.rcfp.org
www.un.org
www.dw-world.de
www.bbc.co.uk
www.oic-oci.org
www.wikipedia.org
www.wpfc.org

Written by İrem Bilgi, Director
TOPIC AREA B

DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM: WHAT IS "TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS"?

"Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring 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 a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs (in our case, we shall be examining the aspects of the problem applying to women and children) [as defined in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime].

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

➢ Women: Millions of women every year are trafficked around the world, mainly for sexual exploitation, especially in the forms of prostitution and pornography, by means of fraud, deception, intimidation, isolation, threat and use of physical force or debt bondage. In many cases, it has been noted that corrupt state officials facilitate the trafficking by accepting bribes in order to falsify documents and provide protection to the traffickers. Corruption on behalf of certain state officials, and the fact that many governments treat trafficked persons as illegal aliens, criminals, or both, exposes these people to further abuse while the perpetrators remain unpunished, thus allowing trafficking to thrive.

➢ Children: According to a recent research conducted by UNICEF, the issue of child trafficking and slavery affects hundreds of millions of children annually all around the globe. Evidence and statistics from the International Labour Organization show that approximately 246 million children are engaged in exploitative child labour, an estimated 75% of them working in dangerous environments, such as mines or factories, or with dangerous substances, such as chemicals and agricultural pesticides. Furthermore, 1.2 million children worldwide are estimated to be trafficked into the army, into prostitution rings, or forced into debt bondage, being in constant danger of getting arrested or detained for actions they’re not responsible for. Asian and Eastern European girls at the age of adolescence are trafficked as "mail-order brides". One million children, the majority of them being girls, are exploited annually in the multi-billion-dollar sex industry, and most of the times abused because of local demand (but unfortunately, since sexual activity is regarded as a private affair, most governments tend to abstain from intervening in cases of sexual exploitation). Finally, UNICEF’s statistic data show that over 300,000 children, starting from the age of 8, are exploited in armed conflicts in more than 30 countries around the world, facing serious injuries afterwards or even resulting in cruel deaths.

HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

The issue of human trafficking in its current sense has been widely characterised as a modern form of slavery, the slavery of the 20th and 21st century. Slavery throughout history was the first human rights issue to arouse wide international concern. Yet, even in an era where slavery is thought to be abolished and condemned worldwide successfully, slavery-like practices remain a grave and persistent problem, giving modern-day slavery a wide spectrum of meanings, each of them referring to a different kind of human rights violation. In addition to traditional slavery and the slave trade, these violations include the sale of children, child prostitution and pornography, the exploitation of child labour, the sexual mutilation of women and children, the use of children in armed conflicts, debt bondage, the traffic in persons in the sale of human organs and the exploitation of prostitution.

International concern with slavery and its suppression is the theme of many treaties, declarations, and conventions of the 19th and 20th centuries. The first of three modern conventions directly related to this issue is the Slavery Convention of 1926, drawn up by the League of Nations (the predecessor of the United Nations), followed by the Slavery Convention of 1953, this time drawn up by the United Nations, which succeeded the League., and then the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar
The governments of countries in Tier 1 fully comply with the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Such governments criminalize and have successfully prosecuted trafficking, and have provided a wide range of protective services to victims. Victims are not jailed or otherwise punished solely as a result of being trafficked, and they are not summarily returned to a country where they may face hardship as a result of being trafficked. In addition, these governments sponsor or coordinate prevention campaigns aimed at stemming the flow of trafficking.

The governments of countries in Tier 2 do not yet fully comply with the Act’s minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards. Some are strong in the prosecution of traffickers, but provide little or no assistance to victims. Others work to assist victims and punish traffickers, but have not yet taken any significant steps to prevent trafficking. Some governments are only beginning to address trafficking, but nonetheless have already taken significant steps towards the eradication of trafficking.

The governments of countries in Tier 3 do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance. Some of these governments refuse to acknowledge the trafficking problem within their territory. On a more positive note, several other governments in this category are beginning to take concrete steps to combat trafficking. While these steps do not yet reach the appropriate level of significance, many of these governments are on the path to placement on Tier 2.”

*The governments of countries in Tier 1 fully comply with the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Such governments criminalize and have successfully prosecuted trafficking, and have provided a wide range of protective services to victims. Victims are not jailed or otherwise punished solely as a result of being trafficked, and they are not summarily returned to a country where they may face hardship as a result of being trafficked. In addition, these governments sponsor or coordinate prevention campaigns aimed at stemming the flow of trafficking.

### Bloc Positions

As the question of human trafficking is not a crucial matter of world peace and security, there have been established no country blocs whatsoever up to this point, holding a position in favour or against the already existing suggestions for a solution to the issue.

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Edited by Miladis Alamaniis

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under discussion. However, what should be taken into account while figuring out each country’s “allies” in the matter is how lenient or decisive the measures of each country against the problem have been, and also the extent to which human trafficking, especially of women and children, is observed in each country.

1) Asia --Greater Mekong Sub-region:

First of all, we should note the fact that the area most affected by the problem of human trafficking, either as a source or as a destination of people trafficked worldwide is the greater region of East Asia and the Pacific. Nevertheless, even so, six Asian countries have already begun cooperating in the fight against human trafficking. Government officials and police chiefs of Cambodia, China, Laos, Burma, Thailand and Vietnam have created an action plan (signed on the 31st of March, 2005) to be followed by their authorities, aiming at the investigation and prosecution of the traffickers and supporting the rehabilitation of the victims by providing help.

Here are some facts concerning human trafficking in Thailand, China and Vietnam, to help you get an idea of the alarming extent of the problem in this region:

- **Thailand** is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour. Thai women are trafficked to Australia, Bahrain, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, Europe, and North America for commercial sexual exploitation, while numerous men, women, and children from Burma, Laos, Cambodia, and the People’s Republic of China are economic migrants winding up in forced or bonded labour (particularly in commercial fisheries and sweatshops) and commercial sexual exploitation in Thailand (as a result of the country’s widespread sex tourism). The observed cases of internal trafficking in the country concern mainly ethnic hill tribe women and girls from Northern Thailand. An estimated 200 thousand to 300 thousand sex industry workers in the country are either underage or in involuntary servitude or debt bondage, according to the United Nations and other NGOs. Young migrant women and girls, particularly from Laos, were found employed in indentured servitude and under physical constraint in sweatshops that restricted their freedom.

- **The Peoples’ Republic of China** is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and sexual exploitation. Internal trafficking appears to be the major problem here, as a significant number of Chinese women and children each year are trafficked internally for forced marriage and forced labour. On an international scale, there are many cases of Chinese women lured and trafficked in various destinations throughout Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe and North America for commercial sexual exploitation, under false promises of legitimate employment. Furthermore, there are many cases of Chinese men and women being smuggled abroad at enormous personal financial cost and, upon arrival in the destination country, being subjected to commercial sexual exploitation or other forms of exploitative labour to repay their debts. Finally, China is a destination country for women trafficked from Burma, North Korea, Russia, Vietnam and Mongolia for the purposes of labour, commercial exploitation and forced marriage. The Ministry of Public Security estimated that at least 9,000 women and 1,000 children were kidnapped and sold illegally each year.

- **Vietnam** is a source and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and sexual exploitation. More specifically, the trafficking of women and girls to neighbouring countries, such as Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Taiwan for commercial sexual exploitation and the trafficking of Vietnamese women to Taiwan, lured there by deceptive offers of employment or marriage to Taiwanese men. Moreover, it is a destination country for Cambodian children who are trafficked for forced work as beggars, while there have been observed several cases of internal trafficking from rural to urban areas.

2) Western World – North America and Europe:

- What is particularly significant concerning some countries of the West, more specifically, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Sweden and Norway, is that even though all of these countries suggest rather “popular” destinations of illegally trafficked people annually, they all comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking to a great extent, having a leading role in the fight against illegal trafficking in persons through decisive plans and actions.

- The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women has reported the following interesting facts: Poland, despite its full compliance with the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking, is alarmingly affected by the issue of trafficking in women, especially under-
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aged girls, into the sex industry, to be exploited in pornography or/and prostitution. Ukraine, facing difficulties in successfully complying with the standards, is currently one of the largest exporters of women who enter the international sex industry either under false pretences or for economic survival. However it should be mentioned and acknowledged that the Governments of Poland and Ukraine formed a consensus in 1998 to cooperate in fighting prostitution and sex slave trafficking to the West.

3) Africa:

A continent mostly affected by the trafficking in women and children, which nevertheless has taken a strong initiative to tackle the problem; ministers from 26 African countries have adopted a joint plan to fight the trafficking of people on the continent, particularly of children and women, who were forced into labour and prostitution.

4) Countries of Tier 3:

Pay special attention to this small yet significant group of countries which might not be officially in alliance with each other, but they are all characterised by an ignorant position concerning the matter of human trafficking on a national level, and make no significant efforts (or no efforts at all) to comply with the standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. They should therefore be taken into account as countries with a common policy.

QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER

The following list contains some basic questions your final committee resolution must answer, not necessarily limiting your aim as a team to answering only these questions. It would be advisable to specify each question carefully while addressing it in your resolution.

1. What actions should the General Assembly recommend in order to prevent the trafficking in women and children, especially in regions or countries which lack control of illegal transportations?

2. Concerning the women and children who have already fallen victims to trafficking in the past, what measures should be proposed by the General Assembly for their rehabilitation in their society?

3. Should the above-mentioned actions be the product of international cooperation amongst Governments and the already existing non-governmental organisations and bodies, or should a new force, in the form of another yet specified organisation, be established to tackle the problem?

4. How can the specific solutions proposed by the General Assembly be at the same time effective and also lenient to countries less willing to compromise, in that they do not dramatically or forcefully intervene in and change these countries’ internal policies?

5. Should laws be imposed on all countries to follow, in order to achieve a more effective, radical, and long-term solution to the problem, or is it a measure bound to insult the right of sovereign states to adhere to their own regulations, and therefore, against the principle of democracy that the United Nations try to promote?

CONCLUSION

The question of illegal trafficking in persons is a world matter that concerns each and every country around the globe and should raise everyone’s awareness at national and international levels. It is unacceptable that, in an era which is mainly characterised by radical changes and progress in most aspects of everyday life, primary human rights such as freedom and health-both physical and psychological-are continuously being violated to such an extent and without drastic efforts aiming to prevent that. The world needs to secure the safety of its citizens, and above all, its future citizens of the new generation, children. I think that we would all agree that human trafficking is a situation from which objectively no one really benefits, but on the contrary, it causes intolerable pain, agony and fear to a vast number of innocent people worldwide. Every nation naturally has the will to eliminate the problem, there’s probably no question about that. The real question lies in who is ready to take action and in what way, because staying idle has never solved any grave problem. It takes strong initiatives, concern, and above all, cooperation and understanding. And since we belong, now, in the Human Rights committee, we should bear in mind that the protection of human rights, the most fundamental
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims: “No one shall be held in slavery and servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms”.

This will be the goal of our resolution.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Since the aim of this study guide was to help you get acquainted with the situation of human trafficking in international and basically general terms, as well as the classification of the countries into groups (blocs) according to their compliance with the standards for the elimination of human trafficking and the degree to which each one of them is affected by the problem, you might still reasonably have some questions about the situation concerning the particular country you are going to be representing. I would, therefore, advise you to consult the section of the US State Department’s *Trafficking in Persons Report*, entitled “Country Narratives”. There, you will find a thorough reference to all countries’ situation concerning human trafficking, the steps they have followed to eliminate the problem, and in most cases, the countries or organisations they cooperate with on international level in the fight against trafficking in persons. The link is the following one: http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65987.htm

Also, in order to familiarize yourselves with some already existing UN solutions to the problem of human trafficking, I would suggest that you read the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime. Here is the link:


Finally, a helpful source of information for your research could be some bodies and non-governmental organizations already handling the problem of human trafficking, such as “La Strada-Ukraine” (for the prevention of traffic in women in central and eastern Europe) in www.brama.com/straada, “UNICEF” (for the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and abuse) in www.unicef.org/protection, and the “Coalition Against Trafficking in Women” (which strives to combat mainly sexual exploitation of women and children in all its forms, with the help of donations and funds) in www.catwinternational.org.

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