

Committee: Asia-Pacific Committee

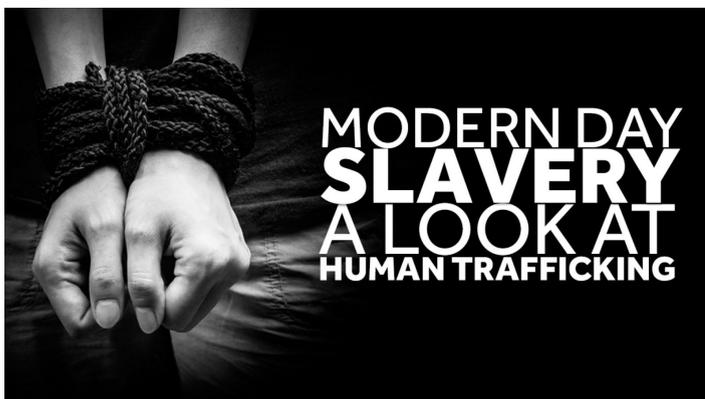
Issue: The issue of human trafficking and forced labour in Southeast Asia

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Introduction:

Human trafficking is the illegal trade of humans for profits through acts of commercial sex and forced labour. Time moves quickly and slavery may just be a horrific chapter in history, but we fail to realize that human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery. It is more difficult to recognize because this type of enslavement is more deceptive. Its target demographic being the unfortunate and the poor, traffickers entice these individuals with promises of money, opportunities abroad, or whatever else they may want or need. Human trafficking is a fast-growing problem. The UN has defined human trafficking as an act of exploiting a person through labor forces. Under this definition, the issues are broken down further into more types of trafficking being acknowledged. Debt bondage, forced labour, and sexual exploitation are the 3 most common forms of human trafficking.



In the past decade, human trafficking has become an issue of concern in Southeast Asia, formerly known as Indochina. It is estimated that 200,000-225,000 women and children from Southeast Asia are trafficked annually. As the demands rise, the supply chain of humans keeps growing.

Caption#1: Modern day Slavery

Victims of such practices can be found in every corner of Asia, and gradually migrating all over the world, from being employed as field workers to commercial sex workers to house maids in foreign countries. These victims are often living in sub-par or even hazardous conditions with limited access to food and water. Additionally, their working conditions are often not much better with many working in uninspected sweatshops, with little availability to basic healthcare in the event of an accident or illness. This raises the flag of a war against human trafficking.

Definition of Key Terms

Human Trafficking

As defined by the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons: “it is the recruitment, transportation, transferring, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of 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.”

Sexual Exploitation

The sexual abuse of a person or child without their consent, through sexual activity, including exposing a person to pornography, displaying of the genitalia to another person, making of pornography, and molesting the victims. This horrific act has been heavily condemned by many nations, and is considered a sexually-oriented crime equivalent to raping.

Forced Labour

The act of treating a worker cruelly for benefits. Forced labour is a very common fate that the victims of human trafficking have to share. The conditions of the workplace are often hazardous, and the workers are often provided insufficient breaks and compensation for the long hours they are forced to work.

Background Information

Origins

It is important to remember that human trafficking and child abuse has been around for centuries, despite the lack of official records of the first instance, it's a guaranteed fact that humans have been exploiting others since the beginning of the first civilization. Society today views this problem to be the dilemma for the women and children of impoverished undeveloped or war-torn nations. And we fail to understand that any kids, any races, and colour, any class can be a victim of abusive actions. As mentioned earlier, human trafficking has happened throughout history, but even today it can be observed in hidden plain sight, in contrast to slavery of the past, modern day slavery is heavily criminalized, due to the threat of severe consequences, human traffickers mostly work in the shadows of society in order to conceal their unjust business and to avoid interference from the government.

Considered to be the third largest international crime industry, this business secures human traffickers an enormous amount of profits all while violating numerous human rights laws, and causing major headaches for nations trying to combat this industry. Human trafficking is growing at a rapid rate, with increasing amounts of victims every year. In recent years, the age range of victims has decreased dramatically; from what seemed to be the predicament of adults and teenagers to now a major concern for children. Traffickers are slowly preferring children as their primary prey.

Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia the hub of of human trafficking. With an alarming increase in the number of victims trafficked throughout the past decade, Southeast Asia is widely known for possessing the world largest number of forced laborers. Nearly one-third of the global trafficking trade occurs within the Southeast Asian region. As mentioned before, 200,00-225,000 women and children from Southeast Asia are trafficked annually and 45,000-50,000 of those women and children are estimated to be trafficked into the US and Europe each year. It is worth mentioning that a majority of these victims are transported out of Southeast Asia as sex worker and those that remain become cheap labour for factories and sweatshops.

Despite the decriminalization of human trafficking, several driving factors allow it to continue to exist as a profitable business. One of the major factors is consumer and employer demand; by utilizing cheap labour forces, many firms hire trafficked victims to work in sweats shop, in order to maximise any profits made. The rises in sex tourism allows the demand for more sex workers to increase, these patrons of the commercial sex industry are a huge source of income for the human trafficking industry.

Debt bondage

Debt bondage is also referred to as debt sex work or debt labour. When a person is being held captive and forced to provide a service without just compensation, as an act of repaying a debt or other agreement, they are considered to be a victim of debt bondage. Debt bondage seems to be a common cause of human trafficking across the southeast Asian region, but that doesn't mean it's not an international threat. that nations within the Sub-Saharan Africa also see many instances of human trafficking due to debt bondage.

With an estimate of 8.1 million people who are currently bonded to illegal labour and sex trafficking, as provide by the International Labour Organization, the crime has gone on uncontrolled by many nations. Some nations simply don't have the capacity to punish the reported crimes due to an overwhelming estimated average of 145 cases being reported each month. The lack of prosecution and discipline by many nations' laws has created a massive loophole. Since there are no regulations on what type of loads and payments being provided, to protect both the loader and receiver. In many cases in

Southeast Asia, children are a form of payment, especially in rural and undeveloped areas, where poverty is a common problem for families within a village or sometimes even province.

These poor and uneducated families are the prime targets of trafficker and they are coerced through fantasies of making money, but the end results always backfire. Many cases start out very similarly with poor families coming to trafficker for a small loan of money to provide the fundamental needs for their families, but when the time to repay comes, the majority of the families can't pay the price. As a result, they end up giving away their vehicle, or valuable household items, as payment. When those things don't add up to the repayment amount they give up their children as the very last option. These children are then sold into brothels or sweatshops to become workers. Many times this includes child prostitution and pornography. Because the primary victims are poor people, the crime often goes unreported. Sometimes the victims are not documented within that country leaving governments have little to no solutions or ability to solve this problem. Debt bondage is still spreading like wildfire, and the sign of it stopping is simply unfound.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
17 April 1839	The creation of the Anti-Slavery International. Before the establishment, slavery was not consider a crime and many heartbreaking events happened creating a dark chapter in history.
1904	The International Agreement on the issues of "White Slave Traffic", this is the first ever international protocol against human trafficking.
1956	Over 67 countries signed the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act.
1995	The issue of women and children trafficking was brought to light, when the United Nations hosted the 4th World Conference focusing on the issue of trafficking of women.

1997	The establishment of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes
December 2003	The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, was introduced and signed, creating a more efficient way of combating human trafficking.
2009	One of the biggest human trafficking rings was discovered and stopped in Taipei.
11 January 2011	This day was set to be Human Trafficking Awareness Day by the United States of America.

UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

In an effort to combat against human trafficking, the UN has been actively providing methods and tactics to decline the rise of human trafficking. With the main target of increasing national and international securities, as well as infiltrating human trafficking hubs, to ensure the defeat of the traffickers. However these frameworks are considerably new, and nations with dramatic cases of human abduction are mostly less economically developed countries, with little to no security enforcement, which results in them not being able to implement these treaties and solutions effectively.

- **S/RES/1674 (2005):** The issues of human trafficking during armed conflict was condemned by the Security Council.
- **United Nations Global Initiative to fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT.HUB):** Established in March 2007, the UN.GIFT.HUB goal was to support the fight against human trafficking by creating constructive relationships between governments. Under the supervision of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes, and the financial aid of the United Arab Emirates, the UN.GIFT.HUB primary objective was based on the idea that human trafficking is not an individual government's responsibility. Thus governments should collaborate, or in their terms "build bridges", to ensure the efficiency of the battle against human trafficking.
- **UNHRC Resolution 11/3 (2009):** This resolution generally discusses the effect of human trafficking, focusing on the human rights aspect of the crime. It directed the attention from purely human trafficking as a whole to focusing on the abuse of women and children.

- **General Assembly Resolution 64/293 (2010):** This resolution is also widely known as the “United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons”.
- **S/RES/2331 (2016):** This is the most recent resolution that contains objectives of combating human trafficking, adopted by the Security Council. This resolution calls out for attention to the issues of human trafficking, specifically the actions carried out by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the main solution was to impose sanctions upon nations that host human trafficking criminal.

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