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**THIRD COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL**

**ASSEMBLY**

**COMMITTEE STUDY GUIDE**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

- i. ASEAN: Association of southeast Asian nations. Its members are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam
- ii. COMMIT: Coordinated Mekong ministerial initiative against trafficking
- iii. CRC: Convention on the rights of the child
- iv. CRC-OPSC: (additional convention) on the sale of children and child prostitution and pornography
- v. (Lao) PDR: People's democratic republic
- vi. GMS: Greater Mekong sub-region
- vii. ILO/IPEC: International labor organization/ Elimination of child labor
- viii. MOU: Memorandum of understanding
- ix. NPA: National plan of action
- x. UNICEF: UN children's fund
- xi. UNODC: UN office on drugs and crime
- xii. UN. GIFT: UN global initiative to fight human trafficking
- xiii. NGO: Non-governmental organization
- xiv. UNESCO: UN educational, scientific and cultural organization
- xv. UNIAP: UN inter agency project on human trafficking

# WELCOMING MESSAGE BY THE BOARD



## **Chair**

### **Mareva Chatzitheodorou**

Dear delegates,

Taking up the role of a diplomat and efficiently responding to current issues is undeniably no easy task. Nevertheless, hopefully, this study guide will not only provide you with the necessary data and information to start your research and get involved in the issue preparing yourselves for the upcoming debate, but also, spark your interest and get you excited for the conference, which is definitely most promising. I urge you to take facts in this guide under serious consideration and deal with the issue with all due respect to your country's policy. Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.



## **Co-Chair**

### **Eleftheria Karampelias**

Honorable delegates,

I am more than proud to welcome you to the the 3rd UNGA Committee -SOCHUM- of Fredmun 2017! I am Eleftheria Karampelias, graduate of the Law school of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, and I will be serving as your Co-chair, along with Ms. Mareva Chatzitheodorou. Among with the agenda items of our Committee social, humanitarian and human rights issues concerning all human beings are included. The advancement of women, the protection of children and the international drug control are only some of the fields falling under the Committee's jurisdiction. The fundamental right to privacy that is undoubtedly questioned in our era due to the rapid development of the technology and the repulsive phenomenon of human trafficking are to be discussed. Ambassadors, it is your responsibility to express your country's policy on these issues, to use your diplomatic skills, to be open to new ideas and propose innovative action plans. In other words, do your best because the whole humanity needs you! I am looking forward to being part of this procedure. See you in Cyprus

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE**

The Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee<sup>1</sup> (SOCHUM) or in other words the Third Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations is tasked with a broad mandate regarding social, humanitarian and human rights issues that affect people all around the world. The committee offers the perfect opportunity for delegates to deal with current issues that affect nations and people on a social level. An important part of the work of the Committee will focus on the examination of human rights questions. The Committee also discusses questions relating to the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, the treatment of refugees, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the right to self-determination. The Committee also addresses important social development questions, such as issues related to youth, family, ageing, persons with disabilities, crime prevention, criminal justice, and international drug control.

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<sup>1</sup>Un.org. (2017). *UN General Assembly - Third Committee - Social, Humanitarian & Cultural*. [online] Available at: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/third/> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

## **Topic A: Preventing child trafficking; the case of Southeast Asia**

## INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

Throughout the international community, child trafficking is considered to be a serious violation of human rights. Children are being moved away from their homes; therefore they are directly and indirectly being exposed to dangers, while they are deprived of their right to a home, safety and education. During the most fragile phase of their physical and psychological development, when they learn how to trust and build relationships with others, they are being taken away, exploited for whatever they have to offer, their small size, their abilities, their skills, even their body and organs. Children, for those seeking to make profit, are considered as easy prey to exploit<sup>2</sup>.

Despite the fact that the international community has realized the threat posed by child trafficking, and that it, in fact, constitutes a form of child labor, it has been quite unproductive when it came to passing legislation or implementing treaties and conventions<sup>3</sup>. The great majority of countries have ratified most of the treaties and protocols on the issue, but they have failed to fully implement them. All the aforementioned will be thoroughly explained in the following sections of this study guide.

There are many approaches to child trafficking. First of all, it may be seen as a violation of the rights of children, owing to the fact that traffickers and trafficking networks deprive them of their basic and most fundamental human rights. Secondly, trafficking is acknowledged as one of the worst forms of child labor, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO). Last but definitely not least, trafficking constitutes a matter of national security.

In 2012, according to the ILO, there were 5.5 million children who had been trafficked and were still in a situation of exploitation<sup>4</sup>. This estimate includes cross-border and internal trafficking. Domestic work, agriculture, construction, manufacturing and entertainment constitute sectors, in which trafficked children are employed the most. Specifically, in Southeast Asia, it is estimated that 10.000 people are deceived or captured into forced labor annually<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup>Anon, (2017). Human Rights Watch World Report. [online] Available at: Anon, (2017). Human Rights Watch World Report. [online] Available at: [https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/wr2013\\_web.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/wr2013_web.pdf) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017]. [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Anon, (2017). ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour. [online] Available at: Ilo.org. (2017). Convention C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention, 1999 (No. 182). [online] Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C182](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182) [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

This study guide will go through the current situation concerning child trafficking in Southeast Asia, the causes, the facts, the patterns, thus providing a tool for research and setting the guidelines for the debate.

## **DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

### *Child*

All persons under the age of eighteen (18)<sup>6 7</sup>

A young human being below the age of puberty or below the legal age of majority

### *Trafficking*

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation<sup>8</sup>.

### *Child Trafficking*

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. It is a violation of their rights, their well-being and denies them the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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<sup>6</sup>Oxford Dictionaries | English. (2017). child | Definition of child in English by Oxford Dictionaries. [online] Available at: <http://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/child> [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>7</sup>Anon, (2017). Declaration of the rights of the child. [online] Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/malaysia/1959-Declaration-of-the-Rights-of-the-Child.pdf> [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>8</sup>Dictionary, t. (2017). trafficking Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. [online] Dictionary.cambridge.org. Available at: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/trafficking> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

### *Exploitation*

It includes the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”<sup>9</sup>

### *Source*

The country, town, or village or other source of origin of the trafficked child

### *Transit*

The route or point on this route which is between the source and the destination

### *Destination*

The place where the child ends up in exploitation

### *Supply*

Trafficked people are often called the 'supply' side of trafficking. They are a factor of production when their labor is exploited.

### *Consumer Demand*

It is generated directly by people who actively or passively buy the products or services of trafficked labor.

### *Derived Demand*

It is generated by all people who stand to make a profit from the trafficking.

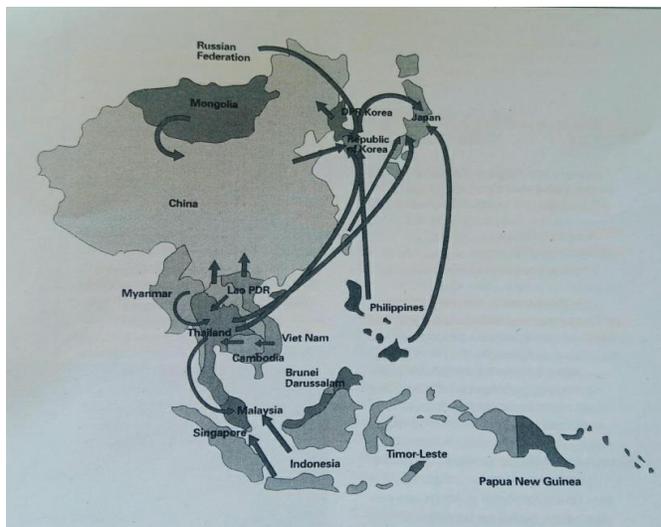
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<sup>9</sup>Oxford Dictionaries | English. (2017). exploitation | Definition of exploitation in English by Oxford Dictionaries. [online] Available at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/exploitation> [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

## HISTORY OF THE TOPIC

All countries in Southeast Asia are dealing with the issue of child trafficking. Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor - Leste and Viet Nam are dealing with the issue on different extent and levels.

It should be underlined that children are trafficked from rural to urban centers, from small towns and villages to big cities, but also, from one country to another. The following map demonstrates the routes which are followed by traffickers of children in the region<sup>10</sup>. In Southeast Asia, there is a number of different factors that render children susceptible to trafficking. These factors are individual or socioeconomic, such as poverty, family breakdown, lack of education, lack of viable employment opportunities, urbanization, gender inequality, discrimination, violence and weak law enforcement<sup>11</sup>.



### *Cambodia<sup>12</sup>*

Human trafficking and especially trafficking of children in Cambodia has been at a great extent induced by the civil conflict that tore the country in 1965. Decades of conflict in the country resulted in a torn society and destroyed infrastructure, which then led to a

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<sup>10</sup>Benko, E. (2017). Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia | Fall 2015 | Washington State University. [online] History.libraries.wsu.edu. Available at: <https://history.libraries.wsu.edu/fall2015/2015/08/31/human-trafficking-in-southeast-asia/> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>11</sup>UN ACT |. (2017). Tools & Guidelines - UN ACT |. [online] Available at: <http://un-act.org/tools-guidelines-download/> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017]

<sup>12</sup>U.S. Department of State. (2017). *Cambodia*. [online] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2016/258738.htm> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

lagging economic development. Due to the civil war, schools, churches were devastated, while other religious organizations ceased to exist. Lack of education and lawful employment opportunities gave some individuals the ground to gain profits by facilitating trafficking. Unfortunately, Cambodia is a country that has been most affected by illnesses associated with trafficking, such as HIV.

### *Indonesia<sup>13</sup>*

One of the most important causes of trafficking in this country is the fact that legal documentation is not provided at birth. Approximately 37% of children under the age of 5 have no birth certificate. Lack of legal documentation can narrow down the opportunities for legal employment. Taking into consideration that unemployment rate in the country is 6-7%, many people tend to turn to illegal means to survive. Another reason why trafficking in Indonesia is a very common phenomenon is the fact that traffickers can run rampant owing to transport options available and very low level of prosecution against them.

### *Malaysia<sup>14</sup>*

Children in Malaysia are subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Many of these country's trafficking offenders are individuals, who seek to make a profit from young boys and girls; at the same time, large organized crime syndicates are usually involved in trafficking. Fewer trafficking investigations and prosecutions were initiated in 2016, than in the previous years, but convictions were increased from three to seven.

### *Brunei<sup>15</sup>*

In this country, sex trafficking victims are augmenting, while illegal adoption constitutes a very common phenomenon.

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<sup>13</sup>U.S. Department of State. (2017). *Indonesia*. [online] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2016/258785.htm> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>14</sup>U.S. Department of State. (2017). *Malaysia*. [online] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2016/258814.htm> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>15</sup>U.S. Department of State. (2017). *Brunei*. [online] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2016/258732.htm> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

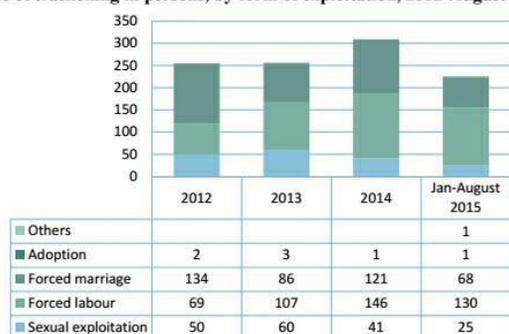
## Myanmar<sup>16</sup>

Children are forced to sex trafficking and illegal labor in fishing, manufacturing, forestry, agriculture and construction, which jeopardizes their health, life and safety. Burmese children are also exploited by foreign child sex tourists. Cross-border trafficking is primarily investigated.

## Philippines<sup>17</sup>

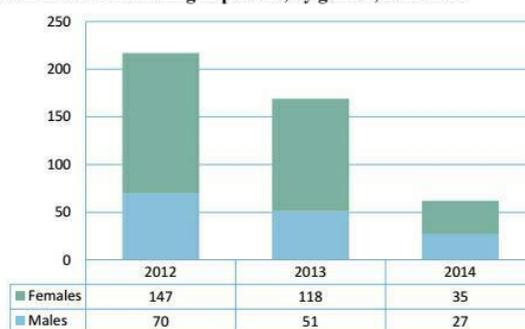
According to UNICEF, children are usually trafficked for exploitation in sex trade; an estimated number of 80.000 children are involved in prostitution, especially in tourist areas. An undetermined number of children are forced into exploitative labor operations.<sup>18</sup>

Cases of trafficking in persons, by form of exploitation, 2012-August 2015



Source: Anti-Trafficking Police.

Persons convicted of trafficking in persons, by gender, 2012-2014



Source: Anti-trafficking Police.

## Thailand<sup>19</sup>

Thailand has a long history of human trafficking and anti-trafficking interventions. Labor trafficking, as well as sex trafficking constitute usual phenomena in this country. However, Thai government has taken great steps in combating sex exploitation, but it has not efficiently dealt with forced labor. Due to the growth of the sex industry, a great amount of foreigners came to the country looking for the 'exotic'. Consequently, sex sector

<sup>16</sup>Hulst, H. (2017). *Child trafficking cases at record high: Myanmar*. [online] Frontier Myanmar. Available at: <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/child-trafficking-cases-at-record-high-police> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>17</sup>U.S. Department of State. (2017). *Philippines*. [online] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2016/258843.htm> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>18</sup>Interpol.int. (2017). *Trafficking in human beings / Trafficking in human beings / Crime areas / Internet / Home - INTERPOL*. [online] Available at: <https://www.interpol.int/Crime-areas/Trafficking-in-human-beings/Trafficking-in-human-beings> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>19</sup>Nhrc.or.th. (2017). *Regional Cooperation to Prevent Human Trafficking in Asia*. [online] Available at: <http://www.nhrc.or.th/getattachment/d10faa6b-9121-456a-895e-40a9f335ed2e/.aspx> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

in Thai urban centers rapidly grew. In addition, it is indisputable that Thailand has undergone a great growth during the last years. Unfortunately, economic growth resulted in the creation of a stark division between rural and urban areas of the country. Citizens began to move from towns and villages to urban centers, where they could find more employment opportunities. Due to the extremely rapid growth, Thai workers could not fill all job vacancies, something that led many people by the neighboring countries to cross the borders and enter Thailand.

### *Timor – Leste<sup>20</sup>*

East Timor is a destination country for women from Indonesia, the People's Republic of China (P.R.C.), Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation. Widespread internal displacement, poverty, and lack of awareness of trafficking risks may lead East Timor to become a source of vulnerable persons trafficked to other countries, including children.

### *Viet Nam<sup>21</sup>*

Viet Nam is mainly a source country of children trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor. Girls are also sold as brides in China. Internally, children are trafficked from villages to urban centers to work at factories or in the sex industry. Unfortunately, existing legal framework does not comprehensively address trafficking all the aforementioned matters.

When dealing with child trafficking in Southeast Asia, it is essential to refer to the efforts all countries in the region have made, in order to find viable and effective solutions to the problem. Through GMS and ASEAN member states, Southeast Asian countries have made great steps in measuring trafficking, collecting data -which is extremely hard to do (“hard to see, harder to measure”)-, understanding the patterns and the flows of the phenomena, cooperating with all other countries in the region, protecting trafficked

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<sup>20</sup>U.S. Department of State. (2017). *Timor-Leste*. [online] Available at: <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2014/226833.htm> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>21</sup>Anon, (2017). *Child Trafficking in Viet Nam*. [online] Available at: [https://www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/NPM\\_CEOP\\_FCO\\_report\\_-\\_trafficking\\_of\\_Vietnamese\\_women\\_and\\_children.pdf](https://www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/NPM_CEOP_FCO_report_-_trafficking_of_Vietnamese_women_and_children.pdf) [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

victims and holding traffickers and intermediaries accountable.  
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In a spirit of cooperation, countries have signed the following bilateral Memoranda of Understanding:

- Cambodia & Thailand
- Cambodia & Viet Nam
- Lao PDR & Thailand
- Thailand & Viet Nam
- Thailand & Myanmar

These memoranda focus on the following fields: “combating and eliminating trafficking”, “employment cooperation” and “law enforcement”<sup>24</sup>.

Through the aforementioned alliances and MOUs, countries gain perspective to other countries' data, while they can exchange ideas and practices, as well as cooperate on profiling the traffickers and bringing them to justice. Furthermore, Southeast Asian countries can create a more viable labor market which will provide opportunities to all; a fact which would undoubtedly contribute to the combat against trafficking.

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<sup>22</sup>ASEAN | ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY ONE COMMUNITY. (2017). ASEAN | ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY ONE COMMUNITY. [online] Available at: <http://asean.org/> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

<sup>23</sup>Anon, (2017). ASEAN plan of action against trafficking in persons, especially women and children. [online] Available at: <http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/APA-FINAL.pdf> [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>24</sup>Anon, (2017). Child trafficking in East and Southeast Asia -UNICEF. [online] Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef\\_EA\\_SEA\\_Trafficking\\_Report\\_Aug\\_2009\\_low\\_res.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef_EA_SEA_Trafficking_Report_Aug_2009_low_res.pdf) [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

It is a fact that in many countries trafficking is not recognized as a criminal act according to national legislation, thus making it easier for traffickers to escape and minimize penalties for those who get convicted, since the latter are charged with prostitution, abduction, smuggling, and illegal immigration of people or labor exploitation instead.

Internationally, however, there are treaties, protocols and covenants, which have been agreed upon, gradually ratified and implemented, in order to effectively address child trafficking.

### *Convention of the Rights of the Child<sup>25</sup> (CRC)*

This Convention protects children's rights to life, safety, home, education, food, sanitation and free time to play. Articles 32, 34 and 35 specifically relate to the child's right to be protected from exploitation, drugs, sexual abuse and exploitation. There are two additional optional protocols to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and pornography, as well as on the use of children in armed conflict.

### *ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labor Convention<sup>26</sup>*

Trafficking is included in these forms of labor. Other forms include bonded or forced labor or recruitment into armed conflict. ILO's Recommendation includes suggestions on planning and coordination to prevent trafficking.

### *UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime<sup>27</sup>*

According to Article 2a: "organized criminal group shall mean a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences established by the convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit."

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<sup>25</sup>Anon, (2017). Combatting Trafficking in Children for Labour Exploitation. [online] Available at: [http://file:///home/imichalaki/%CE%9B%CE%AE%CF%88%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%82/Trafficking\\_Kit\\_Full\\_Books\\_En\\_Web.pdf](http://file:///home/imichalaki/%CE%9B%CE%AE%CF%88%CE%B5%CE%B9%CF%82/Trafficking_Kit_Full_Books_En_Web.pdf) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>26</sup>Ilo.org. (2017). Convention C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). [online] Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C182](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182) [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

<sup>27</sup>Unodc.org. (2017). Convention on Transnational Organized Crime. [online] Available at: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/treaties/CTOC/> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

This convention is crucial, because child trafficking has been acknowledged to be a very complex phenomenon, which can only be dealt with if countries that face the same issue cooperate with each other by exchanging data and information and by co-organizing methods of bringing criminals to justice. Many officials have stated that child trafficking can only be eliminated through transnational actions.

*Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (also known as the Palermo Protocol)*<sup>28</sup>

Its provisions do not only aim to combat trafficking and hold perpetrators accountable, but also to assist the victims and promote cooperation.

*Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons*<sup>29</sup>

Special attention should be paid to the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons.

In regional level, it seems that governments of Southeast Asian countries have comprehended that trafficking constitutes an imminent threat, therefore have ratified a plethora of declarations and protocols<sup>30</sup>.

*ASEAN Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons, Particularly Women and Children*<sup>31</sup>

It has been ratified by Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam.

*ASEAN Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty*

It has been ratified by Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

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<sup>28</sup>Ohchr.org. (2017). OHCHR | Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. [online] Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ProtocolTraffickingInPersons.aspx> [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>29</sup>Anon, (2017). UN global plan of action to combat trafficking in persons. [online] Available at: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/United\\_Nations\\_Global\\_Plan\\_of\\_Action\\_to\\_Combat\\_Trafficking\\_in\\_Persons.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/United_Nations_Global_Plan_of_Action_to_Combat_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf) [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>30</sup>Anon, (2017). ECPAT - exploitation of children on travel and tourism in Southeast Asia. [online] Available at: [http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SECTT\\_Region-SOUTHEAST-ASIA.pdf](http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/SECTT_Region-SOUTHEAST-ASIA.pdf) [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>31</sup>Anon, (2017). ASEAN plan of action against trafficking in persons, especially women and children. [online] Available at: <http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/APA-FINAL.pdf> [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

### *ASEAN Guidelines on Child Trafficking Victims*

It has been ratified by Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam.

### *COMMIT Guiding Principles for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region<sup>32</sup>*

It has been ratified by China, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam.

## **DISCUSSION OF THE TOPIC<sup>33</sup>**

### *Risk and vulnerability*

When examining child trafficking in Southeast Asia it is fundamental to analyze the factors that render these children susceptible to trafficking. According to UNICEF, these factors can be individual, family related or socioeconomic<sup>34</sup>. Of course, the factor of demand should be also underlined.

Individual factors include experiences of violence or abuse, dropping out of school, living on the street, especially from an early age, lack of legal personal documentation or citizenship and desire for adventure<sup>35</sup>. It is vital to point out that when talking about children, the temptation of the unknown or promises for adventures nobody else will ever have the chance to live, play a very important role.

Family related factors, such as family breakdown, domestic violence, substance abuse from the parents or siblings of the children, neglect and lack of access to information, have also been attributed to child trafficking<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup>Apflnet.ilo.org. (2017). *Resources – AP - Forced Labour Net*. [online] Available at: [http://apflnet.ilo.org/resources/aggregate?c9=Policy&b\\_start:int=15#c5=Resource&b\\_start=0](http://apflnet.ilo.org/resources/aggregate?c9=Policy&b_start:int=15#c5=Resource&b_start=0) [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>33</sup>Anon, (2017). *Reversing the Trend; Child Trafficking in East and Southeast Asia*. [online] Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef\\_EA\\_SEA\\_Trafficking\\_Report\\_Aug\\_2009\\_low\\_res.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef_EA_SEA_Trafficking_Report_Aug_2009_low_res.pdf) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>34</sup>UNICEF. (2017). *Child trafficking*. [online] Available at: [http://unicef.org/protection/57929\\_58005.html](http://unicef.org/protection/57929_58005.html) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>35</sup>Unicef.org. (2017). *UNICEF Home*. [online] Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

<sup>36</sup>UNICEF. (2017). *Child trafficking*. [online] Available at: [http://unicef.org/protection/57929\\_58005.html](http://unicef.org/protection/57929_58005.html) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

Factors relating to the socioeconomic context children live in, play a vital role to their vulnerability to trafficking. These factors include poverty, lack of education and viable employment opportunities, discrimination, uneven financial growth, consumerist culture promoted by the media and armed conflict. For instance, in Cambodia, the civil war paved the way for child trafficking<sup>37</sup>.

UNICEF reports draw the attention to the factor of demand that fuels the trafficking industry<sup>38</sup>. Specifically, demand for child labor is high, due to the facts that children settle for low wages, are unaware of their rights as children, as well as workers and are less likely to be a part of a labor syndicate. Demand for sex with children is spurred by pedophiles, child sex offenders and sex tourists as well; this phenomenon is very common in Thailand<sup>39</sup>. Last but not least, great demand exists for adoption and young brides.

Apart from the aforementioned factors, which render children vulnerable to trafficking, risks that children are exposed to when they are being trafficked should be examined. Risks in transit mostly occur when children are travelling alone in the night, unprotected, in unknown territory, without money or a place to sleep. This mostly happens when they trust an unregistered agency to organize their travel. Furthermore, children are at risk at destination, since i) they are separated from their families, ii) they may lose their identification papers or have them stolen, and iii) they may be introduced to drugs and substance abuse<sup>40</sup>.

### *Purposes of trafficking*

According to UNICEF, several reasons for children to be trafficked have been identified. These include various forms of bonded or exploitative labor, sexual exploitation, marriage, adoption, begging and the sale of small items<sup>41</sup>.

### *Process*

Child trafficking usually begins when a child is recruited by a member of a trafficking

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Anon, (2017). Reversing the Trend; Child Trafficking in East and Southeast Asia. [online] Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef\\_EA\\_SEA\\_Trafficking\\_Report\\_Aug\\_2009\\_low\\_res.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef_EA_SEA_Trafficking_Report_Aug_2009_low_res.pdf) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>39</sup>Anon, (2017). The Economics of Forced Labour. [online] Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms\\_243391.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_243391.pdf) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>40</sup>UNICEF. (2017). Child trafficking. [online] Available at: [http://unicef.org/protection/57929\\_58005.html](http://unicef.org/protection/57929_58005.html) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

group (from now on, a trafficker<sup>42</sup>. In some cases, children approach traffickers themselves, in search of a brighter future, in terms of employment prospects, or while looking for adventure. Sometimes members of the child's family may contact a trafficker and suggest that their child is available. More often than not, there is a relationship of trust involved; trust between the child and the trafficker or trust between a member of the family of the child and the trafficker. It is important to underline that trafficking involves movement. This means that children are being moved either from their town or village to a big, urban city or from their country of origin to another (probably neighboring) country<sup>43</sup>.

The purpose of trafficking is strongly interconnected to the profit from children exploitation. As mentioned above, exploitation can take many forms, depending on the sex of the children, their abilities, the nature of the market in which they have been trafficked and their vulnerability.

### *Profiles and organization of traffickers*

According to UNICEF, "Traffickers are people who contribute to child trafficking with the intent to exploit. They include recruiters, intermediaries, document providers, transporters, corrupt officials, service providers and employers of trafficked children."<sup>44</sup>

Data collection and research in southeast Asia suggest that traffickers organize themselves according to four theoretical models<sup>45</sup>. The first model is called "corporate" and it is organized like any regular business, with a boss at the top, while it usually includes many organized criminal groups.

The second model is called "network" and has many similarities to the first one. Their main difference can be traced in the fact that, instead of having a boss at the top, in this case there is a network of specialists.

The third model, is more loosely organized, with criminals who lead victims from one country to another through well-known routes.

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Anon, (2017). Reversing the Trend; Child Trafficking in East and Southeast Asia. [online] Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef\\_EA\\_SEA\\_Trafficking\\_Report\\_Aug\\_2009\\_low\\_res.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef_EA_SEA_Trafficking_Report_Aug_2009_low_res.pdf) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>44</sup>UNICEF. (2017). Child trafficking. [online] Available at: [http://unicef.org/protection/57929\\_58005.html](http://unicef.org/protection/57929_58005.html) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

The fourth model is made up of individuals with no special knowledge or training, who are only responsible personally for executing one part of the plan. These people may operate regularly or just once in a while. In the Greater Mekong Sub-region, the most common, reoccurring model is the third one<sup>46</sup>

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### *Impact*

It is easily understandable that trafficking affects not only the children trafficked, but also their families, the community and their country's social development.

Apart from the physical dangers a child goes through, when trafficked, he/she also faces psychological traumas that can haunt him/her for a long period of time, often halting his/her personal development and recovery.

Most of the times, families send their children away in hope that they will be able to get employed, create a better future for themselves and their loved ones. In reality, many of these families never get to see their children again and, of course, never receive the agreed profits<sup>48</sup>.

If a trafficked child sends some money back home, this might incentivize other families to approach traffickers, in hope that their children will be lucky enough to gain some money to ameliorate their standard of living.

At a national level, if children manage to return home, they will be in imperative need of rehabilitation and cure.

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<sup>46</sup>Anon, (2017). Reversing the Trend; Child Trafficking in East and Southeast Asia. [online] Available at: [https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef\\_EA\\_SEA\\_Trafficking\\_Report\\_Aug\\_2009\\_low\\_res.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/eapro/Unicef_EA_SEA_Trafficking_Report_Aug_2009_low_res.pdf) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>47</sup>UNICEF. (2017). Child trafficking. [online] Available at: [http://unicef.org/protection/57929\\_58005.html](http://unicef.org/protection/57929_58005.html) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

## **BLOC POSITIONS**<sup>49</sup>

### *Western Bloc*

In this bloc, rates of child trafficking are very low. This bloc works towards reducing the effects and occurrence of trafficking through programs and education, while strict laws and punishments are enforced.

### *Middle East Bloc*

Child trafficking is a very common phenomenon. Countries are more likely to aid children affected by trafficking. No strict laws are being implemented due to the Sharia law.

### *African Bloc*

200.000 children trafficked per year. Trafficking is still not recognized as a crime.

### *Latin American Bloc*

550.000 children trafficked per year. These countries work to provide education, in order to reintegrate children. In addition, they promote the implementation of strict laws, while they reclaim any financial aid they can get from developed countries.

### *Asian Bloc*

250.000 children trafficked per year. Education and humanitarian aid is needed, in order to cure victims and hinder spreading of the phenomenon.

### *Southeast Asia*

Many steps need to be taken to combat the problems that Southeast Asian victims who seek refuge in other Asia countries deal with.

Multilateral cooperation is of vital importance (ASEAN cooperation, UN global initiative to fight human trafficking, Palermo protocol,

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<sup>49</sup>Unodc.org. (2017). UN.GiFT - United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking. [online] Available at: <https://www.unodc.org/lpo-brazil/en/trafico-de-pessoas/ungift.html> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

and UN act) <sup>50 51 52 53</sup>

Protection and prevention are both considered equally crucial factors in combatting child trafficking, by bringing the traffickers to justice and aiding the victims recover.

### **ACTIONS THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN TAKEN**

The United Nations have adopted several Resolutions on the issue of child trafficking. Especially the Human Rights Council has repeatedly dealt with this specific matter<sup>54</sup>. In 2008 and 2009 it adopted Resolutions that aimed to address all aspects of the issue. (71/287, 63/156, 63/194, 2331, 64/293)<sup>55</sup>.

The General Assembly, adopting Resolution 64/293 in 2010, established a global plan of action to target trafficking, and find ways to eradicate it<sup>56</sup>. Strengthening partnerships against trafficking in person was underlined as of vital importance.

UNICEF is the UN's primary agency focusing on trafficking as a severe violation of children's rights<sup>57</sup>. Along with ILO/International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC), they have been closely working with government officials, NGOs, researchers, academics, families and reintegrated children in order to strengthen resilience and mobilize all forces available. ILO/IPEC and UNICEF both support United

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<sup>50</sup>Childhub.org. (2017). Asia ACT -Asia against child trafficking. [online] Available at: [http://childhub.org/en/system/tdf/library/attachments/tdh\\_germany\\_combating\\_child\\_trafficking\\_in\\_southeast\\_asia.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=16874](http://childhub.org/en/system/tdf/library/attachments/tdh_germany_combating_child_trafficking_in_southeast_asia.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=16874) [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>51</sup>Anon, (2017). UN global initiative to fight human trafficking (UN. GIFT). [online] Available at: <https://www.unodc.org/documents/overview.pdf> [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>52</sup>Ohchr.org. (2017). OHCHR | Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons. [online] Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/TrafficInPersons.aspx> [Accessed 7 Jul. 2017].

<sup>53</sup>UN ACT |. (2017). Tools & Guidelines - UN ACT |. [online] Available at: <http://un-act.org/tools-guidelines-download/> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

<sup>54</sup>Un.org. (2017). Security Council Condemns Human Trafficking in Strongest Terms, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2331 (2016) | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. [online] Available at: <https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12647.doc.htm> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

<sup>55</sup>Team, O. (2017). ODS HOME PAGE. [online] Documents-dds-ny.un.org. Available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/No9/479/41/PDF/No947941.pdf?OpenElement> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

<sup>56</sup>General Assembly of the United Nations. (2017). Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. [online] Available at: <http://www.un.org/pga/71/event-latest/global-plan-of-action-to-combat-trafficking-in-persons/> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

<sup>57</sup>Unicef.org. (2017). UNICEF Home. [online] Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) by creating an expert group on the issue of child trafficking<sup>58</sup>.

Bilaterally and multilaterally, Southeast Asian governments have worked cooperatively, in order to tackle the transnational challenges of the phenomenon. Memoranda Of Understanding (MOU) and National Plans of Actions have been adopted by the legislative bodies of the governments. Memoranda of Understanding aim to raise awareness on a specific issue, while providing all facts available<sup>59</sup>. Via MOUs, countries are able to share facts, data, testimonies and exemplary cases, thus facilitating the process of tackling a transnational problem. National Plans of Action offer more concrete solutions and proposals, which need to be cooperatively examined and implemented.

### **QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED**<sup>60</sup>

- What fuels traffickers? (Demand and profits<sup>61</sup>). Which are the ways to reduce profits for traffickers?
- How can reduction concerning demand for brides, sex tourism, cheap labor, adoption be achieved?
- What makes children approach traffickers? (i.e. need for money or adventure, neglect from their families, employment opportunities).
- How can children and their families be informed concerning the dangers of trafficking?

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<sup>58</sup>Anon, (2017). ILO IPEC+ Flagship Strategy. [online] Available at: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms\\_528938.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---ipec/documents/publication/wcms_528938.pdf) [Accessed 19 Sep. 2017].

<sup>59</sup>Nhrc.or.th. (2017). *Regional Cooperation to Prevent Human Trafficking in Asia*. [online] Available at: <http://www.nhrc.or.th/getattachment/d10faa6b-9121-456a-895e-40a9f335ed2e/.aspx> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

<sup>60</sup>Unodc.org. (2017). UN.GiFT - United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking. [online] Available at: <https://www.unodc.org/lpo-brazil/en/trafico-de-pessoas/ungift.html> [Accessed 20 Sep. 2017].

<sup>61</sup>Dictionary, t. (2017). trafficking Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. [online] Dictionary.cambridge.org. Available at: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/trafficking> [Accessed 1 Oct. 2017].

- How can campaigns “portray true colors” of trafficking and how dangerous it is for children and their wellbeing?
- Who can organize these evidence-based campaigns, making sure they reach even the smallest community?
- How can the UN ensure that legal documentation and citizenship is provided at birth?
- How can international community make sure that laws, which target the roots of the problem are implemented at a national and international level?
- How can cooperation between countries be strengthened and expanded?
- Apart from prevention, protection and rehabilitation of victims are equally important. How can victims be identified?
- Which measures can be adopted by the UN, in order to strengthen rehabilitation programs for victims who have escaped from the trafficking loop?
- Since very limited knowledge and data collection has been established, how can international organizations, NGOs and national governments cooperate to collect data? How can these data be used to combat trafficking? How can social and justice structures be strengthened? How can any implemented method be evaluated for future amelioration and reference?

## **CONCLUSION**

Taking all the aforementioned data into serious consideration, it is well understood that child trafficking poses major threats to many (if not all) of today’s societies. A number of factors render children vulnerable to trafficking, which jeopardizes not only their life and safety, but also their psychological stability and development. International community has already taken some steps towards efficiently combatting trafficking, by ratifying and partially implementing treaties and conventions. However, it has been observed that trafficking is a complex phenomenon, which needs complex treatment. International community needs to make sure that all Resolutions adopted should focus on two axes. The first one is prevention, while the second one is protection. Identification of the victims, punishment of criminals, education and social structures reform are key terms, which need to be taken into account by all countries, along with their official policies,

when discussing on the issue. It is crucial to stress that a multi-disciplinary approach is enforced through all stages of combating the problem. This will include links between families, communities, provinces, villages, states, regions, cities and other areas and it will ensure maximum efficiency.

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