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SOCIAL, CULTURAL & HUMANITARIAN COMMITTEE (GA3)

PROTECTING REFUGEES FROM HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Student Officer: Kally Glentze

Position: Co-chair

Chair: Orsalia Toutouza

**International
Community**

**Memorable
Experience**

**Challenges
Skills**



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INTRODUCTION

Following the turbulent socio-political state of certain nations due to political instability, countries' residents, such as those of Syria and Libya, have been forced to abandon their homes and seek for asylum in other countries. However, asylum is often not enough. There is also a need for higher safety and security, as recent incidents have proven that individuals or groups have taken advantage of refugees. This leads to what is often an expensive and dangerous journey for refugees. Refugees go through an unknown journey with the desire for a higher quality of life, which leads them to achieving a vulnerable status instead. Many have experienced a large sequence of devastating losses, and after all that, they still face the risk of exposure to human trafficking.

There are approximately 21 million victims trapped in today's slavery. These slaves are exploited to labor, sexual exploitation and in state-imposed forced labour. At least 20 months of strict forced labour is most likely the case. A wide range of unrecorded refugee victims are not recorded despite their increasing role of the phenomenon's victims.

Large amounts of refugee children have been lost in the hands of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), something which increases concerns that the children are being separated from their parents in their journeys from their country of origin. This means the children are placed into organizations where they are then placed in a home of various sponsors; which refer to alleged "close-ties" of the immigrant's families or are distant relatives. This again is a risk as the children are put in an automatic risk of not being in a safe home in the hands of these sponsors. This means that children being brought into unknown peoples' homes in a new city with people of different cultures is better than the risk of the dangerous environments. These dangerous environments may lead to the violation of human rights, such as through trafficking.

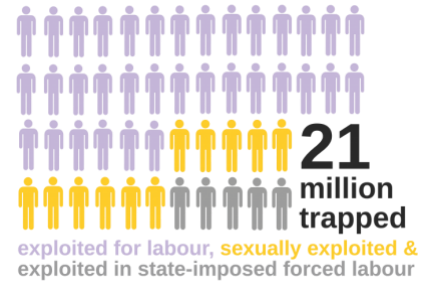
The overwhelming majority of victims of human trafficking are women and children. Shocking estimates show that one to two million women and children are trafficked every year. Trafficking of this kind mainly involves exploitation and the willingness of victims to leave their country is almost always obtained through the use of coercion.

To conclude the overview of the topic, human trafficking of refugees is a rising phenomenon due to the huge refugee waves. Conditions in refugees' countries of origin worsen and a higher number of refugees are forced to flee their countries. This means however that many more volunteers and staff are needed in order to control the betterment of refugees' lives. However, there is a lack of increase of volunteers and staff and therefore many refugees remain illegal inhabitants of a country due to lack of legitimate



paperwork which makes them targets for human trafficking. As this situation progresses, the phenomenon of human trafficking may rise, so action is needed urgently.

21 million people victims of forced labour





DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

- **Refugee**

“A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.”¹ To be recognized as a refugee under this criterion, a person who is outside their country of nationality must establish, among other matters, that he or she is unable or, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for any of the relevant reasons, unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country.

- **Refugee Protection**

The term ‘protection’ in this context means ‘diplomatic protection’, which is, the protection accorded by states to their nationals abroad.

- **Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking is a crime against the person due to the violation of human rights of movement. This violation often occurs through coercion. These people may also be prone to commercial exploitation. The purpose of human trafficking is for victims to be placed into forced labour, sexual slavery or removal of organs. This is the trade in people, and usually that of women and children. Human trafficking has three constituent elements;

- **The act:** which means what is done. This involves recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of victims.
- **The means:** which means how it is done. This involves the threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, and deception, abuse of power or vulnerability or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim.
- **The purpose:** which means why it is done. This includes exploiting the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices and the removal of organs.

¹ "Refugee | Definition Of Refugee In English By Oxford Dictionaries". Oxford Dictionaries | English, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/refugee>. Accessed 15 June 2018.



- **Coercion**

The action or practice of persuading someone to do something by using force or threats. ²

- **No-refoulement**

This is the practice of not forcing refugees or asylum seekers to return to a country in they are liable to be subjected to persecution.

² "Coercion Definition And Meaning | Collins English Dictionary". Collinsdictionary.Com, 2018, <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/coercion>. Accessed 15 June 2018.



TIMELINE

These were various incidents, which brought human trafficking into consideration, making it a rising issue and violation to human rights.

Date	Description of Event
1904	The International Agreement for the Suppression of 'White Slave Traffic' was signed and put into action.
1927	The League of Nations was founded after WWI. There was a focus on the international issue of human trafficking. Where the Suppression of White Slave Traffic was changed into 'traffic in women and children'. In this way there is no discrimination against any race.
1932	In WWII, women all across Asia were forced in sexual slavery. This led to several deaths.
1956	More acts around the world were formed. India began the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act.
1995	The UN continued to address the issue of trafficking. They held the 4 th World Conference. Trafficking was recognized as an act of violence and the whole idea of it was further denied.
2002	The Polaris Project was formed and put into action. This was an act of eliminating modern day slavery. They provided a toll-free hotline where they receive reports on human trafficking.
2008	Several reports of migrants found to be illegally smuggled into Thailand by traffickers. They told the victims that they would find jobs in Thailand. However, many of them died on the way there, many protested and eventually the driver departed from action. This was due to his fear of being noticed by the police.
2009	Several young females were brought in to the US with fake passports. They were victims of human trafficking; however, the act didn't go as planned as it was brought to Taiwan's attention.
2003	The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children
2004	The Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land Sea and Air
2007	The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT)
2008	Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
2010	Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking



KEY EVENTS

2010 – Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons	The aim of the Global Plan of Action is to boost development and global security of human trafficking of refugees. They called upon the importance of this topic so that it is brought into the UN’s broader programme.
2015 - The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda was created	One of the goals included was aimed to end the trafficking and violence against children. They called for their desire to eliminate forms of violence against and exploitation of women and girls. Also, they announced the importance for measures to be taken against human trafficking.
2016 – New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants	Addresses how the international community should attend to the increasing movements of refugees and migrants.
2018 – World Day Against Human Trafficking	The topic of human trafficking was further recognized and a day was allocated to raise awareness of the situation the victims are in. The ways of protection of their rights was promoted further to the public.

According to a 2017 report from the International Labour Organization (ILO), there have been vast amounts of recorded human trafficking. About 25 million victims are trapped in today’s slavery. These ‘slaves’ are exploited for labor and sexual exploitation. On average, 20 months of strict forced labour is what the victims could be exposed to. Nonetheless, there are many refugee victims who are not being recorded, despite their being a large portion of the demographic affected. This is perpetuated by the lack of legal registration of these individuals, which is necessary for their entry into other countries.

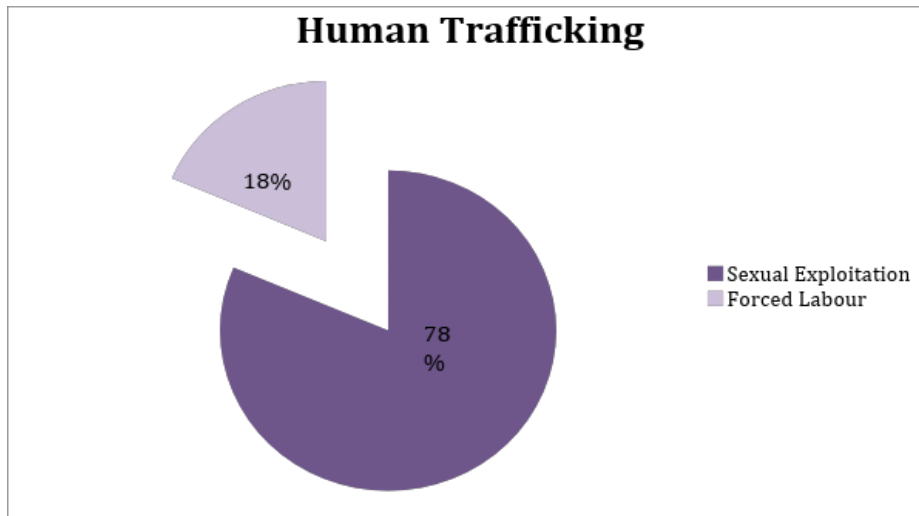


TOPIC DISCUSSION

The aim of this committee is to work towards measures that will prevent and tackle the human trafficking of refugees. The phenomenon of human trafficking of refugees has increased largely due to the unexpected flow of illegal refugees and undocumented migrants. Due to the social-political turbulence caused in the light of recent events, such as civil wars that have led to constant fear in one's day to day life, there has been a massive flow of illegal smuggling of refugees, which has led to squalid living conditions, forced labour, mistreatment of refugees and many other harsh conditions which are violations against human rights. Since there is a lack of staff to control the migrants, they set off somewhere unknown and, in most cases, they lead into human trafficking since groups have the opportunity to take advantage of migrants. Considering the policies of the hosting countries and the previous actions of major organizations, you are called upon to collaborate and come up with implementable and effective plans and measures. This will secure all the journeys to the welcoming hosting countries and to recognize who will prevent the existence of human trafficking networks. To conclude, putting forward preventative measures for this issue and ensuring protection of migrants from traffickers is the goal of this committee.

CAUSES

Historical slave trade and present-day human trafficking consist of the same principles. The principles of the historic slave trade were based on the ability of the ‘master’ to have people to do the demanding labour which the master himself was unlikely to do. This meant that they needed to find a large amount of people that would work on farms or other areas of cultivation with low wages. The slave trade came into place, as the masters did not have to pay much for the large amount of harsh work the slaves did. This meant however that the slaves were usually maltreated, as a result of their erring, or simply to express the power that could be exerted over them. Today’s human trafficking is in some senses like the historical slave trade. This is due to the individuals or groups of people who want to recruit slaves or other people in bad conditions for three main reasons. These are: forced labour, removal of organs, or sexual exploitation.



Due to the high numbers of sexual exploitation, it is the most documented and researched form of human trafficking. The exploitation of women tends to be relatively visible in city centers. Refugees suffer of reported cases of forced labour in prostitution, and they are even subjected to the removal of their organs. These are subjectively the worst kind of human trafficking purposes, since the refugees lose their human rights, namely, their freedom of choice, as they are being used towards gaining profit. This system is often upheld through the use of threats, or the notion that this is the only way for them to continue living in a certain country.





In recent years, human trafficking of refugees has increased drastically due to large waves of refugees and the lack of documents of the refugees who are crossing borders. Through these changes of the patterns of forced migration the risk for refugees has increased. A large number of refugees follow the same journeys that willing labour migrants take. This leads them to organizations where migrants have gone to get cheap employment. Consequently, they lead to the same working enforcement in small communities which may not always be the best environment and living conditions- since they often live in shanty towns- for refugees which are seeking for a better quality of life. Due to this process a higher number of migratory refugees mix with labour migrants. The widespread restrictions faced by refugees due to the lack of economic affordability of other methods of transportations, such as planes, and environmental degradation explains this. The lack of refugee identification and registration, due to lack of legal status, indicates that they are in danger of being sent back to their country of origin. The fear of torture and even death has led refugees to go to great lengths compared to other migrants to secure their status and avoid apprehension therefore leading to a possible acceptance of higher level of labour exploitation or employment risks in order to avoid being returned to their country of origin. In many cases refugees trust individuals who offer them false hopes that they can live proper lives without having any papers. In the vulnerable, desperate state that they are in they have no choice but to trust them. The individuals which they have trusted often put them into processes off illegal work which they realize they are in too late. At the time of realization, they cannot go to the police or authorities since they will face terrible treatment. At this point they are victims of human trafficking since they are illegally smuggled and placed into harsh labour or conditions. The lack of legalization of these refugees is the main cause for which individuals have been able to traffic victims with ease.



MAJOR COUNTRIES & ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

Organizations

UNITED NATIONS

In 1948, they adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which declared freedom from slavery. Aiming for all through “education to promote respect for these rights” as well as “secure [the] universal and effective recognition [of Human Rights]”. Articles of the declaration include: i) “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” ii) “Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person” iii) “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”.

International Refugee Rights Initiative

The International Refugee Rights Initiative’s aim was to increase promotion of human rights. They tried focusing on increasing this in situations of conflict and displacement, as well as advancing the protection of the refugees at all times in conflict; the before, during and after.

International Rescue Committee

Founded in 1934, this organization has responded to humanitarian crises such as WWII and the recent refugee crisis in the Mediterranean. This committee holds members in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Greece, Italy, Serbia and numerous African countries including Libya, Nigeria, Ethiopia and more.

The NO Project

The NO Project is a campaign, which targets youth awareness of modern slavery and human trafficking through film, music, art, dance, theatre, social media, and more. They strive to inform the next generation the problems victims of human trafficking face such as sexual exploitation. They encourage young people to dedicate their talents and time to fight against slavery by recognizing it as a problem and acting accordingly through fighting against slavery together. Through their beliefs that each individual carries responsibility to confront and eliminate the demand for slavery, they are committed to supporting the work of their campaign and others to eliminate slavery globally. They remind the public and introduce to the youth that this is a real



existing problem that needs to be addressed, and thus, a large portion of their contributions has been in raising awareness for the cause.

Countries

Greece

Greece tries to provide assistance and support to victims. They have introduced a Help line that operates throughout the day. With these lines children are able to call if they need any assistance. IOM with the Office of the NR have training courses which train individuals on how to be able to handle the situation with all aspects such as the legal, psychological and defining the exploitations. The Hellenic police are bringing forward a law which is aimed to suppress and combat trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation.

Turkey

Turkey joined the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees in the late 1950s. This was a turning point to Turkey as they enforced many laws relating to the care of refugees. Their main aim was to modernize the country's legal structure on migration. They enforced laws such as the LFIP (Law on Foreign and International Protection) to regulate the principles and procedures regarding foreigners' entry into, stay in and exit from Turkey. To enter Turkey foreigners must submit a valid passport or travel document to border officials to ensure for legitimate refugees and track the number of refugees accounted for; in order for refugees to not be at risk a lack of legal protection.

United States of America

In 2011, the former president of the United States of America, Barack Obama, declared January a national month of awareness of human trafficking. In the United States of America, according to CNN, approximately 1500 refugee children were lost by the Office of Refugee Resettlement, ORR, raising concerns as they are "being separated from their parents at the US border"³ and placed in the care of a sponsor; sponsors often

³ Andone, Dakin. "US Lost Track Of 1,500 Immigrant Children, But Says It's Not 'Legally Responsible'". CNN, 2018, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/05/26/politics/hhs-lost-track-1500-immigrant-children/index.html>. Accessed 15 June 2018.



have “close-ties”⁴ to the immigrant’s families or are “other-than-close relatives or non-relatives”⁵. However, the US government claims no responsibility and as stated by top official of the Department of Health and Human Services, Steve Wagner, “[the] ORR is not legally responsible for children after released [from their care].”⁶ This proves how refugees seek new homes in other countries to escape dangerous environments only to fall victims of possibly harmful situations, which may violate their human rights such as trafficking.

⁴ Andone, Dakin. "US Lost Track Of 1,500 Immigrant Children, But Says It's Not 'Legally Responsible'". CNN, 2018, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/05/26/politics/hhs-lost-track-1500-immigrant-children/index.html>. Accessed 15 June 2018

⁵ Andone, Dakin. "US Lost Track Of 1,500 Immigrant Children, But Says It's Not 'Legally Responsible'". CNN, 2018, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/05/26/politics/hhs-lost-track-1500-immigrant-children/index.html>. Accessed 15 June 2018

⁶ Andone, Dakin. "US Lost Track Of 1,500 Immigrant Children, But Says It's Not 'Legally Responsible'". CNN, 2018, <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/05/26/politics/hhs-lost-track-1500-immigrant-children/index.html>. Accessed 15 June 2018



LAWS ENFORCED

The UNHCR has large interest concerning the human trafficking of refugees' protection. They call upon the human rights concerning the human trafficking, which go beyond identifying and prosecuting the perpetrators. It includes the measures needed in order to protect the victims or individuals, which are at risk of being trafficked. The UNHCR encourages European countries develop ways to strengthen the protection of and assistance to trafficking victims in Europe and support prevention efforts in countries of origin. They have stated in a conference paper that they will strive to increase the legal and institutional frameworks. They will improve the training programs for national asylum authorities and organizations involved with victims of trafficking. Further data collections have been advised in order to understand patterns. This will help with knowing how to deal with cases such as a large mass of refugees.

Below are two laws that were enforced for the betterment of humans including refugees to protect their human rights:

🚩 INTERNATIONAL LAW

International law, for countries who have signed treaties which are monitored by the UN, has a limitation of applicability however it plays a vital role in the development of systems of procedures and rules in areas such as air, land, sea, outer space and human rights. The international law governs the interaction between sovereign states, their rights and duties of the citizens of the sovereign states towards the citizens of other fellow sovereign states.

🚩 EUROPEAN LAW

The European law strongly supports UNHCR's interests and activities in the areas of trafficking in human beings and strives to promote this topic globally to the EU in conferences. The European Law highlights three main aspects:

- **Human rights of victims:** this urges that measures are taken for international protection of victims. Such measures must ensure full compliance with the principle of non-refoulement and victims' human rights.
- **Government contribution:** States must ensure that appropriate and effective referral mechanisms are in place between authorities involved in anti-trafficking activities and those responsible for granting of international protection. Such measures must ensure full compliance with the principle of non-refoulement.
- **Legal protection:** The potential need for international protection of persons who have been trafficked or are at risk of being trafficked must be taken into account.



POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

As nowadays human trafficking of refugees is a large problem, it is vital that the matter is minimized and ideally eliminated. The solutions that should be taken by governments and states require contributions from the government itself, the citizens of the hosting country and refugees themselves. Solutions such as strengthening legal systems and increasing border controls are government-centered approaches. Regulations of human trafficking is a larger challenge in countries with conservative immigration policies due to the questionable routes the refugees have to take into the country. Furthermore, the citizens should be willing to help refugees, and could take part in activities such as raising awareness, training programs and observance of specific safeguards states. The safeguards would ensure that no individual would pose any possible threat to the refugees. International organizations should invest in raising awareness to refugees or potential refugees on how to protect themselves against the risks that they may face as well as self-protection. They should be educated on how to know if they can trust individuals since there will be people trying to take advantage of them.

A possible solution is to strengthen the legal systems for victimized refugees and therefore empowering them to get in contact with law enforcement, if needed so. Furthermore, through raising awareness contributions to refugee resettlement programmes there may be higher amount of forms of employment.

The improvement of asylums in refugees' new home countries should occur so there is no refugee gone 'missing'. To combat human trafficking legal and institutional framework should be significantly strengthened even inside asylums. This could lead to higher protection and assistance to victims, which go missing. Since a large amount of them are not even recognized as missing.

Additionally, training programs should be provided to volunteers and staff -related to the protection of refugees in asylums, etc.- and improved for national asylum authorities and organizations. Modules on International Refugee Law should also be included in national professional training programs on human trafficking.

Necessary measures should be adopted to ensure the participation of government institutions, such as and including national asylum authorities, international organizations and civil society organizations where appropriate. These serve the purpose of assessing the protection and needs of trafficking victims. Moreover, specific safeguards for the protection of both male and female victims of trafficking should be established. This can be done so by achieving a formal determination of the best interest of the child. The adoption of child specific protection measures such as the appointment of guardians could lead to the protection of trafficking victims.

A significant role in this process would be the gathering of information on the impact the parents might have caused in the trafficking situation of their own children. Another safeguard, which would lead to protection of victims, is improving issues of tracing and family reunification. While lastly the observance of



specific safeguards in cases of the repatriation of unaccompanied or separated children could be a possible solution.



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