DEAR READER:

Human trafficking is one of the most tragic human rights issues of our time. It splinters families, distorts global markets, undermines the rule of law, and spurs other transnational criminal activity. It threatens public safety and national security.

But worst of all, the crime robs human beings of their freedom and their dignity. That's why we must pursue an end to the scourge of human trafficking.

Today we take another key step towards that goal. The 2017 *Trafficking in Persons Report* highlights the successes achieved and the remaining challenges before us on this important global issue.

In particular, the introduction of this year's Report focuses on the responsibility of governments to criminalize human trafficking and hold offenders accountable. To that end, this Report is intended to assist governments in identifying threats so law enforcement agencies around the world can respond effectively and gain insight into where human trafficking remains most severe. The Report will also equip local and sub-national law enforcement agencies to better assist in efforts to target and prosecute those who commit these terrible crimes.

Because human trafficking is global in scope, international partners are essential to success. That's why the State Department will continue to establish positive partnerships with governments, civil society, law enforcement groups, and survivors to provide help for those who need our support.

The United States is a leader in the fight against human trafficking. We seek justice for victims and accountability for offenders. This Report is instrumental to our strategy to end human trafficking. I am proud of the work and dedication of the Department towards that end, and remain committed to the elimination of human trafficking here and abroad.

Sincerely,

Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State

Three Nigerian sex trafficking survivors gaze out over the Mediterranean after leaving Italy, where they were exploited. In 2016, more than 11,000 Nigerian women and girls arrived in Italy by sea.

DEAR READER:

This year, the theme of the *Trafficking in Persons Report* is increasing criminal accountability of human traffickers and addressing challenges in prosecution—an essential component of the 3P paradigm of prosecution, protection, and prevention. As a former federal prosecutor in the United States and now as Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, this topic is deeply personal to me.

I am particularly and acutely aware of the lives destroyed by human trafficking. I will never forget a young woman in a case I prosecuted, a survivor who I'll call Teresa. She was raised in Central America by her grandmother, and as a young woman, was deceived by a man she thought cared for her with promises of love and a better life. That man brought Teresa to the United States and, instead of building a new life with her, forced her into commercial sex, took all the money she was paid, and intimidated her with threats of deportation and humiliation before her family. His threats not only instilled fear in Teresa and coerced her into exploitation; they also convinced her she was a criminal for violating federal immigration and local anti-prostitution laws.

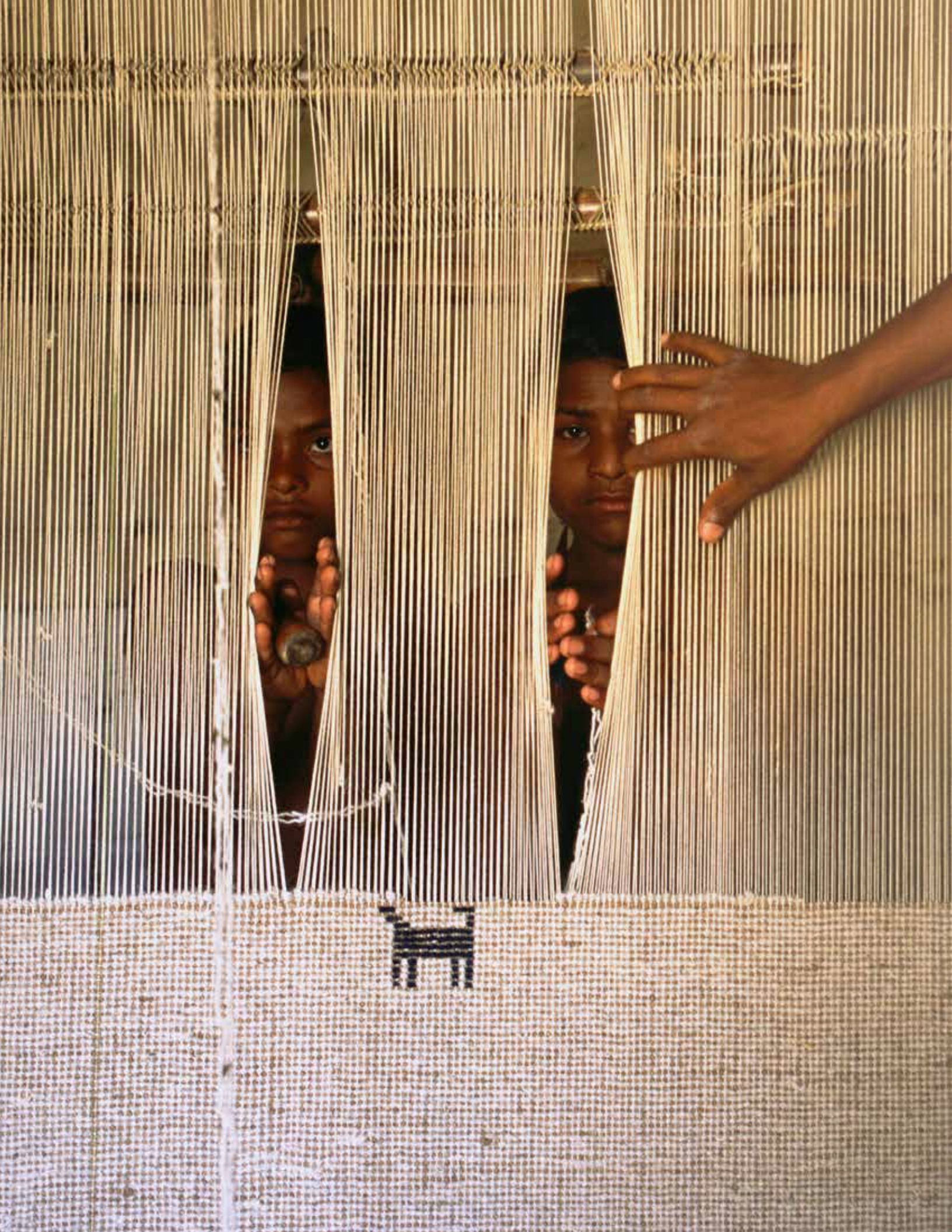
There are people like Teresa trapped in compelled service all over the world who fear that justice systems will punish them, rather than convict and incarcerate their traffickers—and in reality their fears are often justified. Teresa ultimately stood before a judge in a case against her trafficker and shared her experience in a court of law. What's more, she saw her trafficker convicted and sentenced to jail, and she received an award of restitution for the money he made by exploiting her. When the case was over, I was able to return to Teresa a picture she had carried with her to the United States of her grandmother, who had since passed away—a memory of her prior life. While governments can never fully reverse the trauma of human trafficking, they can help survivors pursue the justice they deserve and return to a life of their choosing, a life with dignity and free will.

When I engage with representatives of foreign governments, I often speak with police, investigators, prosecutors, and judges. I commend those who are fearless in the fight against human trafficking—those who courageously take on the tough cases, those who argue for stringent sentences for criminals and restitution for victims, and those who do so while ensuring that victims are treated with dignity. A victim-centered and trauma-informed approach requires, first and foremost, that the criminal justice system not penalize victims of human trafficking when they are forced to commit crimes as a direct result of their exploitation. When forced criminality takes place as part of the scheme, victims should not be further punished by the very system meant to protect them; and when they are, their convictions should be expunged and they should receive support and the comprehensive services to which they are entitled.

In my time serving as Ambassador-at-Large, I have had the incredible honor of meeting inspiring individuals who fight each day to end modern slavery. I have seen first-hand how those on the ground in countries around the world implement effective strategies to combat human trafficking. Having the benefit and honor of these experiences, I am confident that we are closer than ever to creating strong communities where justice and freedom prevail.

Sincerely,

Susan Coppedge
Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor
and Combat Trafficking in Persons



CONTENTS

ENHANCING CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN PROSECUTION EFFORTS 1

- Scope and Efficacy of National Anti-Trafficking Laws 2
- Criminal Accountability and Strong Deterrence 4
- Common Challenges in the Pursuit of Justice 6

TOPICS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- Paying to Work: The High Cost of Recruitment Fees 14
- Human Trafficking: A Public Health Perspective 18
- Assisting Male Survivors of Human Trafficking 22
- Engaging Survivors of Human Trafficking 30
- Online Sexual Exploitation of Children: An Alarming Trend 32
- Media Reporting on Human Trafficking 33

WHAT IS TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS? 17

- The Face of Modern Slavery 17

CHILD SOLDIERS PREVENTION ACT LIST 20

METHODOLOGY 25

- Tier Placement 25
- Government Accountability Office Report 27
- A Guide to the Tiers 28
- Funding Restrictions for Tier 3 Countries 29

GLOBAL LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA 34

TVPA MINIMUM STANDARDS 38

2017 TIP REPORT HEROES 40

TIER PLACEMENTS AND REGIONAL MAPS 45

HOW TO READ A COUNTRY NARRATIVE 54

COUNTRY NARRATIVES 55

RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS 438

STOPPING HUMAN TRAFFICKING, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, AND ABUSE BY INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPERS & CIVILIAN PERSONNEL 439

INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND SUB-REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS 440

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS 442

PHOTO CREDITS 443

CLOSING NOTE 444

This Report is available at www.state.gov/j/tip

A police officer keeps watch over a brothel in Peru. When law enforcement officers moonlight as security for brothels, they are often complicit in sex trafficking and other illicit activities.

"The scale of human trafficking is atrocious. The silence that conceals this crime is disgraceful. We have to speak out because the victims are living in fear for their lives. We have to raise our voices for them. That means confronting the social and economic conditions that abet this crime. It means arresting the traffickers. And above all, it means protecting the victims."

– Former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon

ENHANCING CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADDRESSING CHALLENGES IN PROSECUTION EFFORTS

The modern anti-trafficking movement commenced in earnest with the adoption of the Palermo Protocol in 2000, and since then has grown substantially. Governments have made progress and continue to work to pass and implement legislation criminalizing all forms of human trafficking, collaborate with civil society and human trafficking survivors to strengthen victim protections at the policy and grassroots levels, and take prevention measures and raise public awareness about the dangers and indicators of modern slavery.

While this progress is encouraging, traffickers around the world continue to exploit millions of victims in forced labor and sex trafficking. This multi-billion dollar industry destroys families and communities, weakens the rule of law, strengthens criminal networks, and offends universal concepts of human decency.

Although support from civil society and international organizations has led to more holistic and effective anti-trafficking solutions, governments bear primary responsibility for addressing human trafficking. That is why the *Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report* annually measures government efforts across the 3P paradigm of prosecuting traffickers, protecting victims, and preventing the crime.

In the last five years, the Introduction to this Report has examined the protection and prevention elements of this paradigm to enhance understanding of the crime and highlight global trends and achievements in combating it. For instance, the Report has explained the importance of using a victim-centered approach to identify and protect victims, and also to effectively prosecute trafficking cases. It has taken a hard look at the journey from victim to survivor and at the support survivors need to reclaim their lives. And it has profiled a wide range of effective strategies to prevent human trafficking, including by examining vulnerabilities in global supply chains.

This year's Introduction focuses on prosecution efforts—the distinct responsibility governments bear under the Palermo Protocol to criminalize human trafficking in all its forms and to prosecute and hold offenders accountable for their crimes.

Human trafficking is not analogous to migrant smuggling (a crime against a state by which an individual voluntarily enters into an agreement with another party to gain illegal entry into a foreign country) or employment-related wage and hour abuses (administrative violations of labor law). Under the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), an effective criminal justice response to human trafficking should treat the prosecution of cases as seriously as other grave crimes, such as kidnapping or rape, and impose consequences that are severe enough to be a deterrent.

VICTIM STORIES

The victims' testimonies included in this Report are meant to be illustrative and to characterize the many forms of trafficking and the wide variety of places in which they occur. They do not reflect all forms of human trafficking and could take place almost anywhere in the world. Many of the victims' names have been changed in this Report. Most photographs are not images of confirmed trafficking victims. They illustrate the myriad forms of exploitation that comprise human trafficking and the variety of situations in which trafficking victims are found.

INDIA | UNITED KINGDOM

Vihaan, a maritime machinist, accepted a job in the oil industry on a boat off the coast of the United Kingdom, thinking the sacrifice of leaving his family would be worth the money he could send home to support them. Once he arrived, the job was not as promised. Vihaan was not paid and had to work long hours under difficult conditions. When the Indian owner of the vessel abandoned the ship due to unpaid debts, he left the crew stranded with their wages unpaid. Vihaan and his crewmates decided they would not desert the ship until they had been paid, and waited seven months before the Indian bank that owned the ship agreed to settle the unpaid wages.

Effective anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts are challenging. Human trafficking often unfolds in various stages and over extended periods of time, typically involving multiple actors. Human trafficking is a hidden crime, in which perpetrators take advantage of power imbalances and coerce and intimidate their victims into silence. Victims of trafficking may not know they are entitled to legal protection and may fear being prosecuted or punished for crimes or immigration violations committed as a direct result of the trafficking scheme. Even if a victim initially consents to enter into a situation in which exploitation later occurs, or to participate in criminal acts during such exploitation, such consent is legally irrelevant under the Palermo Protocol once that person is subjected to compelled service through force, fraud, or coercion. In all of these scenarios, law enforcement must collect evidence to enable prosecutors to prove suspects intended to exploit someone, often with few, if any, corroborating witnesses. Where the crime takes place across multiple countries, governments may face additional challenges securing international cooperation, as well as jurisdiction, to effectively investigate and prosecute trafficking crimes.

The pages that follow examine the importance of a comprehensive anti-trafficking law, the need for criminal accountability with strong deterrent effects, and some of the challenges governments face in investigating and prosecuting human trafficking crimes.

Scope and Efficacy of National Anti-Trafficking Laws

The primary tool needed for effective prosecution of trafficking cases is a comprehensive anti-trafficking law that clearly defines the crime consistent with international law—specifying the acts, means, and ends. Such laws set the framework for all national anti-trafficking efforts. They give authority to law enforcement initiatives and provide clarity to justice sector officials so they can use the provisions during the investigation and prosecution of suspected trafficking crimes.

As it relates to prosecution and law enforcement, a strong anti-trafficking law includes:

- The criminalization of all forms of trafficking in persons.
- A clear definition of human trafficking that describes the acts, means, and ends, as distinct from related crimes—such as migrant smuggling, prostitution, kidnapping, organ trafficking, or illegal adoption.
- Penalties of imprisonment for the commission of trafficking crimes that are commensurate with those for other serious crimes, such as rape or kidnapping.
- A mandate setting forth clear roles and responsibilities for relevant government agencies or ministries, including with respect to inter-ministerial coordination of anti-trafficking policies.

Strong, comprehensive anti-trafficking laws signal governments' commitment not to tolerate human trafficking and give law enforcement and prosecutors the tools needed to secure convictions and justice for victims.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING DEFINED

The TVPA defines "severe forms of trafficking in persons" as:

- sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or
- the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

A victim need not be physically transported from one location to another for the crime to fall within this definition.

A Burmese teenage girl who worked in a shrimp-peeling shed receives support services at a shelter in Thailand. Children are exploited in forced labor around the world.

"It's an issue that cuts across class, race, and even gender. Both boys and girls are exploited in this way."

– Kansas sex trafficking victim

Criminal Accountability and Strong Deterrence

In addition to protecting victims from retribution or re-victimization, an effective criminal justice response brings traffickers to justice both to punish them for their crimes and to deter others. Yet, in many countries, governments struggle to hold perpetrators of human trafficking criminally accountable and, even when convictions are obtained, they sometimes impose suspended sentences, fines, or administrative penalties in place of prison sentences.

As noted above, a strong anti-trafficking response should recognize the serious nature of trafficking in persons and impose punishments commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes in a given country, such as rape and kidnapping. For example, in 2015, courts in **Lithuania** convicted 17 traffickers and sentenced all of them to time in prison, with terms ranging from three to eight years' imprisonment, which are commensurate with penalties for other serious crimes. Lithuania also amended its criminal code in 2014 to ensure child sex traffickers tried on prostitution charges could not benefit from lighter sentences. That amendment increased the prescribed penalties for profiting from prostitution and removed a provision permitting judges to consider whether a child had consented, better reflecting the requirements of international law that children cannot consent to sex trafficking. In addition to offering justice to victims of exploitation, strict penalties can serve as a stronger deterrent for would-be traffickers.

Yet many governments do not impose sentences that include adequate jail time. Judicial officials in many countries frequently impose suspended sentences, fines, or administrative penalties on human traffickers. These less severe punishments can result from broader sentencing guidelines, lack of understanding regarding the crime of human trafficking, systemic inefficiencies in criminal justice systems, or socio-cultural considerations, among other reasons. In other countries, human trafficking laws allow judges to impose a fine in lieu of incarceration, a practice that can limit the potential for a true deterrent effect for the defendant and other traffickers. Traffickers who have exploited others for profit often have the means to pay fines, which become a mere cost of doing business.

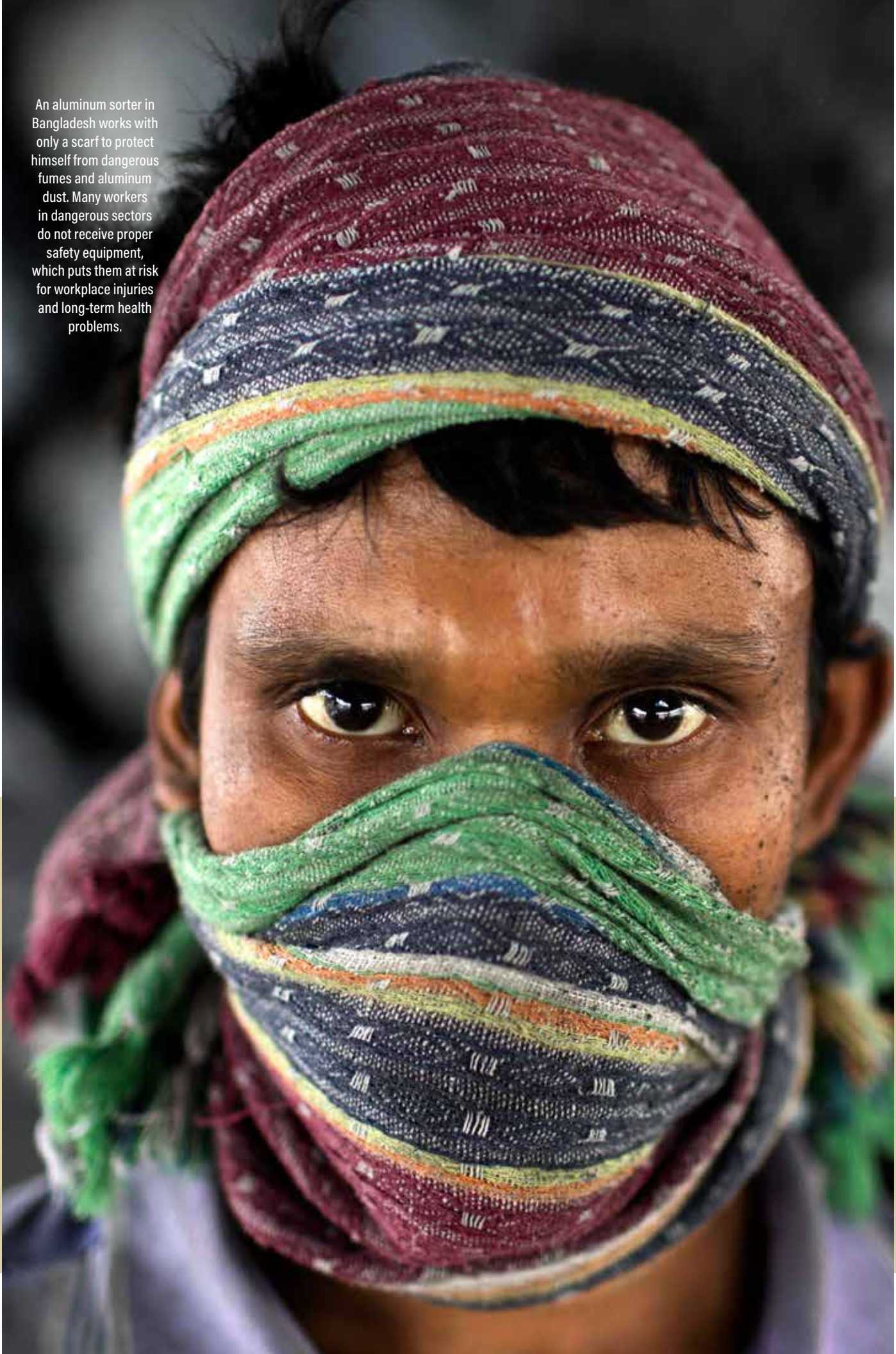
While cultural perceptions of criminal justice may create disparities in the way countries assess and penalize suspected criminals, the Palermo Protocol, to which 170 States are party, does not allow for cultural variations. For example, access to justice should be extended to all victims regardless of age or gender, and to vulnerable populations that may typically experience discrimination. Similarly, the prosecution of trafficking cases should move forward regardless of the gender of the trafficker. The judicial system should prioritize both sex trafficking and labor trafficking cases, and adult and male victims as well as women and children.

For example, in recent years, the Government of **Bahrain** began to criminally prosecute potential labor law violations that rose to the level of human trafficking. In 2014, Bahrain's Ministry of Labor referred 63 such cases for prosecution out of 427 pending labor violations. Previously, none of these types of cases were investigated under the criminal law but were treated administratively. This improvement in sanctioning labor traffickers is significant and provides a greater deterrent effect.

Ideally, and consistent with the Palermo Protocol, a victim-centered legal framework should also authorize court-ordered restitution or compensation to victims in conjunction with the successful conviction of traffickers. Several governments have gone further to make restitution mandatory to provide victims with monetary support for damages suffered. In 2015, a judge in **Guyana** sentenced a convicted trafficker to a three-year prison sentence and required her to pay the victim restitution—the first time a court ordered restitution by a trafficker in that country. In **Switzerland**, 28 victims received restitution payments from their traffickers following

SYRIA | LEBANON

Maya was 22 when she fled her home country of Syria due to conflict in the region. She was promised a job working in a factory in Lebanon, but when she arrived she was forced into commercial sex along with more than 70 other Syrian women. They endured severe physical and psychological violence. Eventually, police raided the apartment units the women lived in and arrested 10 men and eight women who had been part of the sex trafficking scheme.



An aluminum sorter in Bangladesh works with only a scarf to protect himself from dangerous fumes and aluminum dust. Many workers in dangerous sectors do not receive proper safety equipment, which puts them at risk for workplace injuries and long-term health problems.

An internally displaced person picks cotton in Syria with her child on her back. Traffickers often prey on those without security or opportunities, coerce and deceive them, and then profit from their compelled service.

INDIA | NEW ZEALAND

Rajiv arrived in New Zealand on a student visa to enroll in a business management program. Before courses started, he travelled to the Bay of Plenty, where he knew there was agricultural work, to earn extra money for school expenses. He soon found himself in a situation he could not leave. His employers forced him to use fake identification documents so he could work 80-hour weeks illegally in kiwi fruit orchards. Rajiv and other migrant workers lived in fear of being deported or kidnapped if they complained about the grueling work. Rajiv's employer refused to give him his promised wages. After several months, Rajiv escaped the orchards and sought assistance from the New Zealand authorities.

their 2015 convictions. In March 2015, a court in **Australia** ordered a convicted trafficker to pay the equivalent of $134,000 in back wages and interest to the Indian national he had subjected to forced labor. In many other instances, however, even in countries with well-developed justice systems, courts do not award restitution during criminal sentencing and, in some cases, prosecutors fail to request restitution on behalf of victims.

Common Challenges in the Pursuit of Justice

Effective anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts are inherently challenging and even the most effective governments struggle to address the crime comprehensively. Worldwide convictions of human traffickers listed in this year's Report were fewer than 10,000, while estimates of the number of victims of human trafficking remain in the tens of millions. Even with the low numbers of convictions, however, many criminal justice systems around the world are faced with cases that exceed their processing capacity. Limited funding and poor training for personnel impede the investigation of many types of crimes, including human trafficking. Often, the time and resources that do exist are stretched across competing priorities. These challenges must be addressed head on.

Barriers to Building a Strong Case

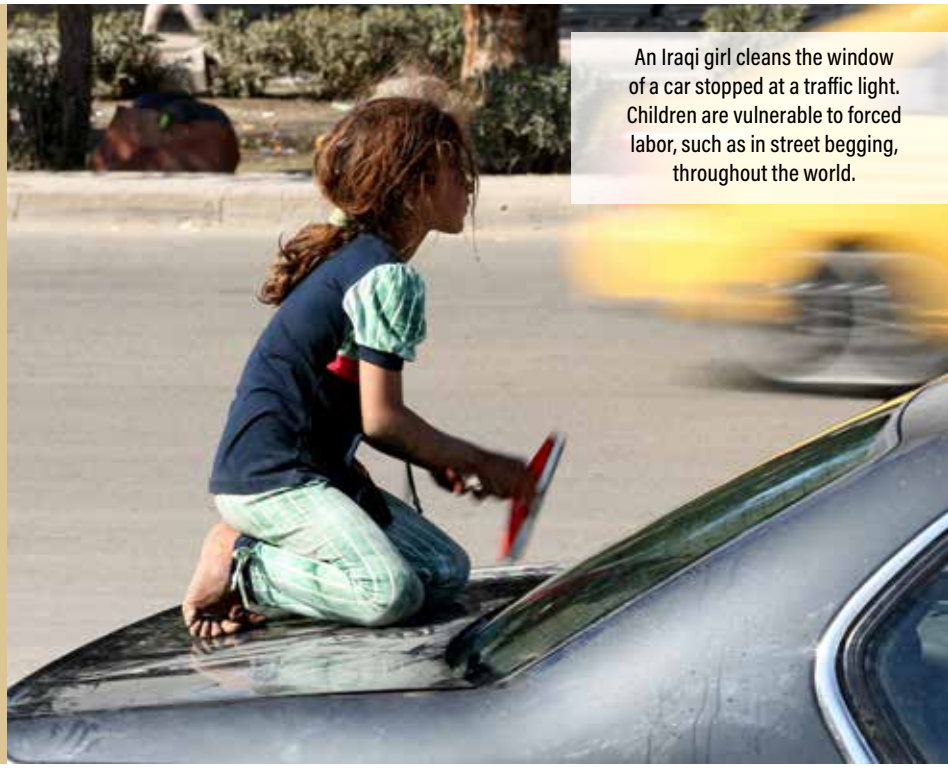
Building a strong human trafficking case can be complex and unwieldy. In many instances, police officials begin an investigation with a single victim who often may be the only witness who can describe the force, fraud, or coercion experienced in the course of his or her victimization. Officials must then gather evidence to corroborate that testimony, which is often a challenging and time-consuming process. It is vital that law enforcement is sufficiently trained on how to corroborate the victim's testimony and how to gather evidence to prove a suspect's intent to exploit a person in forced labor or sex trafficking. In addition, investigators and prosecutors should work together during the investigation stage to ensure the necessary evidence is collected and any weaknesses in the case are addressed as early as possible. Inadequate or incomplete evidence is often to blame for the lack of successful trafficking cases around the world.

In response to certain issues in evidence collection, governments in some countries have increased coordination between police and prosecutors. In **South Africa**, the National Prosecuting Authority leads national anti-trafficking efforts, with prosecutors overseeing provincial anti-trafficking taskforces—allowing them to lead provincial law enforcement efforts and trainings for respective police and community personnel country-wide, further building the expertise and network of trained professionals.

Law enforcement and judicial officials need advanced training to develop appropriate investigation and evidence-processing techniques. In **Ukraine**, the Prosecutor General issued a directive in 2017 to give human trafficking investigations priority access to surveillance resources. In **Cambodia**, local organizations and even some officials acknowledge an urgent need for the law to authorize sophisticated evidence-collection techniques, including undercover investigations, wiretaps, and the ability to seek search warrants. These techniques can help law enforcement decrease reliance on witness testimony and adapt to the increasingly clandestine nature of human trafficking in Cambodia. Without such authority, law enforcement is limited in its ability to investigate these cases and is

I never thought there was human trafficking [in Ohio]. The problem was in front of my eyes. I just did not pay attention."

– Imam Talal Eid, Islamic Center of Greater Toledo



An Iraqi girl cleans the window of a car stopped at a traffic light. Children are vulnerable to forced labor, such as in street begging, throughout the world.

forced to close them when evidence cannot be obtained. In many other countries, the challenge lies in collecting and processing forensic evidence that can be lawfully admitted in court proceedings.

Delays in Prosecution

In many countries, backlogs in the courts or with over-burdened law enforcement personnel delay prosecutions and slow the delivery of justice. Many governments lack adequate personnel to handle time-intensive trafficking cases or face high personnel turnover of those officials with experience to prosecute them. Significant delays in prosecution can discourage victims from testifying or pursuing a case, or may have the practical result that the individual is no longer in the country or available to assist law enforcement or testify at trial. Worse, these delays can allow traffickers to continue exploiting, threatening, or intimidating victims, including survivors whose testimony is necessary to achieve a conviction.

With limited resources and staff, some governments have made efforts to designate specialized prosecutors to manage anti-trafficking caseloads, a step that facilitates the development of expertise on the investigation and prosecution of complex trafficking cases and allows for continued attention to combating this crime. For example, a specialized prosecutor would understand why a trafficking victim may initially lie to law enforcement about the facts of the crime or even describe a willing involvement in the trafficking scheme. An inexperienced prosecutor may see a reluctant or untruthful witness as an impediment to prosecution, instead of seeing evidence of the trafficker's success in controlling the victim such that he or she does not feel safe confiding in law enforcement. Specialized prosecutors better understand how to navigate these challenges.

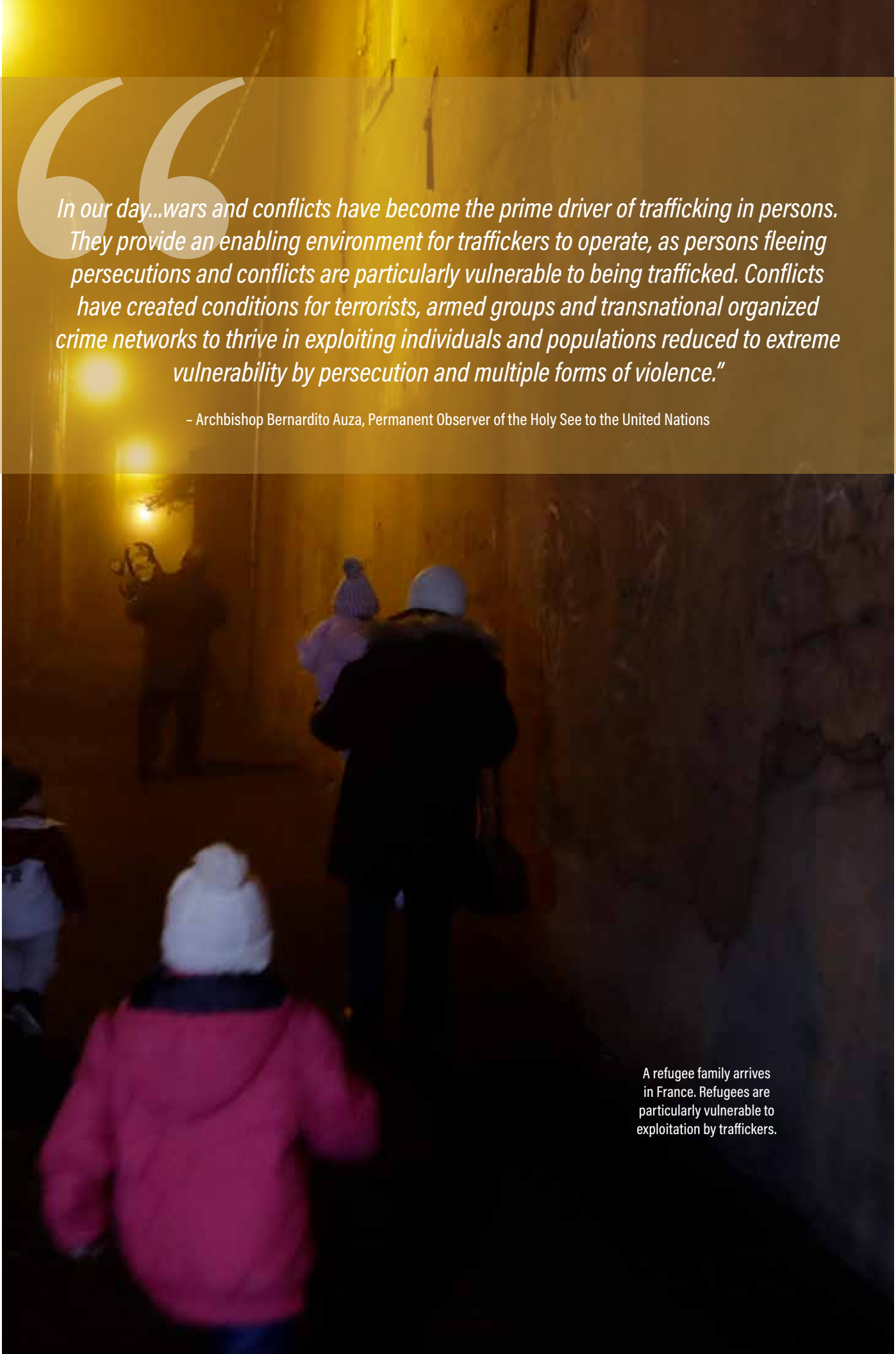
In **Botswana**, after the passage of the 2014 Anti-Human Trafficking Act, the Directorate of Public Prosecutions designated a prosecutor to specialize in building trafficking prosecutions. Such specialized staff understand the intricacies and issues that routinely arise in a trafficking case and can share this information with other judicial sector officials through routine trainings and case work. Specialized prosecutors also gain an understanding of the needs and demands on victim-witnesses and can develop specialized mechanisms to assist them.

Supreme Court of the **Philippines** instituted the continuous trial system pilot project in 2014 to significantly expedite human trafficking prosecutions. During its first year, the court completed seven trafficking cases in less than one year and it continued to expedite trafficking prosecutions in subsequent years, even though some cases remain pending prosecution. By comparison, in 2013, trafficking cases prosecuted in the Philippines took an average of three-and-a-half to five years to complete.

In some countries with a civil law system, trafficking is treated as a high crime, requiring trials at the high court level, which may not convene regularly or address trafficking matters given other critical caseloads and limited resources. To address this, governments should encourage high courts to hold routine sessions, fund special sessions to prevent or reduce case backlogs, or prioritize human trafficking cases when setting court dates.

In our day...wars and conflicts have become the prime driver of trafficking in persons. They provide an enabling environment for traffickers to operate, as persons fleeing persecutions and conflicts are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked. Conflicts have created conditions for terrorists, armed groups and transnational organized crime networks to thrive in exploiting individuals and populations reduced to extreme vulnerability by persecution and multiple forms of violence."

– Archbishop Bernardito Auza, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations



A refugee family arrives in France. Refugees are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by traffickers.

Non-Criminal Resolutions

A criminal investigation and trial may be time- and resource-intensive, with no guarantee of a conviction or financial restitution. Lengthy judicial processes in turn can cause victims to become frustrated and discouraged with the legal system; victims who are traumatized and seek to move on with their lives may simply stop participating if the investigation or prosecution drags on too long. It is also often expensive for victims to travel to and stay in cities where trials are located. Defendants may seek to postpone or draw out a trial as a tactic, knowing that victims may be unable economically or emotionally to continue to participate and press their claims. Often the same realities that make individuals vulnerable to human trafficking, including economic pressures, discrimination, and a lack of agency, persist when the trafficking scheme ends. Support services and access to work authorization often allow victims to continue participating in long trials.

Given all of these challenges, human trafficking victims sometimes choose to mediate or settle their cases out-of-court, rather than participate in criminal proceedings. These alternative venues are seen as speedier and more likely to secure a positive result—in the form of financial compensation, including monetary payments for back wages or labor law violations. NGOs may even advise victims in some countries to seek mediation over criminal investigations to avoid the financial and emotional drain that may result where criminal proceedings are not likely to result in a conviction. In other instances, victims may prefer agreements on back wages or damages through an out-of-court settlement rather than risk the exposure and uncertainty of a criminal trial that, even if successful, will fail to compensate the victim financially.

For example, in **Laos**, the government has encouraged victims to cooperate with prosecutors, and the Lao Women's Union has made efforts to familiarize individual victims with the criminal court process; however, in previous years, an overall lack of incentives, resources, and lawyers made it difficult for victims to fully participate in formal legal proceedings, which could be lengthy and unlikely to include restitution awards. Rather than support prosecution efforts in the courts, this situation led some victims to choose traditional out-of-court mediation for faster closure and financial redress.

Mediation procedures, however, fall short of the Palermo Protocol's standards, which defines trafficking in persons as a crime to be prosecuted, not a civil wrong to be remedied by damages. In addition, terms of imprisonment commensurate with the heinous nature of the crime are expected to serve as a more effective deterrent than monetary damages or penalties alone. Even in countries in which legal systems allow for both civil and criminal cases to be brought against alleged traffickers, the civil claim ideally occurs in addition to a criminal case, not as an alternative. Governments must work to instill confidence in criminal justice systems and hold perpetrators of human trafficking accountable. Without prison sentences, human traffickers will likely not be deterred effectively.

Complicity and Corruption

Those who enforce the law are not above the law. Official complicity is a problem that plagues many criminal justice systems. In some countries, law enforcement personnel ignore clear signs of exploitation or actively participate in or facilitate human trafficking. Some police officials work when they are off-duty as security guards at brothels or other establishments where sex trafficking victims are exploited, making them potentially complicit with traffickers and reducing the likelihood victims would trust police enough to report such crimes. At borders, some officials take bribes to allow illegal crossings of trafficking victims or smuggled migrants who are vulnerable to trafficking and may later face exploitation; others may produce fraudulent documents for traffickers or their associates. Still other government officials are culpable for using their positions to facilitate or commit trafficking crimes for their own financial gain or even exploit victims themselves, such as by subjecting their household workers to domestic servitude or knowingly purchasing commercial sex from trafficking victims.

Because of law enforcement officials' unique position in government, they are also able to obstruct investigations. At times prompted by bribes or pressure from suspected traffickers or complicit officials, some law enforcement officials intentionally delay investigative efforts by slowing down evidence processing and requesting adjournments, among other practices. This can lengthen or delay the process and the commencement of a trial. As noted earlier, delays increase the burden on victims, including the financial burden, and may discourage their continued participation in criminal trials. These delays also allow traffickers and complicit officials more time to intimidate witnesses and their families.

It is vital that governments investigate vigorously any signs of official complicity and prosecute government and law enforcement officials both for any involvement in the crime and for related corrupt acts. Complicit government officials should face criminal accountability and stringent sentences, not merely reassignment or other administrative measures. Accountability creates a strong deterrent for any other potentially complicit officials. Publicly prosecuting corruption also builds trust in government in general and law enforcement in particular, and it can encourage victims and witnesses to report human trafficking cases.

Many governments are taking locally appropriate measures to respond to corruption and complicity. For example, in 2015, **Antigua and Barbuda's** Royal Police Force passed a new standing order prohibiting police officers from engaging in secondary employment at night clubs and strip clubs. This type of secondary employment is common practice in the region,

but the government passed this order to avoid the appearance of police protection for these establishments. In 2013, **Nepal's** anti-corruption commission indicted 46 officials from the Departments of Foreign Employment and Immigration for issuing fraudulent documents, a deterrent to others who might be tempted to facilitate human trafficking.

Governments can also encourage transparency as a means to uncover or deter official complicity and corruption, and empower independent officials to investigate or report cases of official complicity in trafficking, as with anti-discrimination ombudsmen in **Finland** and **France**. Dedicated anti-trafficking police units not only encourage the development of specialized skills among law enforcement but can also serve to inoculate against broader corruption and complicity. Such units have been established in **Chile**, **Cyprus**, **Ukraine**, **Thailand**, and **South Africa**, to name a few. Vetting members of such units through background checks and security clearances provides additional safeguards against corruption and complicity.

Prosecution of All Criminally Culpable Parties

Given the far-reaching nature of many human trafficking schemes, cases often involve multiple actors—intermediaries and recruitment agencies who entice people to leave their homes with promises of employment; truck or taxi drivers who transport potential victims; smugglers who help people cross borders; enforcers who monitor and control victims; those who financially benefit from the exploitation; and those who oversee the exploitation itself—the club, brothel or hotel owner, factory or farm manager, mine operator or ship captain, among others.

All such persons, if knowingly involved, are criminally culpable. Human traffickers are not only the individuals overseeing the exploitation of victims or the chief conspirators orchestrating the scheme. Any intermediary involved in the recruitment or transportation process, if aware of the intended exploitation of victims of sex or labor trafficking, is responsible and should be held criminally liable. Similarly, those who knowingly purchase or procure a commercial sex act from a victim of sex trafficking are also human traffickers.

For example, intermediaries in some areas recruit women with offers of ostensibly legitimate work abroad, only to later force them into labor or sex trafficking. These recruiters, however, often act in concert with traffickers in destination cities or countries and know what conditions await the women. When the exploitation is uncovered—usually in the destination country—victims can only identify the recruiter who originally deceived them and not the main trafficker and organizer. Worse yet, victims who are repatriated from exploitation abroad often return to the same places where they were recruited and may experience intimidation by intermediaries who were directly involved in their trafficking but were not held accountable. The lack of investigation and prosecution leaves the victim susceptible to retaliation, and also inhibits some victims from reporting their exploitation to authorities and participating in trials against their traffickers.

Governments should improve efforts to detect and prosecute all who are knowingly involved in perpetrating trafficking crimes and exploiting victims, including through robust investigations that reveal the tactics of the scheme, track the individuals in the criminal organization, and follow the monetary payments.

In many instances, officials may assume that intermediaries are not conspirators or are unaware of what will happen to the workers they recruit or transport, and thus that the intermediaries are not liable for prosecution. Careful investigation of all those in the trafficking network is essential to ensure perpetrators at all levels are held accountable for their involvement in trafficking crimes and as a deterrent measure to discourage others from assuming these roles.

"These are people living in some of the most horrifying conditions imaginable. We see children forced to make bricks in Peru, disentangle fishing nets in Ghana, or sold into prostitution in Southeast Asia. We see men held captive on fishing boats off the coast of Thailand, or women trapped as domestic workers in the Persian Gulf. No country is immune from this crisis."

– Nikki Haley, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

Regardless of whether law enforcement officials can establish an intermediary had knowledge of the intended exploitation, they should question such intermediaries as part of an investigation to understand the larger scheme, and to ensure justice and security for victims. In a case in the **United States**, New York state authorities charged several defendants with sex trafficking and money laundering in 2012; they also charged six cab drivers for their role in transporting the victims and finding new customers, pursuing every intermediary responsible for supporting the sex trafficking operation, as well as the purchasers.

Authorities can also raise awareness in communities where recruiters frequently operate, by alerting those likely to be targets of the false promises that can lead to their victimization. Being active in vulnerable communities may also help law enforcement identify victims who can help establish a pattern of behavior by recruiters and prove the requisite intent to support a criminal conviction. The **Philippine** Overseas Employment Administration undertakes robust awareness-raising efforts so Filipino overseas workers can identify warning signs of illegal or unscrupulous recruitment practices. Well-informed overseas workers, in turn, provide information to the Agency that enables it to identify and investigate proactively suspicious recruitment activities. In 2015, the Agency investigated 98 cases of illegal recruitment involving 231 complainants. This resulted in the closure of 12 non-licensed establishments and the referral of 84 cases for criminal investigation.

Undertaking robust efforts to investigate and prosecute all intermediaries and actors knowingly involved in the perpetration of trafficking crimes is essential to deterring trafficking crimes from taking place and holding all perpetrators accountable. Many countries' trafficking laws have provisions penalizing collaborators and accomplices, specifically outlining different punishments for those involved to varying degrees in the separate portions of the crime. Thus, governments should look to use anti-trafficking laws to prosecute all those knowingly engaged in the full range of offenses covered by these laws.

Need for Bilateral and Multilateral Cooperation

Human trafficking occurs in virtually every country in the world and often crosses borders. While the crime of human trafficking does not require movement either within or across borders, cases often involve movement between source, transit, and destination countries. This is especially true in an increasingly interconnected global economy, with migration on the rise. People seeking opportunity or fleeing conflict frequently transit several countries and face vulnerabilities to human trafficking along the way. Others, recruited from their homes, are moved by intermediaries and exploiters, sometimes including migrant smugglers, en route to third countries where they face exploitation. Traffickers often capitalize on the lack of cooperation between governments to hide the full scope of their criminal enterprise. The transnational nature of many trafficking crimes requires increased efforts by governments to cooperate with each other. Governments must adhere to their obligations under Articles 2 and 10 of the Palermo Protocol, which require cooperation and information-sharing among governments' law enforcement, immigration, and other relevant authorities to investigate and prosecute trafficking.

Source-country governments report challenges in investigating and prosecuting trafficking crimes in which victims encounter exploitation on the other side of the border. Destination- and transit-country governments report an inability to collect evidence proving fraud or coercion in the initial recruitment scheme. In addition, jurisdictional questions often pose significant challenges to law enforcement efforts. However, there are promising efforts to cooperate internationally. In 2016, with support from **Sri Lanka**, **Nepal** sent a team of police and other officials from the ministries of labor, foreign affairs, and social welfare to Sri Lanka's capital city Colombo to investigate allegations that human traffickers and migrant smugglers were increasingly using Sri Lanka as a transit point for Nepali women to be exploited in other countries. In collaboration with the Sri Lankan police, the Nepali team found and helped send home 19 stranded migrant workers.

KUWAIT

Nicole left her impoverished family to work as a maid in Kuwait with the intention of sending her earnings back home. For nine months she worked constantly, suffered physical and verbal abuse, and received no pay. When her work visa expired, her employer took Nicole to the police and falsely accused her of a petty crime. Nicole tried to explain her innocence and reported that she had not been paid and had been abused over the past nine months. The police did not listen and instead jailed Nicole for six months. After her time in jail, Nicole was deported and returned home without any compensation.

I had no holidays or rest days ... We had to prepare gear, fix cables, stitch the nets. It was constant, constant."

– Omol, Irish fishing industry trafficking victim

The government of **Kazakhstan** jointly investigated 17 cases related to trafficking in cooperation with several foreign governments, including the **Kyrgyz Republic**, **Uzbekistan**, **Russia**, and **Tajikistan** during the 2016 reporting period. In **St. Lucia**, police investigators cooperated with the **United States**, **Bangladesh**, and the **United Kingdom** in the course of investigating three men from India and one from Bangladesh who were charged with subjecting nine individuals to forced labor in the hospitality industry. The government recently initiated prosecution of all four defendants. In a sex tourism case involving the **United Kingdom** and **India**, a state-level law enforcement agency in India cooperated with law enforcement in the United Kingdom to prosecute a British defendant. Similarly, law enforcement authorities from the **United States** and **Mexico** conduct coordinated, bilateral law enforcement actions under the U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Human Trafficking Enforcement Initiative to dismantle human trafficking networks operating across their shared border. In 2015, the two governments simultaneously apprehended eight defendants in both countries and charged them with operating a sex trafficking enterprise. The governments then collaborated to secure the extradition to the United States in 2016 of the five defendants apprehended in Mexico.

Many trafficking laws also include provisions allowing for extra-territorial jurisdiction, allowing governments to investigate their citizens responsible for trafficking crimes abroad. For instance, in the **United States**, **Portugal**, **Qatar**, and **Sweden**, laws prohibiting sexual crimes against children have extra-territorial reach allowing for the prosecution of suspected child sex tourists who are those countries' nationals for offenses committed while abroad.

In addition to leveraging member state expertise and resources, multilateral organizations generate momentum to develop global, regional, and domestic strategies to help dismantle trafficking networks and empower vulnerable populations. INTERPOL publishes notices requesting cooperation or issuing alerts to member countries that allow national police to share critical crime-related information. For instance, a green notice provides warnings and intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offenses and are likely to repeat these crimes in other countries. UNODC, charged with promoting implementation of the Palermo Protocol, convenes government experts to collaborate on emerging human trafficking issues, and provides technical assistance to governments upon request. Additionally, UNODC maintains a public case law database with more than 1,400 human trafficking cases from around the world as well as a case digest to assist criminal law and other practitioners interested in how evidentiary issues are addressed in other jurisdictions.

Multilateral and regional organizations also work to foster consensus among their member states on common goals, commitments, and norms; and they can help standardize research and data collection methods at the regional and sub-regional levels. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is one example of multilateral leadership where consensus-building led to the development and adoption of a new legally-binding regional instrument. The ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which entered into force on March 8, 2017, provides a framework for Member States to enter into direct law enforcement cooperation on human trafficking cases. Multilateral fora also frequently provide a venue for member states, civil society, academia, the private sector, and survivors to exchange information on experiences and challenges, including identifying new and emerging issues related to human trafficking.

As with every aspect of combating human trafficking, collaboration can leverage expertise, resources, and capacity, which lead to better overall outcomes in law enforcement and victim protection.

Conclusion

Human trafficking is an assault on human dignity and should be penalized accordingly. No government can hold human traffickers accountable or address the needs of victims without stringent and comprehensive human trafficking laws, strong law enforcement and prosecutorial capacity funded with adequate resources, and an informed judiciary. Victims of human trafficking deserve timely and meaningful access to justice through a system that respects rule of law and due process rights. Without these measures, human trafficking will continue to flourish.

While governments cannot undo the pain and indignity victims face, they can seek to right those wrongs through official acknowledgment of injustice and by prosecuting, convicting, and sentencing traffickers and those complicit in human trafficking. In taking these measures, governments provide justice for victims, create more stable societies to keep the vulnerable safe, and work towards a world free from modern slavery.

Countries in the *2017 TIP Report* that are not States Parties to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

Between April 2016 and March 2017, the Maldives became party to the Protocol.

VENEZUELA | TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Working with a recruiter in Venezuela, Sarah accepted a job in a nursing home in Trinidad and Tobago. She was thrilled by the chance to earn more money, yet nervous that she had to leave her home and did not have enough experience in elder care. When Maria arrived in Trinidad and Tobago, she realized she had been deceived. The recruiter informed her she owed a large debt, and instead of working at a nursing home, she was forced into prostitution at a local hotel bar. Her recruiter confiscated most of her earnings each night.

PAYING TO WORK: THE HIGH COST OF RECRUITMENT FEES

Each year, millions of workers turn to or are approached by labor intermediaries—recruiters, agents, or brokers—who facilitate the movement of labor to satisfy global demand. As globalization increasingly drives markets toward temporary or seasonal contract work that depends on labor mobility and flexibility, the importance of the recruitment industry grows.

Labor intermediaries function as a bridge between workers and employers and, at their best, can provide helpful guidance and assist in matching workers with jobs and in arranging visas and documentation, medical checkups, pre-departure orientation, training, and travel. These intermediaries can range from licensed and legitimate to informal and unregulated, and increasingly, to criminal.

The International Labor Organization recognizes the important function of recruitment in a globalized world, but cautions against its use in ways that harm workers:

> *Recruitment should respond to established labor market needs, and not serve as a means to displace or diminish an existing workforce, to lower labor standards, wages, or working conditions, or to otherwise undermine decent work.*

Around the world, workers and advocates report that unscrupulous recruiters often use misleading and fraudulent practices to take advantage of workers, especially those who do not have access to information about job opportunities and their rights. In many cases, workers also lack access to remedies when they experience exploitation.

Dishonest recruiters employ a variety of practices that ultimately undermine decent working conditions: they mislead workers about the conditions and nature of a job, engage in contract switching, and confiscate or destroy workers' identity documents to prevent them from leaving. Another common practice—charging workers fees to access job opportunities or cover the costs of recruitment—is a dominant model of recruitment in much of the world that contributes to the facilitation of crimes such as corruption and bribery and puts workers at risk of exploitation, including human trafficking.

WORKER-PAID RECRUITMENT FEES

In many cases, low-wage workers borrow large sums of money to cover the cost of recruitment fees, which can amount to anywhere from several hundreds to tens of thousands of dollars. Misled by promises of high wages, workers may borrow money from family or predatory lenders, or mortgage their homes or land, believing that they can easily repay their debts upon employment. These fees, which may also be combined with unfair and excessive interest rates, mean workers spend a period of time—sometimes years—working exclusively to repay what they owe.

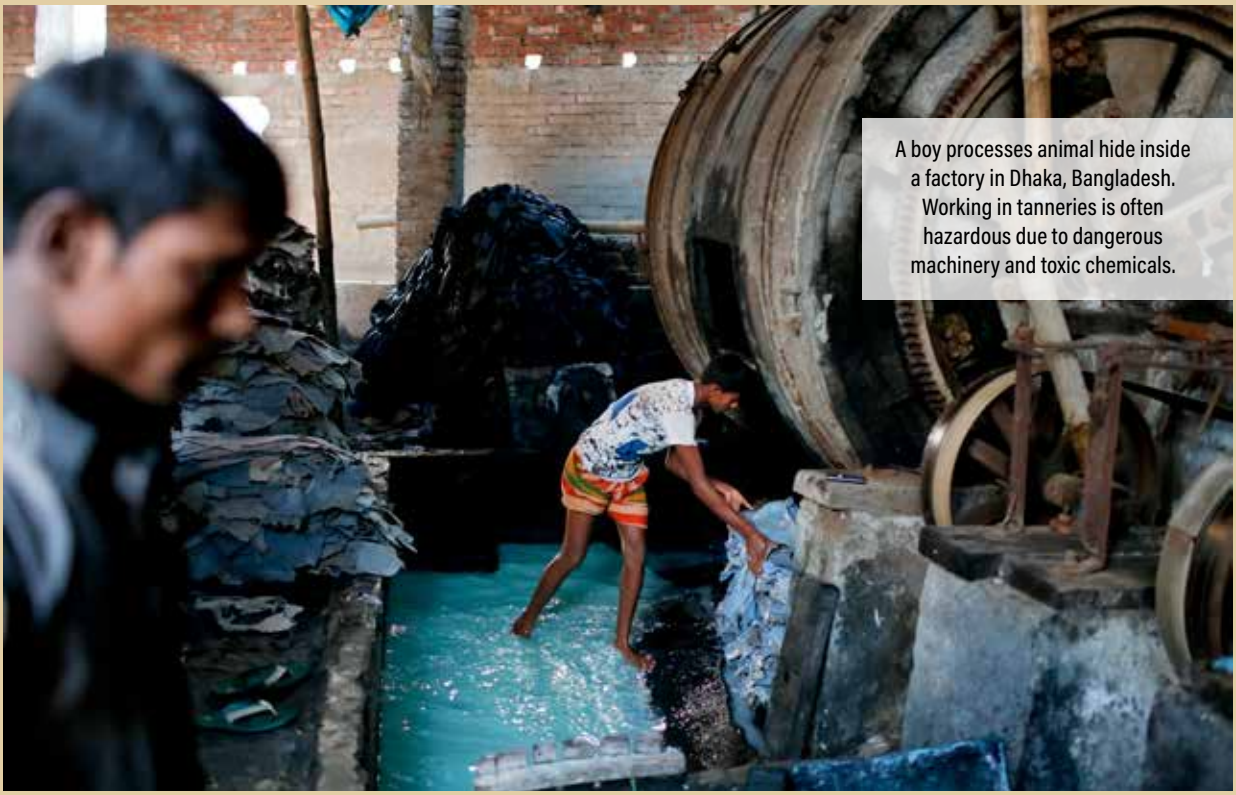
When workers are charged recruitment fees, they become vulnerable to a variety of abuses, including debt bondage, a form of human trafficking in which individuals are forced to give up most or all of their salary until their debts are repaid. Individuals who carry debts that must be repaid with their wages are reluctant to complain to an employer or law enforcement, or leave the job. Workers may endure abusive conditions for fear of losing their job and defaulting on their debts. In many cases, unpaid debt results in threats to family members or loss of family property, adding further pressure for workers to stay in exploitative conditions.

ENFORCING GOVERNMENT REGULATION AND PRIVATE SECTOR POLICIES

Currently, the loosely defined "recruitment industry" is ripe for creating conditions of exploitation. Existing laws often fail to assign any responsibility to recruitment agents to protect workers, and governments do not actively monitor recruiters or require remediation when recruiters use fraudulent practices to exploit workers. In those countries where recruitment fees are prohibited, governments often do not robustly enforce such prohibitions.

In many cases, it can be difficult to prove that recruiters or recruitment agencies were aware of the exploitative circumstances in which the worker eventually ended up—and, even if they do not knowingly contribute to a human trafficking scheme, their actions can significantly contribute to the vulnerability of the worker. Because holding recruiters criminally accountable is challenging, the enforcement of regulations on abusive recruitment practices is all the more important.

For many businesses, the use of recruiters is a necessity and therefore should be treated as any operating cost, but using recruitment methods that ultimately pass these costs on to workers is both unfair and unsustainable. All employers, including those who contract with governments, should bear the cost and responsibility of using recruiters and should support and work closely with licensed recruitment agents to prohibit unscrupulous recruitment practices. Employers should be willing to pay higher costs for agencies that effectively implement measures to prevent exploitation and governments should promote policies that protect workers, enforce labor regulations, and prosecute criminals who knowingly exploit the vulnerability of workers.



A boy processes animal hide inside a factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Working in tanneries is often hazardous due to dangerous machinery and toxic chemicals.

In recent years, there has been growing consensus that, throughout their supply chains, both governments and the private sector should prohibit the practice of charging recruitment fees to workers:

- In 2016, worker, employer, and government representatives to the ILO negotiated and adopted non-binding general principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment. The ILO identified governments as having the ultimate responsibility for advancing fair recruitment, and included the principle that "No recruitment fees or related costs should be charged to, or otherwise borne by, workers or jobseekers."
- In 2011, the Dhaka Principles for migration with dignity included as its first principle that no fees should be charged to migrant workers.
- The United States' 2015 Federal Acquisition Regulation, Ending Trafficking in Persons, prohibits federal contractors from charging workers recruitment fees, among other misleading and fraudulent recruitment practices.
- The International Organization for Migration is developing the International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS) to provide a platform for addressing unfair recruitment. Accreditation to the program will be based on recruiters' adherence to certain principles, one of which includes a prohibition on charging fees to job seekers.
- The Consumer Goods Forum, a global network of more than 400 retailers, manufacturers, and service providers representing some $3.5 trillion in sales, adopted a policy in 2016 stating the employer should bear the cost of recruitment, not the worker.
- The Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment, convened by the Institute for Human Rights and Business, is a group of major companies working together with experts to address the payment of recruitment fees by workers. Launched in 2016, the initiative is based around the Employer Pays Principle, which states that "No worker should pay for a job. The costs of recruitment should be borne not by the worker but by the employer." The aim of the Group is the eradication of worker-paid fees over the coming decade.

Access to fair economic opportunity is critical not only to the livelihood of workers but also to preventing human trafficking. Labor intermediaries can help connect workers and employers and should be compensated for this work. Too often, however, workers are forced to shoulder the cost of their own recruitment, which makes them increasingly vulnerable to exploitation. Governments and the private sector can take actions to eliminate this practice and help to create supply chains free from human trafficking.

THE FACE OF MODERN SLAVERY

Sex Trafficking

When an adult engages in a commercial sex act, such as prostitution, as the result of force, threats of force, fraud, coercion or any combination of such means, that person is a victim of trafficking. Under such circumstances, perpetrators involved in recruiting, harboring, enticing, transporting, providing, obtaining, patronizing, soliciting, or maintaining a person for that purpose are guilty of sex trafficking of an adult. Sex trafficking also may occur through a specific form of coercion whereby individuals are compelled to continue in prostitution through the use of unlawful "debt," purportedly incurred through their transportation, recruitment, or even their "sale"—which exploiters insist they must pay off before they can be free. Even if an adult initially consents to participate in prostitution it is irrelevant: if an adult, after consenting, is subsequently held in service through psychological manipulation or physical force, he or she is a trafficking victim and should receive benefits outlined in the Palermo Protocol and applicable domestic laws.

Child Sex Trafficking

When a child (under 18 years of age) is recruited, enticed, harbored, transported, provided, obtained, patronized, solicited, or maintained to perform a commercial sex act, proving force, fraud, or coercion is not necessary for the offense to be prosecuted as human trafficking. There are no exceptions to this rule: no cultural or socioeconomic rationalizations alter the fact that children who are exploited in prostitution are trafficking victims. The use of children in commercial sex is prohibited under U.S. law and by statute in most countries around the world. Sex trafficking has devastating consequences for children, including long-lasting physical and psychological trauma, disease (including HIV/AIDS), drug addiction, unwanted pregnancy, malnutrition, social ostracism, and even death.

Forced Labor

Forced labor, sometimes also referred to as labor trafficking, encompasses the range of activities—recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining—involved when a person uses force or physical threats, psychological coercion, abuse of the legal process, deception, or other coercive means to compel someone to work. Once a person's labor is exploited by such means, the person's prior consent to work for an employer is legally irrelevant: the employer is a trafficker and the employee a trafficking victim. Migrants are particularly vulnerable to this form of human trafficking, but individuals also may be forced into labor in their own countries. Female victims of forced or bonded labor, especially women and girls in domestic servitude, are often sexually abused or exploited as well.

Bonded Labor or Debt Bondage

One form of coercion used by traffickers in both sex trafficking and forced labor is the imposition of a bond or debt. Some workers inherit debt; for example, in South Asia it is estimated that there are millions of trafficking victims working to pay off their ancestors' debts. Others fall victim to traffickers or recruiters who unlawfully exploit an initial debt assumed, wittingly or unwittingly, as a term of employment. Traffickers, labor agencies, recruiters, and employers in both the country of origin and the destination country can contribute to debt bondage by charging workers recruitment fees and exorbitant interest rates, making it difficult, if not impossible, to pay off the debt. Such circumstances may occur in the context of employment-based temporary work programs in which a worker's legal status in the destination country is tied to the employer so workers fear seeking redress.

Domestic Servitude

Involuntary domestic servitude is a form of human trafficking found in distinct circumstances—work in a private residence—that create unique vulnerabilities for victims. It is a crime in which a domestic worker is not free to leave his or her employment and is abused and underpaid, if paid at all. Many domestic workers do not receive the basic benefits and protections commonly extended to other groups of workers—things as simple as a day off. Moreover, their ability to move freely is often limited, and employment in private homes increases their isolation and vulnerability. Labor officials generally do not have the authority to inspect employment conditions in private homes. Domestic workers, especially women, confront various forms of abuse, harassment, and exploitation, including sexual and gender-based violence. These issues, taken together, may be symptoms of a situation of domestic servitude. When the employer of a domestic worker has diplomatic status and enjoys immunity from civil and/or criminal jurisdiction, the vulnerability to domestic servitude is enhanced.

Forced Child Labor

Although children may legally engage in certain forms of work, children can also be found in slavery or slavery-like situations. Some indicators of forced labor of a child include situations in which the child appears to be in the custody of a non-family member who requires the child to perform work that financially benefits someone outside the child's family and does not offer the child the option of leaving, such as forced begging. Anti-trafficking responses should supplement, not replace, traditional actions against child labor, such as remediation and education. When children are enslaved, their exploiters should not escape criminal punishment—something that occurs when governments use administrative responses to address cases of forced child labor.

Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers

Child soldiering is a manifestation of human trafficking when it involves the unlawful recruitment or use of children—through force, fraud, or coercion—by armed forces as combatants or other forms of labor. Perpetrators may be government armed forces, paramilitary organizations, or rebel groups. Many children are forcibly abducted to be used as combatants. Others are made to work as porters, cooks, guards, servants, messengers, or spies. Young girls may be forced to "marry" or be raped by commanders and male combatants. Both male and female child soldiers are often sexually abused or exploited by armed groups and such children are subject to the same types of devastating physical and psychological consequences associated with child sex trafficking.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: A PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVE

Human trafficking is a crime increasingly associated with other government priorities such as national security, economic stability, migration, and environmental sustainability. It is reported that human trafficking fuels transnational criminal organizations, exacerbates irregular migratory flows, disrupts labor markets, and sustains other harmful, illicit activities through the forced criminality of its victims. Human trafficking can subvert legitimate economic and labor markets and cause a loss of productivity and economic stability for countries. And certain industries known for the use of forced labor also feature practices that wreak significant environmental damage.

In the public health arena, the consequences of human trafficking are even more evident. The circumstances that victims of human trafficking endure often include unsanitary and dangerous work environments, poor living conditions, substandard nutrition, exposure to sexually transmitted and other communicable diseases, and the denial of access to any health care. Victims of trafficking also frequently suffer physical and mental abuse resulting in physical, sexual, and psychological trauma.

For both children and adults, unsanitary and crowded living conditions, coupled with poor nutrition, foster a host of adverse health conditions. In forced labor cases, long hours and hazardous working conditions including poor training, proximity to dangerous chemicals, lack of personal protective equipment, and financial or physical punishment, including sexual assault, can cause or contribute injuries and illnesses. Sex trafficking victims are exposed to pelvic inflammatory disease, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted infections. Human traffickers may force pregnant victims to undergo abortions, usually in unsafe conditions, posing further trauma and health risks. In addition to physical harm suffered, the range of recurrent emotional and psychological abuse victims often experience can lead to a host of disorders, such as anxiety, depression, and panic attacks.

The myriad health conditions victims of human trafficking face are often not treated properly or promptly, if at all. Victims may be barred entirely from seeking medical attention for health issues and from seeking preventive services, such as dental cleanings, annual health screenings, or vaccinations, either by their trafficker or due to a lack of health insurance or money. Unaddressed health issues, which may have been treatable if detected early, can become more aggressive and severely degenerate the individual's health. Even after leaving a trafficking situation, survivors face health risks and consequences that last for many years. These often chronic health conditions are compounded for survivors of trafficking by unique barriers to accessing adequate health care and medical treatment. Untreated conditions, especially contagious illnesses, can threaten the health of the individual victims, as well as the collective health condition of their communities.

In responding to the consequences detailed above, several U.S. public health experts in the 2017 compilation of essays titled *Human Trafficking Is a Public Health Issue* make the case that using a public health perspective that moves beyond a criminal justice response has the advantage of enlisting a broader set of stakeholders and leads to more effective strategies to support victims and prevent human trafficking. For example, licensed health care practitioners, first responders, and other service providers can be trained to better identify victims seeking medical attention and help them to come forward. Likewise, professional curricula on domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse can integrate human trafficking elements. Such enhanced understanding and expanded training among a wide range of community stakeholders also aids in the prevention of human trafficking, as individuals with certain histories—such as abuse, violence, homelessness, substance abuse, or untreated mental health disorders—are considered at increased risk for human trafficking. In this way, employing a public health perspective can help inform the development of more effective anti-trafficking interventions and prevention strategies.

A man subjected to forced labor loads a truck in a charcoal camp in Brazil. Conditions in the charcoal sector are hazardous and workers are often isolated, making them more vulnerable to human trafficking.

Sex trafficking victims in a shelter in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Service providers assist victims by facilitating access to medical and mental health care, shelter, and legal support.

MEXICO

Lilly lived in a small town in Mexico and needed a job. After she inquired at a local dry cleaning establishment, the owners offered her a position and a place to stay, which she happily accepted. Soon after beginning, the owners accused her of stealing and began to force her to work without pay. For almost two years, the owners confined Lilly to an ironing station in the shop and physically abused her if she stopped working. She was allowed only one small meal a day and little access to water. Lilly finally managed to escape the shop and alert the police, who raided the establishment.

CHILD SOLDIERS PREVENTION ACT LIST

The Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2008 (CSPA) was signed into law on December 23, 2008 (Title IV of Pub. L. 110-457), and took effect on June 21, 2009. The CSPA requires publication in the annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* of a list of foreign governments identified during the previous year as having governmental armed forces or government-supported armed groups that recruit and use child soldiers, as defined in the act. These determinations cover the reporting period beginning April 1, 2016, and ending March 31, 2017.

For the purpose of the CSPA, and generally consistent with the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, the term "child soldier" means:

(i) any person under 18 years of age who takes a direct part in hostilities as a member of governmental armed forces;

(ii) any person under 18 years of age who has been compulsorily recruited into governmental armed forces;

(iii) any person under 15 years of age who has been voluntarily recruited into governmental armed forces; or

(iv) any person under 18 years of age who has been recruited or used in hostilities by armed forces distinct from the armed forces of a state.

The term "child soldier" includes any person described in clauses (ii), (iii), or (iv) who is serving in any capacity, including in a support role, such as a "cook, porter, messenger, medic, guard, or sex slave."

Governments identified on the list are subject to restrictions, in the following fiscal year, on certain security assistance and commercial licensing of military equipment. The CSPA, as amended, prohibits assistance to governments that are identified in the list under the following authorities: International Military Education and Training, Foreign Military Financing, Excess Defense Articles, and Peacekeeping Operations, with exceptions for some programs undertaken pursuant to the Peacekeeping Operations authority. The CSPA also prohibits the issuance of licenses for direct commercial sales of military equipment to such governments. Beginning October 1, 2017, and effective throughout Fiscal Year 2018, these restrictions will apply to the listed countries, absent a presidential national interest waiver, applicable exception, or reinstatement of assistance pursuant to the terms of the CSPA. The determination to include a government in the CSPA list is informed by a range of sources, including first-hand observation by U.S. government personnel and research and credible reporting from various UN entities, international organizations, local and international NGOs, and international media outlets.

The 2017 CSPA List includes
governments in the following countries:

1. Democratic Republic of Congo
2. Mali
3. Nigeria
4. Somalia
5. South Sudan
6. Sudan
7. Syria
8. Yemen

Former anti-Balaka child soldiers wait to be released as part of a UN-negotiated deal in the Central African Republic. Some governments and government-supported militias in African, Asian, and Middle Eastern countries force children to serve as front-line soldiers or servants, and to guard checkpoints.

A child soldier trains in a Syrian training camp. Recruitment and use of children in combat in Syria continues to increase. Syrian government forces, pro-regime militias, and armed groups, including ISIS, continue to recruit and use boys and girls as soldiers, human shields, suicide bombers, and executioners, as well as to fill supporting roles.

NIGERIA

Boko Haram attacked Abdul's village and kidnapped him when he was 14 years old. They trained him to handle assault weapons such as machine guns, anti-aircraft guns, and rocket-propelled grenades. The group kept him and forced him to carry out various operations during which he was forced to kill 18 civilians. They also forced Abdul to gather intelligence on government forces, where he risked being recognized and prosecuted as a Boko Haram member. After being forced to fight for three years, Abdul decided to flee while on a spying mission, but was recognized as Boko Haram and arrested when he entered an internally displaced persons camp to look for his parents.

"I was forced literally to kill my best friend as an initiation process into the army. That's something I will never forget, and I still fight with every single day."

– Michel Chikwanine, former child soldier, DRC

ASSISTING MALE SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The most frequently cited global statistics on human trafficking indicate that men and boys represent nearly half of the total number of human trafficking victims; yet the identification and proper care of male victims remains an enormous challenge to governments and care providers around the world. Too often, men and boys go unidentified and remain in perilous situations, deprived of their freedom. When they do escape their trafficking situations, they are likely to be neglected by governments and service providers whose programs were established to shelter and assist women and girls. Instead of being treated as exploited individuals, they are at greater risk of being penalized or fined for offenses, such as crossing a border illegally, or of facing charges and imprisonment for crimes committed as a result of being subjected to trafficking.

Male victims of forced labor have been found in nearly all work sectors, including mining, forestry, construction, health care, factories, hospitality, and agriculture. Recent investigative reports have documented the severe abuse of men on fishing boats in Southeast Asia for years at a time and the exploitation of boys in forced labor on fishing vessels on Ghana's Lake Volta. In addition, there have been recent reports of men forced to work in construction in Qatar as it prepares for the 2022 World Cup and in agriculture in the United Kingdom and the United States. Around the world, the sex trafficking of boys and men continues to be hidden and underreported, and there is a severe shortage of programs to meet their needs. For example, reports have documented boys sold into sex trafficking in Afghanistan, including for *bacha baazi*, where men use young boys for social and sexual entertainment. In the United States, men and boys are exploited in commercial sex.

Recent research has documented the physical and mental health impact of human trafficking on men and boys who may have experienced physical and sexual abuse and threats of violence, deprivation of basic nutrition and sanitation, and loss of freedom of movement. Despite experiencing such conditions, male survivors often do not initially see themselves as having been the victim of the crime of forced labor. Instead they are likely to view their labor trafficking situation as bad luck, their own "gullibility," or a "normal" consequence of labor migration. This is reinforced by commonly accepted or traditional gender roles or stereotypes in which men are expected to stand up for themselves and provide for their families. In addition, authorities, such as immigration officers, labor inspectors, and police, often do not recognize male victims due to biases or the tendency to perceive males as less vulnerable to human trafficking or erroneously view human trafficking as exclusively the sex trafficking of girls and women.

Most programs established to assist trafficking victims do not focus on meeting male survivors' needs. In many countries, even when authorities identify a male trafficking victim, there are few anti-trafficking programs able to provide men or boys specialized assistance, especially safe housing.

Male survivors of trafficking need access to **comprehensive and culturally appropriate assistance** to meet their needs, such as housing, medical care, mental health services, legal support, and employment assistance, offered through centers that tailor services to individuals, for example:

- **Housing.** Access to housing that is safe and has resources to meet their unique needs. The use of homeless shelters is often inadequate for traumatized male survivors.
- **Health.** Access to a wide range of trauma-informed physical and mental health services, including alternatives to traditional care such as peer-to-peer counseling.
- **Legal Support.** Access to legal support to ensure male survivors are aware of their rights, have access to legal proceedings, and are assisted in contacting consular services from their home country and seeking compensation for lost wages and injuries and other forms of restitution.
- **Employment Assistance.** Access to employment assistance that includes education, skills training, and job placement.

While some governments have made progress to improve the anti-trafficking response for male victims, much work remains to ensure men and boys are not overlooked or under-served. Governments should ensure services are sensitive to the needs of all victims, regardless of gender, and adapt methodologies as needed. All trafficking victims should be offered high quality individualized assistance, supported in regaining control of their lives, and empowered to make informed decisions about the options available to them.

While docked in San Francisco, an Indonesian man points out a finger injury he sustained while working on a U.S. fishing vessel.

UNITED KINGDOM

Tim lost his job in 2009 and was on the edge of destitution when a couple recruited him to work in their construction business, offering him housing and three meals a day. When he arrived at the couple's property, however, he found workers were living in a crowded and dirty trailer. The couple shaved his head, took his clothes, and confiscated his phone and identification. They held him captive, physically and verbally abused him, and forced him to work laying cement driveways. Eventually, the traffickers were arrested and Tim was released.

A child sex trafficking victim eats her lunch in her room at a brothel in Bangladesh. Traffickers subject adults and children to sex trafficking in brothels, bars, massage parlors, and private apartments.

There are situations where you have to force girls by using rape, abuse or torture. When she begins to fear for her life, she stops resisting and starts working."

– South African brothel owner and human trafficker

METHODOLOGY

The Department of State prepared this Report using information from U.S. embassies, government officials, nongovernmental and international organizations, published reports, news articles, academic studies, research trips to every region of the world, and information submitted to tipreport@state.gov. This email address provides a means by which organizations and individuals can share information with the Department of State on government progress in addressing trafficking.

U.S. diplomatic posts and domestic agencies reported on the trafficking situation and governmental action to fight trafficking based on thorough research that included meetings with a wide variety of government officials, local and international NGO representatives, officials of international organizations, journalists, academics, and survivors. U.S. missions overseas are dedicated to covering human trafficking issues year-round. The 2017 *Trafficking in Persons Report* covers government efforts undertaken from April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017.

Tier Placement

The Department places each country in this Report onto one of four tiers, as mandated by the TVPA. This placement is based not on the size of the country's problem but on the extent of governments' efforts to meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking (see page 38), which are generally consistent with the Palermo Protocol.

While Tier 1 is the highest ranking, it does not mean that a country has no human trafficking problem or that it is doing enough to address the problem. Rather, a Tier 1 ranking indicates that a government has acknowledged the existence of human trafficking, has made efforts to address the problem, and meets the TVPA's minimum standards. Each year, governments need to demonstrate appreciable progress in combating trafficking to maintain a Tier 1 ranking. Indeed, Tier 1 represents a responsibility rather than a reprieve. A country is never finished with the job of fighting trafficking.

Tier rankings and narratives in the 2017 *Trafficking in Persons Report* reflect an assessment of the following:

- enactment of laws prohibiting severe forms of trafficking in persons, as defined by the TVPA, and provision of criminal punishments for trafficking offenses;
- criminal penalties prescribed for human trafficking offenses with a maximum of at least four years' deprivation of liberty, or a more severe penalty;

CAMBODIA

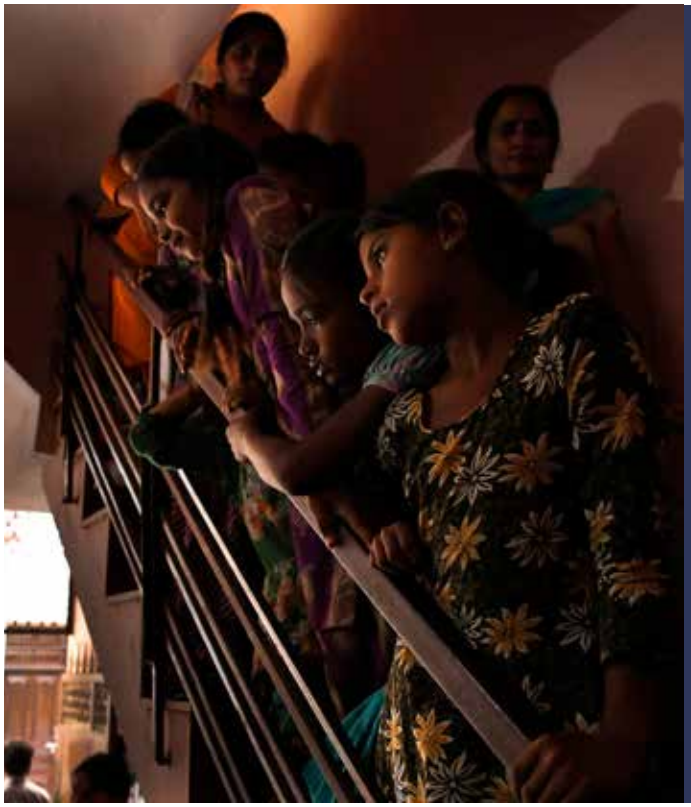
After Lai's family fell into debt to loan sharks, her mother asked her to help the family earn more money. Lai, just 12 years old, was examined by a doctor and issued a certificate of virginity. Her mother then delivered her to a hotel where a man raped her repeatedly. For nearly two years, Lai's mother continued to sell her to make money to pay off their debts. After learning her mother was planning to sell her again, this time for a six-month stretch, Lai fled her home and found sanctuary in a residence for sex trafficking victims.

A Burmese victim of trafficking in Indonesia awaits repatriation. Traffickers use debts, physical abuse, and document confiscation, among other tactics, to trap victims in involuntary servitude.

- implementation of human trafficking laws through vigorous prosecution of the prevalent forms of trafficking in the country and sentencing of offenders;
- proactive victim identification measures with systematic procedures to guide law enforcement and other government-supported front-line responders in the process of victim identification;
- government funding and partnerships with NGOs to provide victims with access to primary health care, counseling, and shelter, allowing them to recount their trafficking experiences to trained social workers and law enforcement in an environment of minimal pressure;
- victim protection efforts that include access to services and shelter without detention and with legal alternatives to removal to countries in which victims would face retribution or hardship;
- the extent to which a government ensures victims are provided with legal and other assistance and that, consistent with domestic law, proceedings are not prejudicial to victims' rights, dignity, or psychological well-being;
- the extent to which a government ensures the safe, humane, and to the extent possible, voluntary repatriation and reintegration of victims;
- governmental measures to prevent human trafficking, including efforts to curb practices identified as contributing factors to human trafficking, such as employers' confiscation of foreign workers' passports and allowing labor recruiters to charge prospective migrants recruitment fees; and
- governmental efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts and international sex tourism.

Tier rankings and narratives are NOT affected by the following:

- efforts, however laudable, undertaken exclusively by nongovernmental actors in the country;
- general public awareness events—government-sponsored or otherwise—lacking concrete ties to the prosecution of traffickers, protection of victims, or prevention of trafficking; and
- broad-based law enforcement or developmental initiatives.



NIGERIA | ITALY

Paula was walking home from the market in her hometown in Nigeria when a man approached her and offered her a job in Italy that included good pay and housing. The man told Paula she would have to pay a substantial recruitment fee for the job, but she did not have enough money. Paula reasoned that a job in Europe was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and the proposed salary would be enough to pay back the debt easily, so she borrowed the money and eagerly accepted. Paula and a group of other Nigerian women traveled with the recruiters to Italy. Upon arrival, the women realized they had been deceived; the recruiters forced them into prostitution to repay their travel debts. Paula and the other women were discovered during a police raid.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORT: "STATE HAS MADE IMPROVEMENTS IN ITS ANNUAL REPORT BUT DOES NOT EXPLICITLY EXPLAIN CERTAIN TIER RANKINGS OR CHANGES"

On December 5, 2016, the Government Accountability Office released a report evaluating the Department of State's annual *Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report* and making several recommendations to the Secretary of State to improve the clarity and usefulness of the *TIP Report*. Among these was the recommendation that the *TIP Report* should more clearly explain the factual basis for country tier rankings. To that end, the tier ranking justification for each country in the 2017 *TIP Report* is now contained in the first paragraph of each country narrative and includes new language that more explicitly highlights the factors that support a given tier ranking. These changes are intended to provide clear linkages between statements in each country narrative and the respective tier ranking, especially in the case of tier upgrades and downgrades.

LEFT: Sex trafficking survivors watch a presentation at a shelter in New Delhi, India. Experts estimate millions of people are victims of sex trafficking in India. Some are exploited in brothels on Delhi's notorious Garstin Bastion Road.

TOP: A *talibé* takes a break from begging in a market in Dakar, Senegal. The Quranic students rise before dawn to study, and then spend hours begging for money and food to bring back to their religious teacher, or *marabout*.

RIGHT: In Afghanistan, boys are sold as dancers, and are often subjected to sex trafficking, in a practice known as *bacha baazi*.

A Guide to the Tiers

Tier 1
The governments of countries that fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.

Tier 2
The governments of countries that do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

Tier 2 Watch List
The government of countries that do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards, and for which:

a. the *absolute number* of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing;

b. there is a failure to provide evidence of *increasing efforts* to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year, including increased investigations, prosecution, and convictions of trafficking crimes, increased assistance to victims, and decreasing evidence of complicity in severe forms of trafficking by government officials; or

c. the determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take *additional steps over the next year*.

Tier 3
The governments of countries that do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

The TVPA lists additional factors to determine whether a country should be on Tier 2 (or Tier 2 Watch List) versus Tier 3: first, the extent to which the country is a country of origin, transit, or destination for severe forms of trafficking; second, the extent to which the country's government does not meet the TVPA's minimum standards and, in particular, the extent to which officials or government employees have been complicit in severe forms of trafficking; and third, reasonable measures that the government would need to undertake to be in compliance with the minimum standards in light of the government's resources and capabilities to address and eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons.

A 2008 amendment to the TVPA provides that any country that has been ranked Tier 2 Watch List for two consecutive years and that would otherwise be ranked Tier 2 Watch List for the next year will instead be ranked Tier 3 in that third year. This automatic downgrade provision came into effect for the first time in the 2013 Report. The Secretary of State is authorized to waive the automatic

UKRAINE | RUSSIA

Sofia traveled from her small town in central Ukraine to Moscow with a friend on the promise of a job working in a market. When they arrived, the man who had offered them the job confiscated their passports and drove them to an old factory surrounded by barbed wire outside the city. Guards carrying guns ensured they could not escape. For almost two months Sofia worked 18-hour days, bottling, packing, and loading vodka from the plant's illegal stills. Sofia was finally able to escape when police raided the factory.

downgrade based on credible evidence that a waiver is justified because the government has a written plan that, if implemented, would constitute making significant efforts to meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is devoting sufficient resources to implement the plan. The Secretary can only issue this waiver for two consecutive years. After the third year, a country must either go up to Tier 1 or 2 or down to Tier 3. Governments subject to the automatic downgrade provision are noted as such in the country narratives.

Funding Restrictions for Tier 3 Countries

Pursuant to the TVPA, governments of countries on Tier 3 may be subject to certain restrictions on assistance, whereby the President may determine not to provide U.S. government nonhumanitarian, nontrade-related foreign assistance. In addition, the President may determine to withhold funding for government official or employee participation in educational and cultural exchange programs for certain Tier 3 countries. Consistent with the TVPA, the President may also determine to instruct the U.S. Executive Director of each multilateral development bank and the International Monetary Fund to vote against and use his or her best efforts to deny any loans or other uses of the institutions' funds to a designated Tier 3 country for most purpose (except for humanitarian, trade-related, and certain development-related assistance). Alternatively, the President may waive application of the foregoing restrictions upon a determination that the provision to a Tier 3 country of such assistance would promote the purposes of the TVPA or is otherwise in the national interest of the United States. The TVPA also authorizes the President to waive funding restrictions if necessary to avoid significant adverse effects on vulnerable populations, including women and children.

Applicable funding restrictions apply for the next Fiscal Year, which begins October 1, 2017.

No tier ranking is permanent. Every country, including the United States, can do more. All countries must maintain and continually increase efforts to combat trafficking.

UNITED STATES

Amy was 12 when her father, an alcoholic and drug addict, began abusing her physically and sexually. When she was 17, Amy began staying with her friend, Lisa, to escape her father's abuse. Lisa told Amy that she knew an agent who could help her become a model—something Amy had always dreamed of. Instead, the man forced Amy into prostitution and kept all the money she made, locking her in a hotel room for weeks, giving her very little food. He threatened to kill her if she ever left. Amy was finally able to escape and now hopes to train to become a certified nursing assistant so she can help others.

Nigerian migrants cross the Mediterranean Sea to Sicily from Libya. Migrants smuggled to Italy via Libya are especially susceptible to exploitation on their journey and when they arrive at their destination.

"Why should I slap them when I can just use words to destroy them mentally?"

– Romanian trafficker in the United Kingdom, speaking on why he doesn't need to use violence against the women he forces into commercial sex.

ENGAGING SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

I see this council really as a shining light for survivors across the country as a way to really empower survivors, that they can be anything that they want to be and they can overcome just about anything that they're dealing with, that they're struggling with, and that there is hope."

– Sheila White, sex trafficking survivor, on behalf of the U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking

Survivors play a vital role in combating human trafficking. Survivors should not be seen only as recipients of services; they run organizations, advocate before legislatures, train law enforcement officers, conduct public outreach, and work with government officials. The survivor voice is vital in establishing effective anti-trafficking strategies that address prosecution, protection, and prevention. The appointment of the United States Advisory Council on Human Trafficking in December 2015 established a formal platform for human trafficking survivors to advise and make recommendations to the federal government on anti-trafficking policies and programs. This marked a significant milestone in the anti-trafficking movement, as it demonstrates both to survivors and governments around the world the importance of survivor engagement in all efforts to combat this crime.

Governments, civil society, and businesses should understand how to engage with survivors appropriately and responsibly, whether within the criminal justice system, through the provision of services, in the adoption and implementation of corporate policies, or in efforts to advocate for social change. The following list, although not exhaustive, delineates several guidelines for meaningful engagement with survivors:

DO:

- **Promote survivor empowerment and self-sufficiency.** Survivors of human trafficking should have access to services that are comprehensive, victim-centered, and culturally appropriate, including long-term care, to promote autonomy. Additionally, survivors should have access to vocational training, skill development courses, financial counseling, and educational scholarships.
- **Use a victim-centered and trauma-informed approach.** All engagement with survivors, as well as all anti-trafficking work, should incorporate a victim-centered and trauma-informed approach to minimize re-traumatization and ensure an understanding of the impact of trauma on the individual.

The victim-centered approach seeks to minimize re-traumatization associated with involvement in the criminal justice process by providing the support of victim service providers, empowering survivors as engaged participants in the process, and providing survivors an opportunity to play a role in seeing their traffickers brought to justice.

A trauma-informed approach includes an understanding of the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on the individual, as well as on the professionals who help them.

- **Hire and compensate.** Survivors know firsthand how to improve anti-trafficking efforts and should be hired and compensated for their expertise. It is important for agencies and organizations to create opportunities to employ survivors as staff members, consultants, or trainers. Survivors, like any other employee or consultant, deserve financial compensation for their time and expertise.
- **Incorporate input.** Government agencies, victim service providers, law enforcement agencies, non-profit organizations, and businesses should listen carefully to survivor recommendations and incorporate survivor input in both the design and implementation of anti-trafficking policies, programs, trainings, and advocacy efforts.
- **Protect confidentiality.** Agencies and organizations interacting with survivors should protect survivors' identities and privacy appropriately and establish policies and procedures on confidentiality.

DON'T:

- **Require participation.** Requiring a survivor to participate in a program deprives him or her of autonomy and the right to self-determination. Survivors should be empowered to make their own decisions about the care they would like to receive.
- **Overpromise.** Law enforcement officials, victim service providers, and government agencies should avoid making promises and commitments they cannot keep. In particular, they should not promise services to gain a survivor's cooperation.
- **Re-traumatize.** When engaging with survivors, do not push them to recount their personal story unnecessarily. Similarly, don't share the details of a survivor's story without gaining permission and providing context for how the information will be used.
- **Sensationalize the individual's experience.** The use of graphic language or shocking imagery to depict human trafficking promotes myths and misconceptions about this crime and can re-traumatize survivors.
- **Photograph or publish information without consent.** It is a survivor's decision to participate in any outreach, marketing, social media, or publicity efforts. Publishing a survivor's name or story without their informed consent could compromise the survivor's safety and well-being. If a survivor is willing, always ask how they would like to be described (e.g., survivor, advocate, etc.) and allow the survivor to review any material for accuracy before publication.

I didn't know I was a victim of anything except circumstance."

– Caitlin Kelly Lawrence, sex trafficking survivor

PHILIPPINES

When Mariel approached Jasmine and promised her a job in an internet café in Manila, Jasmine readily accepted. Mariel recruited Jasmine and more than a dozen other girls from their small village and arranged for the group to travel to Manila together. At the port, however, a security guard became suspicious of the girls traveling with Mariel and asked to see their identification and work documents. Mariel failed to present proper documentation and was arrested. Officials later learned that there had never been any internet café jobs, but rather Mariel had planned to force the girls to work in commercial sex by advertising them online.

ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN: AN ALARMING TREND

That could be anybody's daughter...That could be your neighbor. That could be your daughter's or your son's friend at school."

– FBI Agent Bob Parker, on a victim lured into child sex trafficking via Facebook

New technologies are facilitating the online sexual exploitation of children, including the live-streaming of sexual abuse of children using web cameras or cellphones, often for profit. Mobile devices also provide new and evolving means by which offenders sexually abuse children as apps are being used to target, recruit, and coerce children to engage in sexual activity. Experts believe tens of thousands of children globally are sexually exploited online, and the number appears to be growing. The victims may be boys or girls, ranging from very young children to adolescents, and hailing from all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

The process often begins when an offender gains access to a potential child victim and, through psychological manipulation and coercion, grooms the child for sexual exploitation. The offender then connects via the internet with a paying client who often specifically requests a child. The child is further victimized through commercial sexual exploitation and abuse and the live-streaming of commercial sex acts. Perpetrators can pay to direct the sexual abuse of children from anywhere in the world while the abuse takes place in private homes, Internet cafes, or "cyber dens" in or near the child's community. Disturbingly, closed and highly protected online communities dedicated to the sexual abuse of children have proliferated. Children have been reported to be victims of this crime in Colombia, India, Mexico, the Philippines, Thailand, and the United States. Many countries, including Australia, Britain, Canada, the Netherlands, the Philippines, and the United States, have prosecuted perpetrators—both paying clients and offenders who facilitate the exploitation of the child.

In the Philippines, where many are impoverished and nearly half of the population is connected to the internet, numerous individuals in poor communities reportedly earn income from this type of child exploitation. Online sessions can be conducted at low cost using a cellphone or a computer with a webcam. Connections to prospective clients are made easily; clients remain anonymous and make payments by wire transfer. Children, often naked, have been exploited on camera—including by family members or neighbors—and coerced into exhibiting themselves and performing sex acts for the viewing of individuals watching online. In many cases, family members justify facilitating the online sexual exploitation by asserting that it is not harmful to the child, especially in cases where there is no direct physical contact with the child. This lack of understanding of the detrimental psychological, developmental, and physical impact of this crime on children, the complicity of relatives, and the easy flow of money have contributed to the practice becoming more prevalent.

Another growing threat to children is sextortion, which is a form of online sexual exploitation of children where offenders hack, coerce, deceive or otherwise obtain incriminating photos or information from a child and then threaten exposure if that child does not perform sex acts via web cameras.

The online sexual exploitation of children presents new challenges for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and victim service providers. Law enforcement and prosecutors in most countries have little training or experience in detecting this crime, conducting online investigations, obtaining evidence from internet service providers, and presenting relevant evidence in court. Enhanced mechanisms of encryption by the offenders, such as networks of technologies and platforms that obfuscate traditional IP addresses, have also delayed or complicated investigations. In addition, difficulties in obtaining the cooperation of family members and others who facilitate the crime is a widespread challenge in these cases, as is the lack of specialized trauma-informed care and services for the child victims, especially boys.

Despite such challenges, governments, international organizations, and NGOs are working together to address the online sexual exploitation of children. Successful detection and prosecution of perpetrators requires advanced cybercrime investigative skills, criminal laws and procedures that secure cyber evidence and allow for prosecution of crimes committed online, specialized training for prosecutors and judges, cross-border law enforcement cooperation, and specialized care for child victims. The low financial cost of this criminal enterprise (an internet connection and a mobile device or computer-linked webcam), coupled with its low risk nature (as seen by the relatively small number of convictions globally) and high profitability are driving the rapid growth of online sexual exploitation of children. To reverse this trend, governments must rally significant political will and resources to hold perpetrators accountable, provide comprehensive services to child victims, and prevent the crime from occurring.

MEDIA REPORTING ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

From traditional news outlets to social media, a growing movement is exposing human trafficking as a concern both from a human rights and a national security perspective.

Just 15 years ago, human trafficking was an under-reported and often misrepresented issue and some reporting sensationalized the problem or even misinformed the public. In the last few years, a significant shift has occurred in the media's reporting of human trafficking, from dramatic exposés to in-depth original research and agenda-setting public-interest reporting. These media reports have helped change the way the public looks at human trafficking—from a crime that happens to "others" to one that has an impact on people's everyday lives, in nearly every community and region of the world.

Some of the highlights and exemplary reporting in the last few years include:

- **2009, *Des Moines Register*.** A *Register* investigation in 2009 led to the release of dozens of men with intellectual disabilities, who were living in squalor, abused, and forced to work for as little as 41 cents per hour processing turkeys in a plant in Atalissa, Iowa. After four years of court battles with the company, the men won a $240 million jury verdict, which was subsequently reduced to $50,000 per person.
- **2010, *CNN Freedom Project*.** The network originally committed to a one-year project dedicated to raising awareness about modern slavery around the world. This year, the network celebrates seven years of the "Freedom Project," which has covered more than 600 investigative stories on human trafficking to date.
- **2011, *Al Jazeera English*.** The network started a ground-breaking series, "Slavery: A 21st Century Evil," highlighting modern slavery around the world.
- **2012, *National Public Radio*.** A two-part series on *Morning Edition* exposed forced labor in the seafood sector and its link to American dinner tables.
- **2014, *the Guardian*.** A six-month investigative series, "Modern-day Slavery in Focus," revealed direct links between the men forced to labor on fishing boats and in the production of seafood sold by major retailers throughout the world.
- **2014, *Los Angeles Times*.** The four-part investigative series, "Product of Mexico," revealed the harsh living conditions and exploitative situations endured by migrant farmworkers in Mexico who supplied significant amounts of agricultural produce to the United States.
- **2015, *New York Times*.** A seven-part series, "The Outlaw Ocean," which took two years to investigate, provided a comprehensive look at the overall lawlessness at sea and chronicled a diversity of crimes, including forced labor on fishing boats.
- **2015, *Capital News Service*.** Students from the Philip Merrill College of Journalism at the University of Maryland produced a six-part investigative series, "The Brothel Next Door: Human Trafficking in Maryland," that examined more than three-dozen state and federal human trafficking cases from 2005 to 2015, and submitted 70 public records requests for reports on forced labor and sex trafficking cases.
- **2016 *Associated Press*.** The 18-month investigative story, "Seafood from Slaves," led to the release of more than 2,000 trafficking victims, traced the seafood they caught to supermarkets and pet food providers across the United States, and led to the jailing of perpetrators, congressional hearings, and the introduction of new laws.

Media play an enormous role in shaping perceptions and guiding the public conversation about human trafficking. Human trafficking schemes are constantly evolving, and the media's vigilance helps keep the public informed and engaged. As media pursues more research and investigative work on the issue, the public will better understand how the crime works, how to identify and help trafficking victims, and ultimately, what can be done to prevent the crime from happening.

AFGHANISTAN

When Pasha was 10 years old, his family pulled him out of school so he could help out by earning money working in a brick kiln. Pasha's family had borrowed money from the kiln owner to help take care of Pasha's ailing father, and the interest charged on the loan made the debt insurmountable. For three years, Pasha has worked 12-hour days hauling a handcart full of dirt alongside his father and siblings. If Pasha's family cannot pay off the debt, he and his siblings will inherit it and possibly pass it on to their own children.

GLOBAL LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

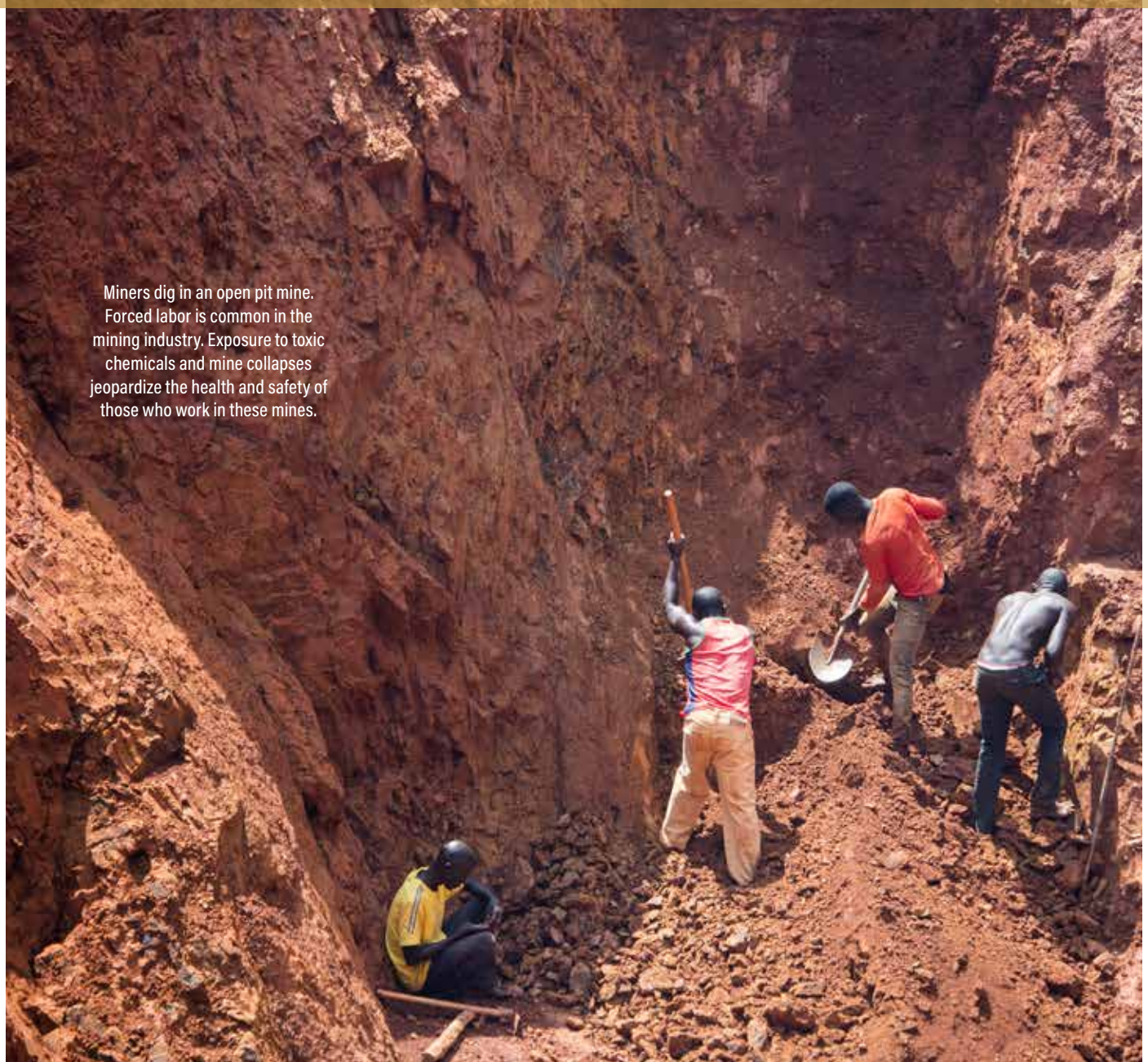
The Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) of 2003 added to the original law a new requirement that foreign governments provide the Department of State with data on trafficking investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences in order to fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking (Tier 1). The 2004 *TIP Report* collected this data for the first time. The 2007 *TIP Report* showed for the first time a breakout of the number of total prosecutions and convictions that related to labor trafficking, placed in parentheses.

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2009	5,606 (432)	4,166 (335)	49,105	33
2010	6,017 (607)	3,619 (237)	33,113	17
2011	7,909 (456)	3,969 (278)	42,291 (15,205)	15
2012	7,705 (1,153)	4,746 (518)	46,570 (17,368)	21
2013	9,460 (1,199)	5,776 (470)	44,758 (10,603)	58
2014	10,051 (418)	4,443 (216)	44,462 (11,438)	20
2015	19,127 (857)	6,615 (456)	77,823 (14,262)	30
2016	14,897 (1,038)	9,071 (717)	66,520 (17,465)	25

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

Victims will only find freedom if we cultivate a radically new, global and co-ordinated approach to defeat this vile crime. Together we must work tirelessly to preserve the freedoms and values that have defined our United Nations from its inception. Together we must work tirelessly to restore these freedoms and values to the lives of the men, women and children who are exploited for profit and held captive with little or no chance of escape."

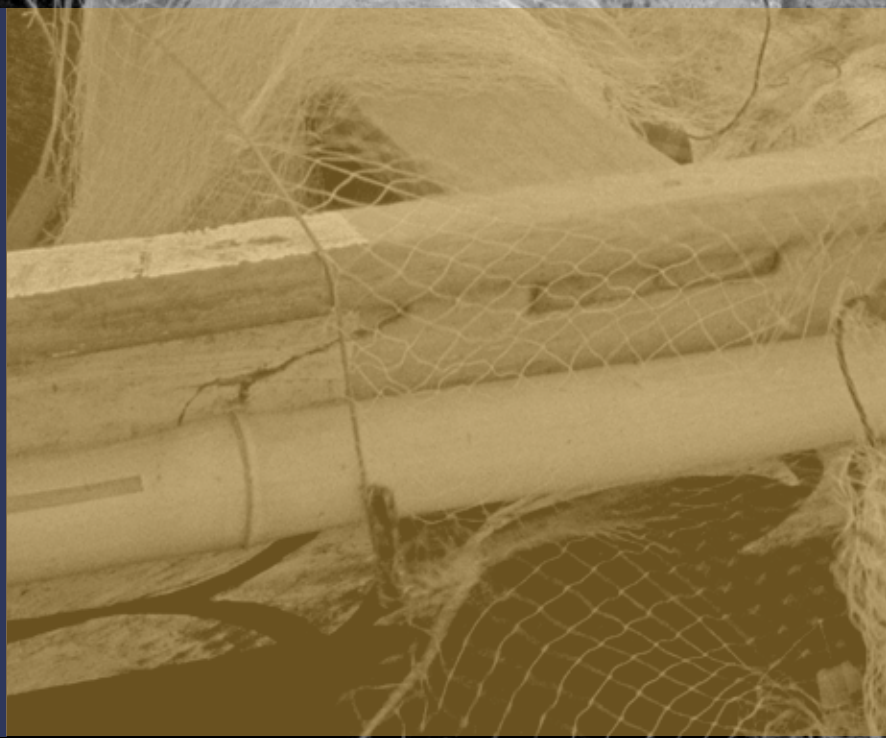
– Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

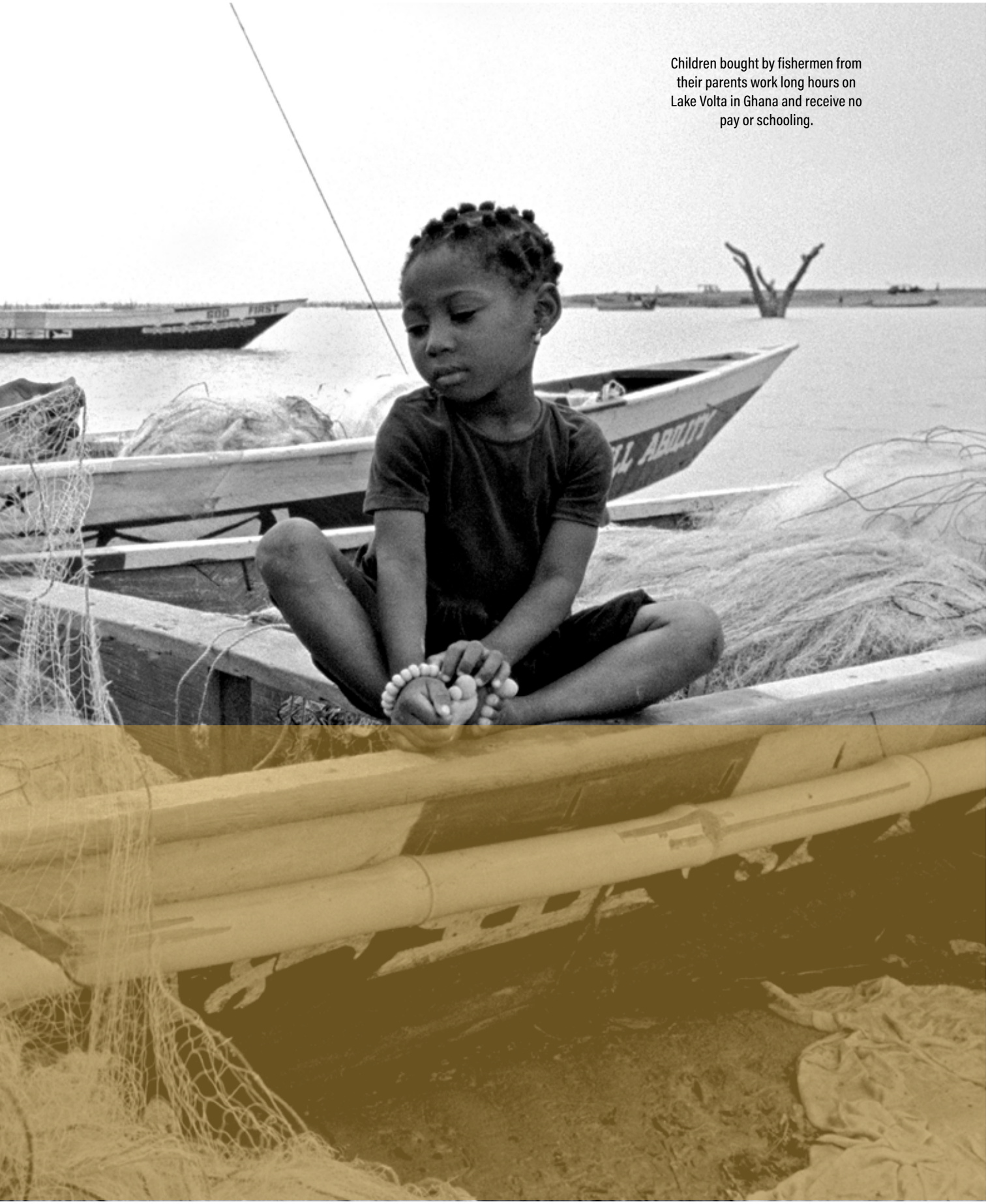


Miners dig in an open pit mine. Forced labor is common in the mining industry. Exposure to toxic chemicals and mine collapses jeopardize the health and safety of those who work in these mines.

UGANDA

Mary dreamed of being an electrician in Uganda. When she was 16 years old, her parents could no longer support her or pay her school fees; they sent her to live with an aunt in a village outside of Kampala. After her aunt had an accident, Mary was soon struggling for money. A neighbor helped Mary get a job in a nearby bar, where her boss forced her to have sex with some of the bar's patrons. One day, a social worker came to the bar and told Mary about an organization that could help her escape the bar. With the support of the NGO, Mary was able to leave, return to school, and get her degree in electronics.





Children bought by fishermen from their parents work long hours on Lake Volta in Ghana and receive no pay or schooling.

TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT: MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, Div. A of Pub. L. No. 106-386, § 108, as amended.

(1) The government of the country should prohibit severe forms of trafficking in persons and punish acts of such trafficking.

(2) For the knowing commission of any act of sex trafficking involving force, fraud, coercion, or in which the victim of sex trafficking is a child incapable of giving meaningful consent, or of trafficking which includes rape or kidnapping or which causes a death, the government of the country should prescribe punishment commensurate with that for grave crimes, such as forcible sexual assault.

(3) For the knowing commission of any act of a severe form of trafficking in persons, the government of the country should prescribe punishment that is sufficiently stringent to deter and that adequately reflects the heinous nature of the offense.

(4) The government of the country should make serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons.

INDICIA OF "SERIOUS AND SUSTAINED EFFORTS"

(1) Whether the government of the country vigorously investigates and prosecutes acts of severe forms of trafficking in persons, and convicts and sentences persons responsible for such acts, that take place wholly or partly within the territory of the country, including, as appropriate, requiring incarceration of individuals convicted of such acts. For purposes of the preceding sentence, suspended or significantly reduced sentences for convictions of principal actors in cases of severe forms of trafficking in persons shall be considered, on a case-by-case basis, whether to be considered as an indicator of serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons. After reasonable requests from the Department of State for data regarding investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences, a government which does not provide such data, consistent with the capacity of such government to obtain such data, shall be presumed not to have vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted, or sentenced such acts. During the periods prior to the annual report submitted on June 1, 2004, and on June 1, 2005, and the periods afterwards until September 30 of each such year, the Secretary of State may disregard the presumption contained in the preceding sentence if the government has provided some data to the Department of State regarding such acts and the Secretary has determined that the government is making a good faith effort to collect such data.

(2) Whether the government of the country protects victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons and encourages their assistance in the investigation and prosecution of such trafficking, including provisions for legal alternatives to their removal to countries in which they would face retribution or hardship, and ensures that victims are not inappropriately incarcerated, fined, or otherwise penalized solely for unlawful acts as a direct result of being trafficked, including by providing training to law enforcement and immigration officials regarding the identification and treatment of trafficking victims using approaches that focus on the needs of the victims.

(3) Whether the government of the country has adopted measures to prevent severe forms of trafficking in persons, such as measures to inform and educate the public, including potential victims, about the causes and consequences of severe forms of trafficking in persons, measures to establish the identity of local populations, including birth registration, citizenship, and nationality, measures to ensure that its nationals who are deployed abroad as part of a diplomatic, peacekeeping, or other similar mission do not engage in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons or exploit victims of such trafficking, a transparent system for remediating or punishing such public officials as a deterrent, measures to prevent the use of forced labor or child labor in violation of international standards, effective bilateral, multilateral, or regional information sharing and cooperation arrangements with other countries, and effective policies or laws regulating foreign labor recruiters and holding them civilly and criminally liable for fraudulent recruiting.

(4) Whether the government of the country cooperates with other governments in the investigation and prosecution of severe forms of trafficking in persons and has entered into bilateral, multilateral, or regional law enforcement cooperation and coordination arrangements with other countries.

(5) Whether the government of the country extradites persons charged with acts of severe forms of trafficking in persons on substantially the same terms and to substantially the same extent as persons charged with other serious crimes (or, to the extent such extradition would be inconsistent with the laws of such country or with international agreements to which the country is a party, whether the government is taking all appropriate measures to modify or replace such laws and treaties so as to permit such extradition).

(6) Whether the government of the country monitors immigration and emigration patterns for evidence of severe forms of trafficking in persons and whether law enforcement agencies of the country respond to any such evidence in a manner that is consistent with the vigorous investigation and prosecution of acts of such trafficking, as well as with the protection of human rights of victims and the internationally recognized human right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's own country.

(7) Whether the government of the country vigorously investigates, prosecutes, convicts, and sentences public officials, including diplomats and soldiers, who participate in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons, including nationals of the country who are deployed abroad as part of a diplomatic, peacekeeping, or other similar mission who engage in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons or exploit victims of such trafficking, and takes all appropriate measures against officials who condone such trafficking. A government's failure to appropriately address public allegations against such public officials, especially once such officials have returned to their home countries, shall be considered inaction under these criteria. After reasonable requests from the Department of State for data regarding such investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences, a government which does not provide such data consistent with its resources shall be presumed not to have vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted, or sentenced such acts. During the periods prior to the annual report submitted on June 1, 2004, and June 1, 2005, and the periods afterwards until September 30 of each such year, the Secretary of State may disregard the presumption contained in the preceding sentence if the government has provided some data to the Department of State regarding such acts and the Secretary has determined that the government is making a good faith effort to collect such data.

(8) Whether the percentage of victims of severe forms of trafficking in the country that are non-citizens of such countries is insignificant.

(9) Whether the government has entered into effective, transparent partnerships, cooperative arrangements, or agreements that have resulted in concrete and measurable outcomes with

(A) domestic civil society organizations, private sector entities, or international nongovernmental organizations, or into multilateral or regional arrangements or agreements, to assist the government's efforts to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and punish traffickers; or

(B) the United States toward agreed goals and objectives in the collective fight against trafficking.

(10) Whether the government of the country, consistent with the capacity of such government, systematically monitors its efforts to satisfy the criteria described in paragraphs (1) through (8) and makes available publicly a periodic assessment of such efforts.

(11) Whether the government of the country achieves appreciable progress in eliminating severe forms of trafficking when compared to the assessment in the previous year.

(12) Whether the government of the country has made serious and sustained efforts to reduce the demand for

(A) commercial sex acts; and

(B) participation in international sex tourism by nationals of the country.

2017 TIP REPORT HEROES

Each year, the Department of State honors individuals around the world who have devoted their lives to the fight against human trafficking. These individuals are NGO workers, lawmakers, police officers, and concerned citizens who are committed to ending modern slavery. They are recognized for their tireless efforts—despite resistance, opposition, and threats to their lives—to protect victims, punish offenders, and raise awareness of ongoing criminal practices in their countries and abroad. For more information about current and past Trafficking in Persons Report Heroes, including how to connect with them, please visit the Trafficking in Persons Report Heroes Global Network at www.tipheroes.org.

ALIKA KINAN / ARGENTINA

Alika Kinan is the first survivor of human trafficking in Argentina to win an award for damages in a civil sex trafficking case. In November 2016, she helped secure a criminal conviction of her traffickers and won the civil judgment and award; this was the first time in the country's history that a local government was ordered to pay a civil award to a victim of human trafficking.

Since escaping from her trafficking situation in 2012, Ms. Kinan has advocated tirelessly for the rights of women at both the national and provincial levels. She has partnered with the Argentine government to enhance its response to human trafficking and continues to fight on behalf of trafficking victims for greater access to essential services such as medical treatment, housing, job training, and education. Ms. Kinan frequently works with the Argentine Prosecutor General's Office, the Public Defenders' Office, and the Ministry of Justice to improve the prosecution of human trafficking cases at the national and provincial levels. She also participates in training efforts and advises provincial governments, NGOs, and local universities on programs to prevent trafficking in persons across the country.

Ms. Kinan is working to establish an NGO to help raise awareness and improve assistance to human trafficking victims in Argentina.

LEONARDO SAKAMOTO / BRAZIL

Leonardo Sakamoto is a Brazilian journalist with an unwavering commitment to the protection of fundamental freedoms in Brazil. In 2001, he established *Repórter Brasil*, an NGO dedicated to monitoring and combating forced labor in Brazil. *Repórter Brasil's* pioneering investigative journalism has helped leaders in the public and private sectors, as well as in civil society, use research and educational programs as tools to combat human trafficking, especially forced labor.

Repórter Brasil runs *Escravo, Nem Pensar!*, the first educational program operating at the national level to help raise awareness about and prevent forced labor in Brazil by providing technical and financial support for vulnerable communities. Under Mr. Sakamoto's leadership, the program has already reached more than 140 municipalities in eight Brazilian states, benefiting more than 200,000 people.

With Mr. Sakamoto at the helm, *Repórter Brasil* was also an active participant in the creation of the National Pact for the Eradication of Slave Labor, an agreement that brings together 400 companies committed to combating forced labor. His devotion to the issue is exemplified by his role in the production of the *Lista Suja*, or the dirty list, a public list of individuals and private companies found to be using forced labor in their supply chains, which has mobilized the Brazilian government to increase its efforts to prevent forced labor in supply chains.

VANAJA JASPHINE / **CAMEROON**

Vanaja Jasphine is the driving force behind and coordinator of the Kumbo Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace in the Northwest Region of Cameroon. In this role, she has placed her organization at the forefront of the fight against human trafficking in Cameroon and has contributed to a renewed government commitment to combat human trafficking.

Sister Jasphine has worked tirelessly to inform authorities and civil society leaders, including those in the religious community and media partners, about human trafficking, especially on patterns of movement that create vulnerabilities. She played a key role in recognizing the trend of Cameroonians traveling to the Middle East and being forced into domestic servitude or sex trafficking, and then spurred the government to take action, including drafting migrant worker agreements and enhancing screening measures at airports. Sister Jasphine and her organization have identified more than 200 Cameroonian trafficking victims in the Middle East during the past few years. In 2016 alone, she helped facilitate the return of at least 14 victims from the Middle East, including raising funds to sponsor return air travel for four of them.

Through her organization, Sister Jasphine has helped provide reintegration assistance to survivors, initiate a number of trafficking-related court proceedings, and offer legal assistance to victims.

VIKTORIA SEBHELYI / **HUNGARY**

Viktoria Sebhelyi is a Hungarian sociologist and human rights activist whose groundbreaking research has been instrumental in increasing awareness and understanding of human trafficking among policymakers and NGO service providers in Hungary. Known as both an academic expert on the issue and a dedicated advocate, Ms. Sebhelyi has galvanized government and NGO actors to collaborate on enhancing protections for victims.

She worked as a researcher and legal analyst between 2013 and 2015 at the Central European University's Center for Policy Studies, writing a report on the prevalence and characteristics of child sex trafficking in Hungary—the first of its kind.

In addition to her academic work, Ms. Sebhelyi collaborates with Hungarian initiatives to improve the country's referral system. She has successfully brought together government officials and civil society actors to address structural challenges affecting vulnerable populations and increase the effectiveness of identifying and providing services for victims of trafficking and abuse, especially women and children. She regularly dedicates her time volunteering for women's and human rights NGOs (NANE Women's Rights Association, Sex Education Foundation, and Hungarian Women's Lobby) and domestic violence shelters, as well as in state institutions to increase the effectiveness of the anti-trafficking referral system.

MAHESH BHAGWAT / **INDIA**

Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat, who currently serves as the first Commissioner of Police of Rachakonda, a police commissionerate in India's Telangana state that covers more than four million residents, has demonstrated remarkable commitment to the fight against human trafficking for the last 13 years. He has participated in anti-trafficking operations that have removed hundreds of victims from situations of trafficking and, with the help of other government departments and civil society organizations, has ensured their placement in support programs.

Mr. Bhagwat's dedication to the fight against human trafficking is exemplified by his innovative and highly effective approach to investigating cases and his success in dismantling trafficking operations within his command areas. He has pioneered the use of legal provisions to close sites where human trafficking is known to occur. Under his command, Rachakonda police closed 25 brothels—five hotels and 20 residential apartments—in less than a year and participated in one of the largest crackdowns on labor trafficking in the country, which led to the identification and removal of more than 350 children forced to work in brick kilns.

In addition to being a central figure in trafficking deterrence efforts, Mr. Bhagwat also constantly pushes for human trafficking to be a top priority for the Telangana state of India.

AMINA OUFROUKHI / **MOROCCO**

Amina Oufroukhi is a judge within the Moroccan Ministry of Justice's Directorate of Criminal Affairs and Pardons, which is responsible for women's and children's issues, vulnerable populations, and trafficking in persons. She played a critical role in drafting and encouraging the passage of Morocco's anti-trafficking law in 2016 and has been a driving force within the government to develop an implementation plan to ensure the protection of victims and the appropriate punishment of perpetrators.

As the head of the central unit coordinating the care of women and children in the courts, Judge Oufroukhi established special protection units in Moroccan courts for women and children and later drafted new legal procedures to extend these protections to all trafficking victims. She helped establish a group of expert judges to train judicial and law enforcement personnel and prepared detailed legal guidance clarifying the provisions of the law for all Moroccan courts.

In addition, Judge Oufroukhi has managed several international cooperative projects on combating trafficking in persons, assisted in the drafting of studies on human trafficking in Morocco, and worked to raise awareness and organize training for government officials, prosecutors, judges, social workers, and security service officers on protecting trafficking victims.

ALLISON LEE / **TAIWAN**

Allison Lee is a co-founder and the Secretary General of the Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union, Taiwan's first labor union composed of and led by foreign workers, and is a leading voice in demanding stronger protections for fishing crew members and accountability for human traffickers. Ms. Lee spearheaded the establishment of the union after working for 16 years for Taiwanese NGOs focused on labor rights issues and handling labor disputes for four years at the municipal level as an employee of Taipei's Labor Affairs Bureau.

Since founding the Yilan Migrant Fishermen Union in 2013, Ms. Lee has advocated for the rights of foreign fishermen working on Taiwan-flagged vessels and documented hundreds of accounts of exploitation, abuse, and underpayment. By serving as a voice for these often unseen and unheard foreign fishing crew members, Ms. Lee has raised international and domestic awareness of exploitative working conditions, including instances of forced labor. In one case, she successfully pushed to reopen an investigation into the death of an Indonesian fisherman on a Taiwan-flagged vessel.

Ms. Lee and her advocacy partners drive change from the grassroots level through sustained pressure on officials and direct engagement with under-represented communities, including victims of human trafficking. She continues to engage local labor bureaus, fisheries associations, and law enforcement to seek justice and compensation for crew members who are exploited at the hands of their employers and labor brokers.

BOOM MOSBY / **THAILAND**

Boom Mosby, the founder and director of the HUG Project, is a passionate advocate for child victims of sexual abuse in Thailand and has been instrumental in the advancement of a victim-centered approach in Thai anti-trafficking efforts.

Ms. Mosby's early work with the HUG Project included a partnership with the Royal Thai Police to provide educational and support services for at-risk children in the city of Chiang Mai. As Ms. Mosby's involvement with child trafficking investigations deepened, she developed key relationships with law enforcement, government officials, and NGO partners, establishing a network of resources and support for child victims.

In 2015, she played a fundamental role in opening the Advocacy Center for Children Thailand (ACT House) in Chiang Mai—the first child advocacy center in all of Southeast Asia. Under Ms. Mosby's leadership, the ACT House has supported more than 81 investigations and the arrest of more than 20 perpetrators. In 2016, she joined the Thailand Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and continues to work tirelessly to develop standard operating procedures for investigating and prosecuting cybercrimes against children using a victim-centered approach. As the use of the internet to facilitate child trafficking grows, Ms. Mosby is battling technology with technology by implementing IT forensics and other systematic strategies.

Ms. Mosby continues to promote prevention, recovery, and reintegration programs for survivors and those vulnerable to trafficking.

Global supply chains have transformed many lives for the better—but not always without costs. Clothes, food, smartphones, jewelry and other consumer goods may bear, wittingly or unwittingly, the traces of exploitation. Gleaming new skyscrapers may owe some of their shine to the sweat of bonded laborers."

– Antonio Guterres,
United Nations Secretary General

Workers labor on a building in Kazakhstan. Construction is a sector vulnerable to forced labor.

THE TIERS

TIER 1

Countries whose governments fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's (TVPA) minimum standards.

TIER 2

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

TIER 2 WATCH LIST

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the TVPA's minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards AND:

a) The absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing;

b) There is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year; or

c) The determination that a country is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with minimum standards was based on commitments by the country to take additional future steps over the next year.

TIER 3

Countries whose governments do not fully comply with the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1

ARMENIA
AUSTRALIA
AUSTRIA
THE BAHAMAS
BELGIUM
CANADA
CHILE
COLOMBIA
CZECHIA
DENMARK
FINLAND
FRANCE
GEORGIA
GERMANY
GUYANA
IRELAND
ISRAEL
ITALY
KOREA, SOUTH
LITHUANIA
LUXEMBOURG
NETHERLANDS
NEW ZEALAND
NORWAY
PHILIPPINES
POLAND
PORTUGAL
ST. MAARTEN
SLOVAKIA
SLOVENIA
SPAIN
SWEDEN
SWITZERLAND
TAIWAN
UNITED KINGDOM
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TIER 2

AFGHANISTAN
ALBANIA
ANGOLA
ARGENTINA
ARUBA
AZERBAIJAN
BAHRAIN
BARBADOS
BHUTAN
BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA
BOTSWANA
BRAZIL
BRUNEI
CAMBODIA
COSTA RICA
COTE D'IVOIRE
CROATIA
CURAÇAO
CYPRUS
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
ECUADOR
EGYPT
EL SALVADOR
ESTONIA
ETHIOPIA
FIJI
GREECE
HONDURAS
ICELAND
INDIA
INDONESIA
JAMAICA
JAPAN
JORDAN
KAZAKHSTAN
KENYA
KOSOVO
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
LATVIA
LEBANON
LESOTHO
MACEDONIA
MALAWI
MALAYSIA
MALDIVES
MALTA
MAURITIUS
MEXICO
MICRONESIA
MONGOLIA
MOROCCO
NAMIBIA
NEPAL
PALAU
PANAMA
PARAGUAY
PERU
QATAR
ROMANIA
ST. LUCIA
ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES
SEYCHELLES
SIERRA LEONE
SINGAPORE
SOLOMON ISLANDS
SOUTH AFRICA
SRI LANKA
TAJIKISTAN
TANZANIA
TIMOR-LESTE
TOGO
TONGA
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
TUNISIA
TURKEY
UGANDA
UKRAINE
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
URUGUAY
VIETNAM

TIER 2 WATCH LIST

ALGERIA
ANTIGUA & BARBUDA
BANGLADESH
BENIN
BOLIVIA
BULGARIA
BURKINA FASO
BURMA
CABO VERDE
CAMEROON
CHAD
CUBA
DJIBOUTI
GABON
THE GAMBIA
GHANA
GUATEMALA
HAITI
HONG KONG
HUNGARY
IRAQ
KUWAIT
LAOS
LIBERIA
MACAU
MADAGASCAR
MARSHALL ISLANDS
MOLDOVA
MONTENEGRO
MOZAMBIQUE
NICARAGUA
NIGER
NIGERIA
OMAN
PAKISTAN
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
RWANDA
SAUDI ARABIA
SENEGAL
SERBIA
SURINAME
SWAZILAND
THAILAND
ZAMBIA
ZIMBABWE

TIER 3

BELARUS
BELIZE
BURUNDI
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
CHINA (PRC)
COMOROS
CONGO, DEMOCRATIC REP. OF
CONGO, REPUBLIC OF
EQUATORIAL GUINEA
ERITREA
GUINEA
GUINEA-BISSAU
IRAN
KOREA, NORTH
MALI
MAURITANIA
RUSSIA
SOUTH SUDAN
SUDAN
SYRIA
TURKMENISTAN
UZBEKISTAN
VENEZUELA

SPECIAL CASE

LIBYA
SOMALIA
YEMEN

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3 | SPECIAL CASE

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2010	272 (168)	163 (113)	9,626	5
2011	340 (45)	217 (113)	8,900 (5,098)	2
2012	493 (273)	252 (177)	10,043 (6,544)	4
2013	572 (245)	341 (192)	10,096 (2,250)	7
2014	811 (49)	317 (33)	9,523 (1,308)	4
2015	1,517 (53)	719 (8)	12,125 (3,531)	6
2016	1,251 (54)	1,119 (21)	18,296 (13,205)	4

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

EAST ASIA & PACIFIC

Boundary representation is not authoritative.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2010	427 (53)	177 (9)	2,597	0
2011	2,127 (55)	978 (55)	8,454 (3,140)	4
2012	1,682 (115)	1,251 (103)	8,521 (1,804)	4
2013	2,460 (188)	1,271 (39)	7,886 (1,077)	3
2014	1,938 (88)	969 (16)	6,349 (1,084)	3
2015	3,414 (193)	1,730 (130)	13,990 (3,533)	10
2016	2,137 (51)	1,953 (31)	9,989 (310)	7

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

* Islands in the Caribbean Sea—although part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten are covered by the State Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2010	2,803 (47)	1,850 (38)	8,548	4
2011	3,188 (298)	1,601 (81)	10,185 (1,796)	2
2012	3,161 (361)	1,818 (112)	11,905 (2,306)	3
2013	3,223 (275)	2,684 (127)	10,374 (1,863)	35
2014	4,199 (197)	1,585 (69)	11,910 (3,531)	5
2015	4,990 (272)	1,692 (245)	11,112 (3,733)	8
2016	2,703 (201)	1,673 (40)	11,416 (3,192)	3

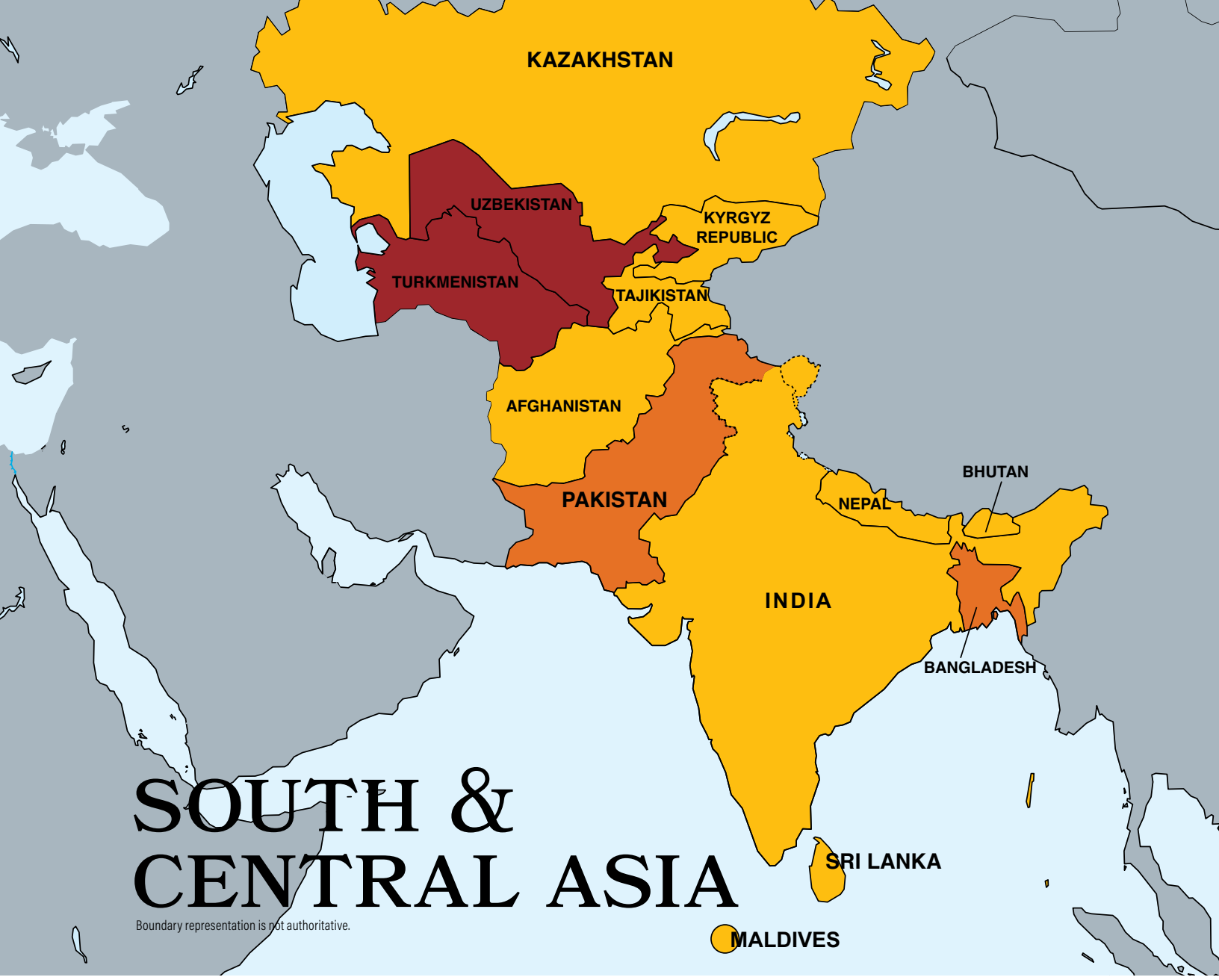
The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3 | SPECIAL CASE

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2010	323 (63)	68 (10)	1,304	1
2011	209 (17)	60 (5)	1,831 (1,132)	2
2012	249 (29)	149 (15)	4,047 (1,063)	1
2013	119 (25)	60 (4)	1,460 (172)	4
2014	320 (5)	144 (25)	3,388 (2,460)	0
2015	480 (31)	343 (31)	6,068 (156)	0
2016	996 (591)	1,187 (582)	3,292 (185)	4

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.



SOUTH & CENTRAL ASIA

Boundary representation is not authoritative.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 TIER 2 TIER 2 WATCH LIST TIER 3

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2010	1,460 (196)	1,068 (11)	4,357	1
2011	974 (24)	829 (11)	3,907 (1,089)	2
2012	1,043 (6)	874 (4)	4,415 (2,150)	1
2013	1,904 (259)	974 (58)	7,124 (1,290)	5
2014	1,839 (12)	958 (10)	4,878 (1,041)	3
2015	6,930 (225)	1,468 (16)	24,867 (1,191)	0
2016	6,297 (72)	2,193 (19)	14,706 (464)	5

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Boundary representation is not authoritative.

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 2 WATCH LIST | TIER 3

YEAR	PROSECUTIONS	CONVICTIONS	VICTIMS IDENTIFIED	NEW OR AMENDED LEGISLATION
2010	732 (80)	293 (65)	6,681	6
2011	624 (17)	279 (14)	9,014 (2,490)	3
2012	1,077 (369)	402 (107)	7,639 (3,501)	8
2013	1,182 (207)	446 (50)	7,818 (3,951)	4
2014	944 (67)	470 (63)	8,414 (2,014)	5
2015	1,796 (83)	663 (26)	9,661 (2,118)	6
2016	1,513 (69)	946 (24)	8,821 (109)	2

The above statistics are estimates derived from data provided by foreign governments and other sources and reviewed by the Department of State. Aggregate data fluctuates from one year to the next due to the hidden nature of trafficking crimes, dynamic global events, shifts in government efforts, and a lack of uniformity in national reporting structures. The numbers in parentheses are those of labor trafficking prosecutions, convictions, and victims identified.

A refugee girl begs for money in traffic in Beirut, Lebanon. Children, especially refugees and migrant children, are vulnerable to forced begging.

"I would feel terrified. He would tell me I had to stay out until I came up with the money. It grossed me out... I didn't want them to look at me, I didn't want them to touch me."

– Teenage sex trafficking victim, California

HOW TO READ A COUNTRY NARRATIVE

This page shows a sample country narrative. The tier ranking justification for each country in this year's Report now appears in the first paragraph of each country narrative and includes new language that more explicitly highlights the factors supporting a given tier ranking. The Prosecution, Protection, and Prevention sections of each country narrative describe how a government has or has not addressed the relevant TVPA minimum standards (see page 38), during the reporting period. This truncated narrative gives a few examples.

The country's tier ranking is based on the government's efforts to combat trafficking as measured against the TVPA minimum standards and compared to its efforts in the preceding year.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(10) – whether the government shows evidence of overall increasing efforts.

COUNTRY X: TIER 2 WATCH LIST

Synopsis of key developments that support the country's tier ranking.

The Government of X does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated significant efforts during the reporting period by undertaking awareness raising efforts and reaffirming its commitment to enact anti-trafficking legislation. However, the government did not demonstrate increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period. The government did not show evidence of overall progress in prosecuting and punishing trafficking offenders and identifying victims of trafficking. Therefore X remained on Tier 2 Watch List for the second consecutive year.

Prioritized recommendations for how the government can better meet the TVPA minimum standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNTRY X:

Enact the draft comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation; significantly increase efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking offenses, and convict and punish trafficking offenders; consistently apply formal procedures to identify victims among vulnerable groups, such as those arrested for immigration violations or prostitution; and collect, analyze, and disseminate counter-trafficking law enforcement data.

TVPA Minimum Standards 1-3 – whether the government prohibits all forms of trafficking and prescribes adequate criminal punishments.

Summary of the government's anti-trafficking laws and law enforcement efforts.

PROSECUTION

The Government of Country X decreased efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking offenses during the reporting period. Country X does not prohibit all forms of trafficking, but it criminalizes slavery under Section 321 and forced labor under Section 322 of its criminal law. The prescribed penalty for forced labor—up to six months' imprisonment—is not sufficiently stringent. Article 297 prohibits forced or coerced prostitution, and the prostitution of a child below age 15 even if there was no compulsion or redress; the prescribed penalty is up to 15 years' imprisonment, which is commensurate with penalties prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. Draft revisions to the penal code have not yet been enacted. An unconfirmed report indicates that four traffickers were charged with fraudulently issuing visas to workers who they then exploited. Two were reportedly deported, and two were reportedly convicted. The government did not confirm nor deny the existence of this case. The government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees complicit in human trafficking offenses.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(1) – whether the government vigorously investigates and prosecutes trafficking offenses; convicts and punishes trafficking offenders; and provides data on these actions.

Summary of the government's efforts to ensure trafficking victims are identified and provided adequate protection.

PROTECTION

Country X maintained minimal efforts to protect victims of trafficking during the reporting period. Although health care facilities reportedly refer suspected abuse cases to the government anti-trafficking shelter for investigation, the government continues to lack a systematic procedure for law enforcement to identify victims of trafficking among vulnerable populations, such as foreign workers awaiting deportation and women arrested for prostitution; as a result, victims may be punished and automatically deported without being identified as victims or offered protection. The government reported that the Ministry of the Interior has a process by which it refers victims to the trafficking shelter; however, this process is underutilized in practice. The trafficking shelter assisted 24 individuals during the reporting period and provided them with a wide range of services, including full medical treatment and legal and job assistance.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(2) – whether the government adequately protects victims of trafficking by identifying them and ensuring they have access to necessary services.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(2) – whether the government adequately protects victims of trafficking by identifying them and ensuring they have access to necessary services.

Country X commonly fines and detains potential trafficking victims for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being subjected to trafficking, such as immigration violations and running away from their sponsors, without determining whether the individuals are victims of trafficking.

Country X sometimes offers temporary relief from deportation so that victims can testify as witnesses against their employers. However, victims were generally not permitted to leave the country if there is a pending case. The government did not routinely encourage victims to assist in trafficking investigations or consistently offer victims alternatives to removal to countries where they may face retribution or hardship.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(3) – whether the government is making adequate efforts to prevent human trafficking, including measures to ensure its diplomats or peacekeepers assigned abroad do not engage in trafficking.

PREVENTION

Country X increased efforts to prevent trafficking in persons during the reporting period. While the government made no apparent efforts to amend provisions of Country X's sponsorship law to help prevent the forced labor of migrant workers, the government did start to enforce other parts of the law to the benefit of migrant workers. One provision in the sponsorship law continues to require foreign workers to request exit permits from their sponsors in order to leave Country X. Although this may increase migrant workers' vulnerability to forced labor, the law created a new process through which a laborer who was not granted an exit permit due to a sponsor's refusal or other circumstances can seek one by other means. The Ministry of Labor sponsored media campaigns and organized informational workshops for officials, NGOs, and labor recruitment agencies. However, the government did not provide anti-trafficking training or guidance to its diplomatic personnel during the reporting period. The government has a national plan of action to address trafficking in persons, but did not publicly disseminate the plan or take steps to implement it during the reporting period. The government did not take any public awareness campaigns aimed at reducing the demand for commercial sex acts in Country X, but it government convicted two of its nationals for soliciting children for sex in other countries and sentenced them to 10 years' imprisonment.

Summary of the government's efforts to prevent human trafficking.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(11) – whether the government has made efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts, and, if applicable, participation in international sex tourism by its nationals.

TRAFFICKING PROFILE

As reported over the past five years, Country X is a transit and destination country for men and women subjected to forced labor and, to a much lesser extent, forced prostitution. Men and women from South[illegible]heast Asia, East Africa, and the Middle East volu[illegible] X as laborers and domestic servants, b[illegible]nditions indicative of involuntary [illegible]lude threats of serious harm, [illegible]nd deportation; withholding of [illegible]ment, including the confiscation [illegible]nd physical, mental, and sexual [illegible]grant workers have found that the t[illegible] X are wholly different from those they [illegible] countries. Individuals employed as domestic [illegible] particularly vulnerable to trafficking since they are not covered under the provisions of the labor law. A small number of foreign workers transit Country X and are forced to work on farms in Country Y. Country X is also a destination for women who migrate and become involved in prostitution, but the extent to which these women are subjected to forced prostitution is unknown.

TVPA Minimum Standard 4(7) – whether the government has made adequate efforts to address the involvement in or facilitation of human trafficking by government employees.

Overview of human trafficking in the country and factors affecting vulnerability to trafficking of the country's nationals abroad.