

HISAR SCHOOL

JUNIOR MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2022

**“Endorsing Accountability: Reapproaching Neglected Urgencies”**

## **Drugs and Crime**

*The question of human-trafficking in East Asian countries*

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**Forum:** Drugs and Crime (SA-1)

**Issue:** The question of human-trafficking in East Asian countries

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## Introduction

Military conflict, territorial disputes, and nuclear proliferation are no longer the only security dangers. Climate change, natural catastrophes, infectious diseases, and international crime are all examples of nonmilitary threats. Human trafficking is one of the most serious of these unconventional security challenges, particularly in Southeast Asia, where natural catastrophes and armed conflicts result in displaced persons and refugees, who are particularly vulnerable to this horrible crime. Human trafficking, sometimes known as "modern slavery," affects over 40 million men, women, and children who are caught in a web of forced labor, sexual exploitation, and forced marriage (ILO and Walk Free Foundation 2017). Human trafficking is becoming one of the world's most lucrative organized crimes, producing more than \$150 billion every year, Human trafficking is becoming a more serious problem in East Asia and the Pacific, according to alarming developments. According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes' Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016 , more than 85 percent of victims were trafficked from Southeast Asia. From adjacent countries, China, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand are popular destinations. According to the Walk Free Foundation's Global Slavery Index 2016, Thailand is the primary destination for trafficking victims from Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar in Southeast Asia.

## Definition of Key Terms

**Human Trafficking:** Human trafficking is the illegal use of force, deception, or compulsion to gain labor or a commercial sex act. Millions of men, women, and children are trafficked every year all across the world, including right here in the United States. Victims might be of any age, ethnicity, gender, or nationality, and it can happen in any society. To attract victims into trafficking situations, traffickers may employ violence, manipulation, or false promises of well-paying jobs or personal relationships.

**Migrant Workers:** A migrant worker is someone who migrates for work either inside or outside of their own country. Migrant workers usually do not intend to stay in the country or region where they work permanently.

**Asylum Seekers:** The term "asylum seeker" refers to someone whose application for asylum has yet to be processed. Approximately one million people seek refuge each year.

**Global Savery Index:** The 2018 Global Slavery Index includes a ranking of the number of individuals trapped in modern slavery by country, as well as an analysis of the responses taken by governments and the reasons that make people vulnerable.

## General Overview

Human trafficking, affects an estimated 21 million or more people worldwide today. In a nutshell, this is the most number of slaves ever recorded in human history.

Individuals are not only mistreated and abused in this region, but they are also exported to marketplaces all over the world, from Japan to Brazil. Poverty, corruption, politics, and globalization are all factors amplifying the industry's success.

One of the most striking similarities across South East Asian countries is the widespread poverty in cities and villages. People in the region are desperate and vulnerable to human trafficking due to the region's third-world conditions such as bad economies and awful human rights conditions..

Human trafficking has proven to be a huge business in Southeast Asia, with hundreds of millions of dollars made. Its procedures and motivations are extremely complicated, involving a wide range of actors and sectors. High-ranking military officials have been convicted of involvement in people trafficking in countries like Thailand, and the Myanmar military openly participates in the activity . From guarding slaves to distribution, a large number of people, from businessmen to anonymous civilians, have been involved in the supply chain .

"The most widespread form of human trafficking (79 percent) is sexual exploitation," according to the United Nations. Forced labor (18%) is the second most common kind of human trafficking, albeit this figure may be misleading because forced labor is less frequently found and reported than trafficking for sexual exploitation" (United Nations). Forced organ removal and begging are also prevalent fates for trafficking victims, in addition to these two groups (United Nations). Individuals are frequently removed from destitute places and transported to industrial zones in other countries, like Korea, Japan, and China (June Lee). China is by far the largest buyer of trafficked people, with brides and prostitutes being bought to meet the needs of a disproportionately male population. Along with the sex industry, China's booming economy has enticed numerous manufacturers and businesses to use South East Asian slave labor.). These challenges highlight the consequences of globalization and migration, allowing human trafficking to become more entrenched in the global economy than ever before.

### Poverty and Human Trafficking

Poverty is by far one of the largest factors causing the prevalence of human trafficking. Poor living conditions combined with lack of infrastructure make citizens vulnerable targets. In villages across South East Asia, desperate individuals are deceived into slavery with false promises of work. For example, in Rakhine State, Myanmar, traffickers deceive victims with offers of transportation to international job markets, but ultimately force them into slavery or sell them for ransom . Victims are typically sold to various businesses and are kept in camps where many are murdered. In numerous rural places throughout Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, and Southeast Asia, mass graves evocative of the Holocaust can be found. These are the results of human traffickers' atrocities, which result in their deals failing as a result of terrible living conditions and violent treatment. Many, if not all, of these cases could have been avoided if the villages where the victims lived had enough growth and jobs. There would be no need to rely on job

postings from far away areas or to sell oneself to support the family. In many cases, bad government policy is purposefully causing poverty. By bad government policies, what meant is policies that are useless and unequal for all human beings. This may be seen in Indonesia, where infrastructure development is unevenly distributed, causing some areas to prosper while others suffer.

This technique has resulted in an influx of migrant workers into established areas, where they are frequently enslaved. Human trafficking has been a victim in all of these situations due to poor living conditions and widespread poverty. People have sold themselves into prostitution or fake labor opportunities as a result of difficult financial circumstances. Poverty is at the basis of sex slavery and forced labor in both cases. Prostitution accounts for the majority of human trafficking, accounting for roughly 79 percent of all cases globally. The bulk of people engaging in prostitution are women and children, who are frequently sold or kidnapped into servitude. These people play an important part in staffing the expanding sex tourism sector in Southeast Asia. Prostitution is an unavoidable feature of life in all parts of the world, from isolated villages to the largest cities. This is evident in Cambodia, which attracts guys from all over the world who want to profit from the thriving sex industry. Prostitutes are trafficked regionally and globally from nations like Cambodia and Thailand to other booming sex markets like Japan and Korea.

Human trafficking is a well-working mechanism with a lot of moving parts. Migration, globalization, economic inequality, and corruption are all factors that contribute to its prevalence. These challenges are extremely complex and, at times, hard to resolve. According to one assertion, eliminating corruption might eliminate nearly half of all human trafficking in Southeast Asia overnight. Corruption, on the other hand, is engrained in the region's culture. Southeast Asia's cultural diversity is a distinguishing quality. Southeast Asia is home to thousands of languages out of the six thousand spoken worldwide today. Around two thousand years ago, cultural shifts began to affect Southeast Asia, with influences originating from two sides. For example, the colonization of Vietnam resulted from Chinese expansion south of the Yangtze River. Corruption can range from high-ranking government officials being implicated in major scandals to ordinary citizens bribing officials to obtain simple commodities such as telephones.

Finally, more effort must be made to meet the needs of victims. Aside from personal safety and security, victims require legal aid, medical care, and temporary accommodation, as well as assistance with repatriation and integration. The UNODC emphasizes the importance of assisting victims in overcoming the pain and stigma associated with human trafficking, as well as fostering public trust in law enforcement so that victims seek assistance and collaborate in the prosecution of traffickers.

To effectively implement anti-trafficking legislation, the battle against human trafficking requires better national criminal justice systems, and these efforts must be part of a broader, multitrack approach that targets the socioeconomic and political dimensions of trafficking. Because of the complexity of the problem, it cannot be solved by a single player, such as the government, or by focusing on a single component of it, such as sexual exploitation or forced labor. A more holistic, human-centered approach forces us to look into the various factors that contribute to human trafficking, such as poverty, harsh exploitation, and political persecution. This will necessitate active participation and collaboration among government and civil society organizations, the commercial sector, and international foundations.

## Major Parties Involved and Their Views

**United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime:** The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime was founded in 1997 as the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention after merging the United Nations International Drug Control Program (UNDCP) and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division in the United Nations Office at Vienna. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are global and pervasive crimes that profit from the exploitation of men, women, and children. People who are vulnerable, desperate, or simply seeking a better life are exploited by the organized networks or individuals behind these lucrative crimes. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) works to eradicate these crimes by dismantling criminal businesses that deal in persons and convicting the primary culprits. Finally, their work protects people from the abuse, neglect, exploitation, and even death that these crimes bring.

**Thailand:** Thailand has become a major destination for migrant laborers, human trafficking, and forced labor, in addition to being a paradise for travelers and. In 2019, an estimated 3.9 million migrant laborers, both officially and illegally, were living and working in Thailand. The majority of them came from Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, and Vietnam, which are all neighbors. Statelessness was expected to number 480,000, with 100,000 refugees and asylum seekers. Thailand has roughly 610,000 human trafficking victims, according to the Global Slavery Index. Labor migration to Thailand has been increasing for more than two and a half decades, and it appears unlikely to reverse in the next few years. The majority of the victims reported in the previous year were from Myanmar, although Thai citizens have also been forced, coerced into labor or sexual exploitation in the past. Victims are trafficked for sexual exploitation in the United States and in a number of other countries throughout the world. Despite the fact that migrants from neighboring countries account for a major share of trafficked people in Thailand, it is apparent that there are many more who have yet to be discovered. In order to accomplish so, the Thai government requires assistance.

**China:** China is a major source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children who are victims of human trafficking, including forced labor and forced prostitution. For commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor, women and children from China are trafficked to Africa, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and North America, primarily Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, and Japan. According to a UNIAP research of human trafficking allegations in China, between 2006 and 2007, 800 incidents of human trafficking were published in the print media. The study discovered links between several types of human trafficking and characteristics such as age and gender. Trafficking of young boys for adoption and trafficking of girls and young women for sexual exploitation, for example, were two different types of human trafficking that had a positive link with another aspect.

**Cambodia:** Human trafficking is on the rise in Cambodia, and it must be addressed. Human trafficking claimed the lives of 40 million men, women, and children worldwide in 2016. Women and girls made up 71 percent of the 40 million victims, while men made up 29 percent. In the same year, 15 million individuals were compelled to marry and more than 25 million people were forced to work.

## Timeline of Events

<b>15 November 2000</b>	<i>Palermo Protocol, is a UN treaty to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children.</i>
<b>25 December 2003</b>	<i>General Assembly resolution 55/25, is a resolution to prevent human trafficking.</i>
<b>16 May 2005</b>	<i>Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings</i>
<b>20 July 2019</b>	<i>World Day Against Trafficking</i>

## Treaties and Events

*Palermo Protocol*

*ILO Convention No. 29*

*ILO Convention No. 105 on Forced or Compulsory Labor*

*ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Form of Child Labor*

## Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

In 2000, the United Nations launched the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, which established a victim-centred approach to trafficking. It has since been signed by 177 countries. In 2005, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings marked a step towards greater cooperation and dedication within Europe.

## Possible Solutions

Recognize the complexity of the crime,, as the first step in combating human trafficking and prosecuting traffickers. Anti-trafficking policies must be integrated into every policy area, from enhancing female education in source nations to reduce the vulnerability of girls to trafficking to increasing police pay in destination countries to reduce the risk of bribery among officers. Countries must not allow to dismiss human trafficking as a problem that can be solved with a few extra taskforces or specialised units. Everyone has to understand how it impacts them and what they can do to help. There have already been commendable efforts in this direction.

Infrastructure is also a crucial subject in this problem. Southeast Asia has a very unimproved and weak infrastructure. To battle human trafficking infrasturcture must be improved and ths can happen by fundings by other member states. By a UN organ these fundings can take place.

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