



Human Trafficking – The Child Connection

By Jax Harrison, Contributions by Bernie Gravett

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"It ought to concern every person, because it is a debasement of our common humanity. It ought to concern every community, because it tears at our social fabric. It ought to concern every business, because it distorts markets. It ought to concern every nation, because it endangers public health and fuels violence and organized crime. I'm talking about the injustice, the outrage, of human trafficking, which must be called by its true name: modern slavery."

–President Barack Obama, September 25, 2012

The Chain of Child Trafficking will be Broken by the Collaboration of Business and Agencies using technology, Education, Certification, and Communications with One Global Standard

EDITOR'S NOTE: SEE PART 1 OF THIS SERIES BELOW

The Child Connection – The Young Face Of The Human Trafficking Nightmare

What is Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking is the crime of selling and debasing another human being. It is a war on women and children, to use them in brutal and abhorrent ways to gain money and power.

Beyond the horror is a staggering \$150 billion global business.

Human trafficking is the trade in people, especially women and children, and does not necessarily involve the movement of the person from one place to another^[1]. Human trafficking is a factor in modern slavery, a situation of exploitation resulting in either forced labor or forced marriage. The victim cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power, either forced labor or forced marriage.

Human Trafficking by the Numbers

In 2016, the International Labour Organization estimated there are **40 million people trapped in modern slavery**^[2] around the world, more than any other time in history.

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- **71% of all modern slavery victims** are female.
- **20 million women and children** have been trafficked into the global sex trade.
- **One in four enslaved people are children** under 18 years. That's 10 million children.
- **Less than 2% of those trafficked are ever rescued.** 70% of those will be re-trafficked.
- **Human trafficking is now the fastest growing criminal industry. It is the second largest income generating crime syndicate in the world producing \$150 Billion annually, behind only drugs and arms trades.**
- While only 19% of victims are trafficked for sex, sexual exploitation earns 66% of the global profits of human trafficking, adding up to **\$99 billion annually.**
- **Every 30 seconds another person** is forced into slavery.

Key Areas In The Fight Against Child Trafficking

Prevention, Protection, and Prosecution are the accepted paths to fight human trafficking. Although there are many effective government agencies, law enforcement, and NGO's working on the issue, there are also many gaps to be addressed at local, national, and global levels.

The global number of prosecutions of human traffickers is alarmingly low. According to the 2017 US State Department Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report^[3], there were only 14,894 prosecutions and 9,071 convictions in 2016 globally. Of these prosecuted cases, only 2% dealt directly with child human trafficking cases.

There are some good reasons for the struggle in this fight; data is relatively new and captures only estimates. Human trafficking is also difficult to prove and convict, taking a long time and requiring a witness—a victim who is scared, without resources, and at risk of being trafficked again. Often if they can not prove human trafficking there may sufficient evidence for a different conviction, like drug charges.

The Foundation of the Palermo Protocols

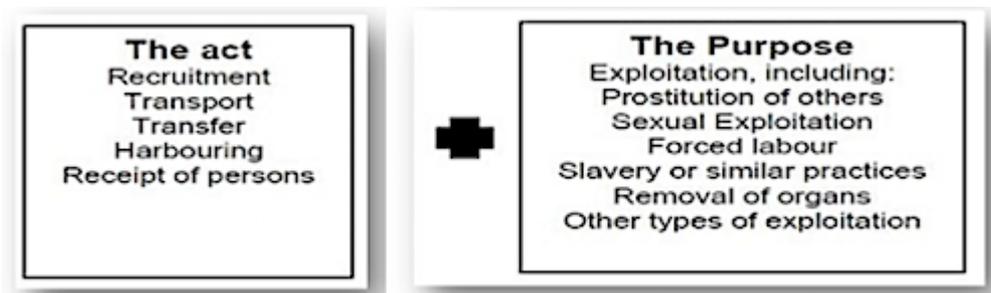
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Human trafficking is a massive commercial business, with horrific consequences for the humans being trafficked worldwide. In order to address such a global problem, 173^[4] nations have signed the Palermo Protocols^[5]. The three protocols were adopted under the jurisdiction of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to supplement the 2000 [Convention against Transnational Organized Crime](#), known as the Palermo Convention. Dealing with the manufacture and sale of arms as well, the second Palermo Protocol states the dedication to prevent, [suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children](#).^[6]

Of course, we should first and foremost protect the rights of those who cannot protect themselves: our children. Most nations have strict laws already on the protection of minors. There are three elements of human trafficking under the [Palermo Protocol](#)^[7] upon which the majority of world laws are based: the **Act**, the **Means**, and the **Purpose**.



However, when it comes to prosecution of human trafficking with children, only two elements are necessary: the **Act** and the **Purpose**.



"All that has to be (technically) proven with children is movement and exploitation. A child's testimony is not needed. Move a child from A to B with intent to exploit or where they are exploited and it is a provable and prosecutable crime," said Bernie Gravett, Director of Specialist Policing Consultancy, experts in countering organized crime at an international level.

Notes on Child Trafficking Prosecution

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- Under the Palermo Protocol and almost all international laws, a child is any person under the age of 18.
- Legally children cannot consent to exploitative actions, therefore the ‘means’ element of the protocol does not need to be proven.
- Many prosecutors and judges continue to use the word forced when talking about exploitative actions. It is important to use the word compelled and not forced, especially when addressing child prosecution cases.
- Independent testimony is ideal in any case, however, it would be inadvisable to put children through additional trauma.
- A child under 6 could be trafficked but cannot understand or testify. A baby could be trafficked but cannot understand or testify.
- Surveillance photos or CCTV images can be used to prove the movement and exploitation, building a case for prosecutors.

Few Convictions and the Ramifications

- The low rate of prosecution and conviction for human trafficking provides little deterrent for the perpetrators, who profit heavily.
- Lack of justice means that perpetrators continue to suffer no consequences for their abhorrent crimes.

While human trafficking is difficult to prove, terrorism is even more challenging. One way of disrupting terrorist recruitment networks is to investigate and prosecute for trafficking. (This is new ground.)

The Lack Of International Standards And Centralization

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- There are no international standards and best practices for the education, training or certification of any agencies and law enforcement entities to prevent human trafficking.^[8]
- There are no international standards for the operation of businesses creating transparency and certified education of its members in anti-human trafficking.^[9]
- There is no singular organization or online platform to collate and share data and training resources. Although there are many agencies, governments and NGO's fighting human trafficking, there is no **single source** for information and resources.
- Many of the engaged agencies are gaining more data and information, but it is challenging to share because of the sensitive nature. There is no single global technology platform that provides recognized resources, pooled data, and information for all involved in this important fight.
- There is no single system to predictively prevent trafficking using mapping. There is no single accurate map of those involved in anti-human trafficking.
- There is no globally accepted Good Secure Digital Identity technology focused on minors.