

# **CHILD TRAFFICKING**

## **A THREAT TO**

## **GLOBAL PEACE**

(by Ehsan Ullah Khan for Global March conference on Child Trafficking in Esposende, Portugal 23-24<sup>th</sup> September 2005)

Trafficking in human is a compound of complex issues. To deeply understand the cruel practice of human trade needs thorough and full study and close observations of the system and octopus network from several dimensions.

Today it exists everywhere in the world in different shapes and density. The system is well organised on different levels and get supporters from high government officials, trade and mafia. In fact, it is a part of global economic trade although human trafficking is a heinous crime, a serious violation of UN's Human Rights declaration, ILO's conventions and prohibited by most of the countries' constitutions and laws. Globally it is a bi-product of corruption, illegal trade, aid, armed conflicts, wars, weapon trade, drug trafficking and poverty. The main victims of the modern slave trafficking in human are children and women. In 21<sup>st</sup> century, Internet age, no one knows the actual number of victims of this human trade. There are high flows of victim to west and the beneficiaries of trafficking in human lives (middle men) in the European industrialised countries.

At present it is hard to mention the accurate global or European figures of trafficking in children, because of many reasons like trafficking in child is mingled with trafficking in women. Secondly, traffickers and mafia manipulate the child's age they pretended 15 years old girl child as 19-20 years young girl at the border or anywhere age used to be required. Thirdly police in Europe, did not have a specified data of trafficking in children.

I asked to the Swedish foreign department for the figures and facts of trafficking in child in Sweden. The concerned woman replied that Sweden doesn't have such facts or figures about trafficked children. I should see the police data system. According to Swedish NCID (National Criminal Investigation Department), every year about 600 girls use to be trafficked in Sweden in spite of high security measures, mostly from Eastern Europe and the Baltic States. According to US trafficking in persons report June 2005, Sweden is a leader against trafficking in human fight.

Finally, the concerned authorities don't give highest priority to trafficking in children in their agenda. According to European institute for crime prevention and control, every year 50 000 women and children mainly from Eastern Europe, Africa and South America and South Africa and South Asia and South East Asia are trafficked to European countries.

An important point that it is very important to understand the difference between human smuggling vs. trafficking in human because trafficking is not smuggling and there are significant differences between two, like as human smuggling (migrant smuggling) includes those who consent to being smuggled but human trafficking victims either do not consent to their situation, or if they initially consent, that consent rendered meaningless by the actions of the traffickers.

### **The dark side of the globalisation**

The International Labour Organisation, ILO's recent report, "A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour," says that at least 12.3 million people worldwide work as slaves or in other forms of forced labour, and 2.5 million people were in forced labour as a result of cross-border trafficking, with 1.2 million of them in the sex trade.

The report also estimated that profits from trafficked forced labour totalled \$32 billion a year, or \$13,000 per trafficked worker. Profits from forced commercial sexual exploitation totalled \$27.8 billion annually, or \$23,000 per worker. The ILO director Juan Somavia commented the report and said that "forced labour represents the underside of globalization and denies people their basic rights and dignity."

The fight against child trafficking is very behind, weak, unorganised and based on charity instead of basic rights.

The children use to be trafficked everyday for many purposes, on National and International level. In Africa, they are every day trafficked from their hometowns to workplaces in far flung areas, like cocoa and coffee-fields, gold- and diamond mines. In some cases children are also trafficked and pushed into armed conflicts and wars as child soldiers.

The trafficking in children is a highly profitable global business of trans-national trade. According to The US Trafficking in persons report June 2005, it is estimated that 6 000 000 to 8 000 000 men, women and children are trafficked across the International borders each year. Approximately 80% are women and girls and up to 50% are minors. The report also illustrate

that the majority of transnational victims are trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation with a focus on transnational trafficking. The millions of victims around the world are trafficked within their own National borders and that number is not estimated. (In US report the trafficking within the National borders is not counted.)

It is crystal clear that trafficking in human particular children and women is based on the economic principle "Supply and demand". The rise of the price of children increase the interest of traffickers and create new traffickers gangs, mafia groups and terrorist networks, while the fall in the price make the children affordable to large traders.

Usually the traffickers, middlemen, select the children from broken families, so called low-caste, Romany children, orphan children or the children, who are victims of armed conflicts and wars, who are the most vulnerable to protect.

There are three ways to overcome the issue, first that the National governments must invest more in the basic education, human development sector and provide education to each child. Secondly the National governments should cut their military budgets and invest more in human development programs, health and for basic needs, for their citizens. Thirdly the global arms producing countries, including the five permanent UN' Security Council members should reduce the arms production and stop selling arms to those countries, which are spending less on education or are involved in armed conflicts or human trafficking.

As the result of that, a child protecting environment will be emerged, which increase the children's protection and decrease the interest of the children traffickers' function.

According to a Small Armed Control NGO report;

"The five permanent members of the UN's Security Council, China, France, UK, Russia and US, together export 88 % of the world's conventional arms, while global militaries are spending amounting to \$ 839 billions per year. An average of \$ 22 billions a year are spent on arms by countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. A sum, which can change the future of those countries and bring on track to meet the Millennium development and achieving the Education for all-goals, (estimated at \$ 10 billions per year), as well as targets for reducing infant and maternal mortality, estimated to \$12 billions per year.

According to the special representative of OSCE's( The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe), Helga Konrad said that;

“Trafficking in children is increasing across the international stage and may have doubled in southeast Europe in the past three years alone. We don't have exact figures but we know that it is increasing from reports from police, from non-governmental organisations, an estimated 1.2 million children are smuggled throughout the world every year, bought and sold for exploitation in domestic and farm work, in mines and in the commercial sex industry. Children account for more than 30 percent of all the victims of human trafficking.<sup>1</sup>”

OSCE's estimates that 200,000 individuals are trafficked annually from Easter Europe, a significant proportion being children. Some become unpaid domestic servants, or work in sweatshops, but many more – boys, girls, and teenagers – are forced into prostitution and crime.

Today less than 30 % of the countries are providing tools to protection for children, while 32 countries have laws allowing for the prosecution of their citizens for sex abuse committed abroad.

The present situation is very dangerous for the global peace and mankind. If we will fail to prevent the flood of human trafficking, they everyone in the world would be the victim and sufferer.

There is a need to bring a change in our economic trade and create a new culture of sharing of the experience between the Nations. This culture should be based on education, democracy, economic equality and global peace. It will help us to bring the real globalisation and elimination of trafficking in human and all kinds of contemporary forms of slavery. It is a tragedy that 190 years have been passed since Vienna congress declared that the war against slave trade<sup>2</sup>, but Europe didn't won the war of slavery.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://iafrica.com/news/features/426047.htm> - Fri, 18 Mar 2005

<sup>2</sup> September 1814-June 1815, one of the most important international conferences in European history, called to remake Europe after the downfall of Napoleon I.

At the Congress of Vienna, the British pressure Spain, Portugal, France and the Netherlands to agree to abolish the slave trade (though Spain and Portugal are permitted a few years of continued slaving to replenish labor supplies).

### **Terrorism and human trafficking**

An American researcher, Christine Dolan pointed out in her report, *Shattered Innocence, Millennium Holocaust*<sup>3</sup> “human trafficking is not only one of the first financial steps into the transnational and trans criminal mobsters’ financial network, but that it is the bedrock of these criminal syndicates. It is far more profitable than trafficking drugs or trading weapons.” Dolan further notes,

“Trafficking humans - especially children... enables these international mobsters to play in the wider field... of trafficking drugs, weapons, arms, chemicals, toxic waste, and even piracy on the high seas.”

The trafficked children worked in different industries, some become modern slaves, domestic servants, factories, sex market and sold as child soldiers etc. They all share key economic characteristics. As we know that each market is an international market with a global price.

Honest and real individual efforts by some governments may not be successful in the real manner, such individual efforts may be counter productive for the global fight against child trafficking because the trafficking in children trade is controlled by “supply and demand” principle.

Under the principle “supply and demand”, if a country invests in the protection of its children and succeed in the fight of elimination of child slavery or trafficking in children at home, this increase the International price of children in the non-industrialised (underdeveloped) world.

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<sup>3</sup> *Shattered Innocence, Millennium Holocaust*

#### **TERRORISM & TRAFFICKING: FINDING THE NEXUS**

Is there a link between terrorism and human trafficking? According to Christine Dolan, panelist at the recent “Terrorism Nexus” seminar hosted by The World Affairs Council of Washington, DC, the answer is a definitive, yes. Dolan was commissioned to investigate the exploitation of children emanating from the Balkan Crises by the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children in 2000. After a 9-week whirlwind tour of Europe during which she conducted more than 500 interviews with children, pimps, restaurant owners, hotel maids, local and national police, immigration experts, prostitutes, heads of charities, and many others, Dolan published her findings in the report

This action may increase the price of products like coffee, clothes, chocolate, petrol, gold and diamonds in the industrialised rich countries.

According to “Feeding the World” UN’s report 2005 during the last 7 years (7 years ago MDGs was introduced) the poor Nations became the most poor and the rich countries became the most rich. In other words, the countries, who grow coffee, cocoa, cotton, produce gold and diamonds and petrol became the poorest, about 800 millions people are hungry and every 3.6 second, someone die of hunger. 1.5 billion are living under the poverty line, while 1 billion live without clean water.

The consumers in west became richer than ever before. Europeans are eating ice-cream for \$ 10 billion per year and Americans spend \$ 35 billions on their pets each year (according to UN’s Jan Engeland, BBC).

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) could be achievable with less than have of this spending. But the political will is lacking.

Some rich countries also increase pollution, which cause draughts in other parts of the world, another main cause of poverty, child trafficking and armed conflicts. It is well established rule that armed conflict increase poverty, poverty increase armed conflict. According to Small Arms Control NGO today “more than two military bullets for every man, woman and child on the planet”. Why are we unable to provide book and pen for every child, when we can afford at least two bullets for every child?

The fight against child trafficking can only be won by effectively combining legislation with other policy measures, including better quality for education, redistribution, or appropriately targeted poverty alleviation programs, debt cancellations and arms control policies.

## Recommendations

### Need of Global awareness

- 1) There is a need of, that a mass and aggressive Global Campaign, against the trafficking in children and for the implementation of the Rights of the Child, should start worldwide. For this purpose a Global March for Peace with the participation of one billion people should be organised as soon as possible for the global peace and for the elimination of child trafficking and child slavery.
- 2) Small arms protocol should be signed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals 2015.
- 3) Debt should be cancelled for all poor countries and a special fund for children's education should be formed for Education for all.
- 4) Special protection for women and children should be provided.
- 5) Trafficking and violence on children should be declared International crime, tried by International Court.
- 6) Child Rights campaigners should be protected by International laws and communities.
- 7) Consumer awareness campaign should start, by NGOs, Trade Unions and other campaign groups.
- 8) ILO and UN conventions and protocols and EU initiatives<sup>4</sup> should be implemented in all States, at least of them who have signed them.

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<sup>4</sup> *ILO, UN and EU initiatives relating to trafficking in human beings/children addressing criminal law issues*  
International Labour Organisation (Convention No 11, 138, 142, 182)  
United Nations  
Protocol May 2000 to UN Convention Rights of the Child  
Palermo, December 2000 (UN UN TOC Convention)  
UN Smuggling Protocol  
UN Trafficking Protocol regional level (European Union as primary perspective))  
EU core crime – Europol/Eurojust competence  
EU Framework Decision (FD) trafficking HB (mid-2002)  
EU FD sexual exploitation children/child porn (mid-2003)