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TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND INTERNATIONAL MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) is modern-day slavery, a crime that is brutal, dehumanizing and a multi-dimensional threat to international security. Human trafficking is linked to organized crime, undermines peacekeeping efforts, and is incompatible with military core values. Any nation serious about ending human trafficking must begin by ensuring that its own uniformed employees lead by example by helping combat modern-day slavery at home and abroad.

Historically, profiteers of both labor and sex trafficking have targeted international military organizations. Labor traffickers sometimes try to exploit military contract opportunities. Sex traffickers often prey on individual peacekeepers and servicemen with solicitations of commercial sex. While the



An all-female police unit from South Asia is deployed alongside UN international peacekeepers.

vast majority of military personnel conduct themselves honorably, a number of recent trafficking in persons cases have occurred in connection with international military organizations.

Typically, commercial sex sellers conduct activities, such as pimping or maintaining brothels, in districts frequented by service members. These activities also provide cover for sex trafficking – the recruitment or use of, especially women and girls, for commercial sexual exploitation.

Where prostitution is legal or tolerated, there is a greater demand for human trafficking victims and, typically, an increase in the number of women and children trafficked into commercial sex slavery. Of the estimated 800,000 people trafficked across international borders annually, 80 percent of victims are female, and up to 50 percent are minors. Hundreds of thousands of these women and children are abused in prostitution each year, including many who are used in prostitution near military bases.

Peacekeepers and service members who engage in commercial sexual exploitation put themselves at risk of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, which jeopardizes the readiness of their unit.

Sex Trafficking and International Peacekeepers

The United Nations was forced to undertake drastic measures to overhaul its system of monitoring gross abuses by its military and civilian personnel in light of 150 allegations of sexual exploitation on the part of international peacekeepers stationed in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In October 2004, the UN Secretary General dispatched a team to conduct an assessment of the magnitude of the problem among the 11,000 UN soldiers and 1,200 civilians serving

combat organized crime syndicates
trafficking in humans

Be a voice

sex slaves and child prostitutes - human faces of modern day slavery

report human trafficking

hotline@dodig.osd.mil

“There’s a special evil in the abuse and exploitation of the most innocent and vulnerable. The victims of sex trade see little of life before they see the worst of life – an underground of brutality and lonely fear. Those who patronize this industry debase themselves and deepen the misery of others. And governments that tolerate this trade are tolerating a form of slavery.”

President George W. Bush
 September 23, 2003

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
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Department of Defense awareness poster provides instructions on reporting human trafficking.

there. The team concluded there was little awareness among international peacekeepers of the UN official policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse. The investigative team found instances of rape, and prostitution with children and adult women for money, food, or jobs. After some peacekeepers raped girls, they tried to cover up the crime by giving them money or food.

Since then, the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has established measures to prevent misconduct and enforce UN standards of conduct. The UN is amending its staff regulations and contractual agreements to classify sexual exploitation and abuse as serious misconduct and to allow the Secretary General to discipline and dismiss personnel.

All troop-contributing countries should undertake serious measures to prevent and punish incidences of trafficking, sexual exploitation, or abuse by personnel regardless of whether prostitution is regulated or tolerated in the troop-contributing country.

U.S. Department of Defense Combats Sex Trafficking

The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has taken an aggressive stand against sex trafficking and related activities that may contribute to the phenomenon of trafficking in persons.

DOD has been implementing a multi-pronged anti-trafficking approach for over three years. DOD's "zero tolerance" policy opposes prostitution, recognizing it as a contributing factor to sex trafficking. U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) developed a program that focuses on increasing awareness, identifying victims, reducing demand, and cooperating with local authorities. It is considered a model approach and served as the basis for NATO's anti-trafficking training curriculum.

Since late 2006, patronizing prostitution is a specific, chargeable offense for service members under Article 134 of the U.S. military's statutory criminal law, the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). This is a landmark provision underscoring the U.S. Government's commitment to curtail the demand for victims of human trafficking.

Labor Trafficking and U.S. Military Contractors

A Defense Department investigation prompted by 2005 media allegations of labor trafficking in Iraq inspired significant changes. The media reports identified a number of abuses, some considered widespread, committed by Defense contractors or subcontractors employing third country national (TCN) workers. Some of these abuses were indicative of human trafficking and included withholding workers' passports and deceptive hiring practices.



U.S. Army officer participates in mandatory TIP training

Chief among the safeguards being implemented is the mandate that all contractors stop withholding employees' passports, that employees be provided a signed copy of their work contract, and that contractors and subcontractors be required to use certified recruiting firms. New regulations require that contractors provide TIP training to all employees and ensure compliance with U.S. law, host nation law, and local theater directives on combating human trafficking.

Anti-trafficking training is now mandatory for all U.S. service members. DOD civilians stationed in the U.S. or abroad and military police are receiving specialized training to help them recognize and identify possible human trafficking scenarios, especially overseas.

The Role of Every Nation

Besides being a major human rights violation, modern-day slavery is a global health threat and undermines international security by fueling the growth of organized crime. Human trafficking is closely connected with money laundering, document forgery, and human smuggling. Where organized crime flourishes, governments and the rule of law are undermined and weakened. It is therefore crucial that military groups avoid behavior that counters law and order and creates security gaps.

For more information, please visit the Web site of the U.S. Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at www.state.gov/g/tip.