

# Anti-Trafficking News Bulletin



## STATE ANTI-TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION EFFORT INTENSIFIES

On July 16, 2004, the Department of Justice announced a model example of an effective state anti-trafficking statute. A Senate resolution encouraging states to adopt the model statute, sponsored by Senator John Cornyn of Texas, passed with overwhelming bi-partisan support this summer.

Legislators are responding. Currently, Minnesota and New Jersey have legislation pending, and legislative efforts are under way in California, Nebraska, Idaho, Massachusetts, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. State anti-trafficking criminal statutes based on the Trafficking Victims Protection Act have already been adopted in Texas, Florida, and Missouri, and the Model Law builds on their efforts.

Senior Civil Rights Division officials and prosecutors have actively reached out to state legislators and promoted adoption of the model statute. Examples of this outreach include:

- On November 18, Assistant Attorney General Alex Acosta and Senior Special Counsel for Trafficking T. March Bell ad-

ressed the National Foundation of Women Legislators' annual conference. In his keynote remarks, AAG Acosta underscored the importance of enacting new laws, such as the model statute to punish traffickers. He also urged the attendees to understand the plight of the trafficking victims and to join federal law enforcement and the non-governmental organizations that work so hard to get protection and services to them.

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### ON THE WEB



The latest U.S. government interagency report on human trafficking, *Assessment of U.S. Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons*, can be found at [www.usdoj.gov/trafficking.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/trafficking.htm)

## JUSTICE DEPARTMENT AWARDS GRANTS TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND ASSIST VICTIMS

In November, the Justice Department announced that it is awarding more than \$7.6 million in grants to enable state and local law enforcement to fight human trafficking by creating similar local task forces to aid in the identification and rescue of human trafficking victims.

The Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs provided and will administer the awards under a new grant program that enables states and local law enforcement to work with victim and social services organizations and federal agencies to identify human trafficking victims

and bring perpetrators to justice. Grant awards of up to \$450,000 will supplement existing efforts within the communities, such as those of the victims of trafficking services and refugee resettlement agencies.

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At the same conference, in a panel discussion, Special Litigation Council Bell set forth specifics of how the U.S. law would operate to help states dismantle trafficking networks, and cautioned the participants that no area of the country is immune from this horrible crime. “The legislators were not just interested in understanding the problem of trafficking, they were hungry for particulars of what steps they could take in their states in combination with enacting strong legislation,” Bell said.

- On October 21, the Civil Rights Division’s Special Litigation Counsel for Trafficking, Lou de Baca, presented the model law and shared his experiences with a packed house of prosecutors and private attorneys at the Nebraska Bar Association’s annual conference.
- On October 5, Counselor to the Assistant Attorney General Luis Reyes testified before the newly formed Select Committee on Human Trafficking of the California Assembly, setting forth the Civil Rights Di-



**Assistant Attorney General Alex Acosta addresses the National Foundation of Women Legislators’ annual conference.**

vision’s experiences in the area. In December, Assemblywoman Sally Lieber, who chaired the hearing, introduced anti-trafficking legislation

that will update and supplement California’s pre-existing laws against child prostitution and involuntary servitude.

**Grants, continued from Page 1**

**The following local law enforcement agencies have received federal grants to support their anti-trafficking efforts:**

Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, D.C.	City of Austin	Nassau County Police Department
Harris County, TX	Seattle Police Department	American Samoa Government Office of Territorial And International Criminal Intelligence And Drug Enforcement, AS
City of Los Angeles, CA	Department of the Attorney General, HI	City of El Paso, TX
New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety	Cobb County Government, GA	City of Oakland, CA
City of Boston, MA	City of Phoenix, AZ	City of Atlanta, GA
San Diego County, CA	Collier County, FL	
	County of Suffolk, NY	

## JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES WASHINGTON, D.C. HUMAN TRAFFICKING TASK FORCE

On November 23, Assistant Attorney General R. Alexander Acosta joined with Assistant Attorney General Christopher A. Wray of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Kenneth L. Wainstein of the District of Columbia to announce the creation of a new anti-trafficking task force in the District of Columbia. Michael A. Mason, Assistant Director of the FBI's Washington, D.C. Field Office, and Metropolitan Police Department Chief Charles Ramsey were also on hand for the event.

The Task Force will build on the Metropolitan Police Department's (MPD) long-standing efforts to eliminate prostitution in the District of Columbia through its highly experienced Prostitution Unit. In many cities, commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking are closely linked.

Along with dedicated resources from the FBI, MPD officers and FBI agents will follow the tried and true method of identifying and apprehending the prostitutes on the streets and then working "up the chain" to

**"With this new partnership and with the generous support of the Department of Justice, we will be able to treat the human trafficker with a firm hand while we reach out to his victim with a helping hand," said Assistant Attorney General Christopher Wray.**

make cases against the traffickers themselves.

"The trafficking of children for the purpose of sexual exploitation is a particularly heinous offense," said Assis-



**Assistant Attorney General Christopher Wray and U.S. Attorney Kenneth Wainstein joined Assistant Attorney General Alex Acosta to announce the new anti-trafficking task force in Washington, D.C.**

tant Attorney General Wray. "Our prosecutors will join forces with the U.S. Attorney's Office to remove the scourge of child sexual exploitation in the District of Columbia and elsewhere."

"Local law enforcement and community-based organizations, particularly faith-based groups, are best situated to identify trafficking victims in their communities during the course of their field operations and delivery of social services," said Assistant Attorney General Acosta. "Increasing the capacity of local law enforcement to work jointly with community-based social service providers and federal law enforcement is essential to combating such human degradation."

The Washington, D.C. Task Force on Trafficking in Persons becomes the 16th task force formed across the country in recent years. These task forces are committed to attacking human trafficking in every form. By pooling the resources of federal prosecutors and special agents, who have considerable experience in battling trafficking, with those of local police officers who daily pursue criminals

engaging in commercial sexual exploitation, the task forces greatly enhance law enforcement ability to pursue these criminals and rescue their victims.

The task force concentrates the resources of the Criminal and Civil Rights Divisions of the Department of Justice, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, the FBI and the Metropolitan Police Department on the problem of human trafficking in the District of Columbia. The task force will work closely with community organizations and support groups committed to helping the victims of this crime. The effort is in conjunction with Operation Innocence Lost, a program sponsored by the FBI Crimes Against Children Division, the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) of the Criminal Division and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Innocence Lost, announced in early 2003, is a nationwide initiative to focus on child victims of interstate sex trafficking in the United States.

"Human trafficking victimizes society's most vulnerable individuals—frightened runaways and illegal immigrants who become trapped in a cycle of violence, prostitution and forced labor, said U.S. Attorney Wainstein. "In the District of Columbia, it also supports a prostitution and sex trade that undermines the quality of life in many of our neighborhoods. The Task Force announced today will assemble our collective resources in an effort to eliminate human trafficking from the District of Columbia. With this new partnership and with the generous support of the Department of Justice, we will be able to treat the human trafficker with a firm hand while we reach out to his victim with a helping hand."

## JUSTICE DEPARTMENT PROSECUTORS INTRODUCE MULTIDISCIPLINARY MODEL TO PRAGUE CONFERENCE

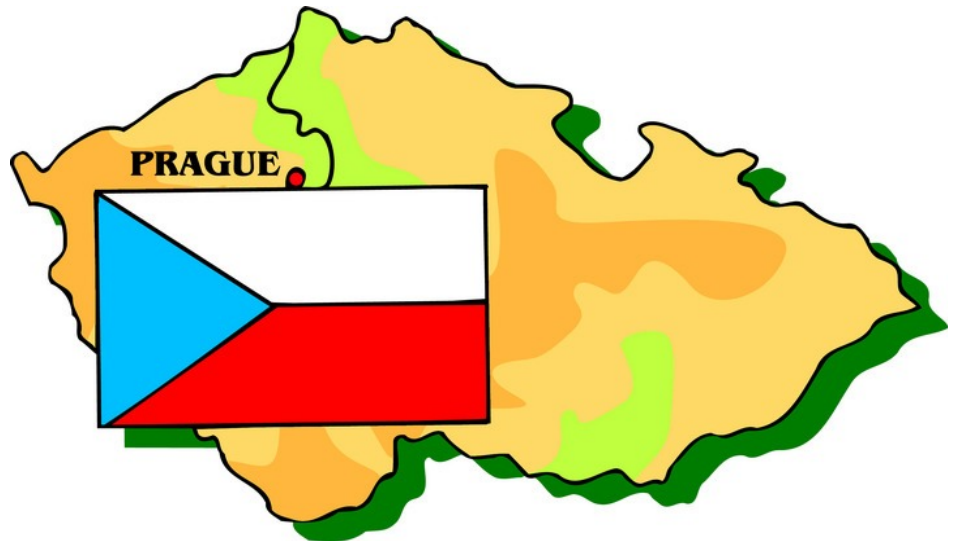
Human Trafficking is a transnational problem, and requires a concerted global response. That is why the Justice Department has aggressively reached out to foreign governments to share expertise, build relationships, and strengthen anti-trafficking efforts at home and abroad. As part of this effort, the Department of Justice's Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Section recently convened an anti-trafficking conference in Prague, Czech Republic. The conference, which brought together law enforcement and prosecutorial representatives from several central and eastern European nations, discussed effective anti-trafficking strategies, with a particular focus on financial aspects of trafficking, such as combating money laundering and using court ordered asset-forfeiture as a tool against the traffickers.

An understanding of the criminal financial issues connected to human trafficking is vitally important to anti-trafficking efforts. Human trafficking, which inflicts unimaginable suffering on its victims, has proven extremely lucrative for the ruthless criminals who trade in their fellow human beings. Authorities estimate that human trafficking generates more illegal revenue than any other transnational crime, excepting only drug trafficking and illegal weapons smuggling.

Since 2000, the Justice Department has aggressively moved against human traffickers in the United States, deploying innovative approaches that have yielded record results. The hallmark of this initiative has been a "victim-centered approach" that emphasizes rescue and restoration of victims and perpetrator accountability.

March Bell, the Civil Right's Division's Senior Counsel for Trafficking, explained the approach to the Prague conference.

Representatives from the Czech Republic reported that all of their anti-trafficking teams now include forensic accountants. These ac-



Asset forfeiture and money laundering are also important tools for the prosecutor who seeks to dismantle a criminal enterprise. The incredible sums trafficking generates attracts additional persons willing to undertake the risks associated with criminal conduct. By working to take the profit out of trafficking, while continuing to secure tough prison sentences for the traffickers and rescuing their victims, prosecutors can multiply their ability to deter criminals and would-be criminals from committing trafficking related crimes.

Participants in the conference included law enforcement and prosecutorial representatives from Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Kosovo, Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia. Each country team summarized their laws, challenges, lessons learned and pro-

gress made. Representatives from the Czech Republic reported that all of their anti-trafficking teams now include forensic accountants. These ac-

counts can focus on "following the money", while other investigators identify the criminal enterprise that recruits, sells and abuses trafficking victims. Additionally, the Czech approach includes action teams that deploy to an area when a new case is identified. These teams are similar to the multidisciplinary team approach pioneered by the Civil Rights Division, but operate as "flying squads", rather than focusing on one geographic area. Each Czech action team is made up of two investigators, a prosecutor and a victim's services advocate.

Many of the countries represented at the conference are just beginning to focus on anti-trafficking efforts as a specific criminal priority and were especially interested in learning about the proactive approach taken by U.S. law enforcement since 2000.

## DEPARTMENT'S ANTI-TRAFFICKING EFFORTS FEATURED AT INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On November 16, the Civil Rights Division participated in a workshop and panel discussion entitled "Local Law Enforcement's Role in Human Trafficking" at the International Association of Chiefs of Police Annual Conference in Los Angeles.

The workshop focused on the critical role that local law enforcement plays in addressing the crime of human trafficking, and how it can best partner with federal law enforcement and non-governmental organizations. The panel included representatives from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Los Angeles Police Department, San Diego County Sheriff's Office, and the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking.

The workshop opened with the showing of the Department's new Human Trafficking video, "Liberty and Justice for Victims of Modern Day Slavery." The wide-ranging panel discussion addressed many of the issues present in human trafficking cases. The panelists spent a considerable amount of time emphasizing the

important role that local law enforcement plays in identifying and investigating these crimes. It was pointed out that, as first responders and the "eyes and ears" of the local community, local law enforcement is in the best position to initially recognize, uncover, and respond to circumstances that may appear to be a routine street crime, but may ultimately turn out to be a human trafficking case.

Representing the Civil Rights Division, prosecutor Mark Kappelhoff made the point that several successful federal human trafficking prosecutions began when enterprising and dedicated local law enforcement officers uncovered what initially appeared to be a run of the mill street crime, but after more intense investigation turned out to be a trafficking case. He cited the efforts of Investigator Frank Mora of the Hidalgo County (Texas) Sheriff's Department in *U.S. v. Soto* and Captain Ruth Selzam and Officer Ivy Garcia of the Plainfield New Jersey Police Depart-

ment in *U.S. v. Jimenez-Caldron*, to major recent sex trafficking prosecutions that drew national attention.

The panel discussion also focused on the importance of local law enforcement collaborating with federal law enforcement and service providers to meet the needs of victims, as well as to pursue joint investigations to leverage resources to ensure that the traffickers are brought to justice.



### ON THE WEB

Excerpts from the Justice Department's Anti-Trafficking Video, "Liberty and Justice for Victims of Modern Day Slavery" can be viewed at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/humantraffickingconf/>. The video was screened at the recent International Association of Chiefs of Police annual conference.

## BACK-TO-BACK CONVICTIONS IN MARYLAND SUBURBS

In a historic first, two trafficking trials took place simultaneously this fall in the same federal district courthouse. The cases, tried in Greenbelt, Maryland, both resulted in convictions.

On November 18, 2004, following a month-long trial, Criminal Section Attorney Seth Rosenthal and Assistant U.S. Attorney Odessa Jackson secured convictions in *U.S. v. Udeozor*. The *Udeozor* case involved a 14 year-old Nigerian girl who had been brought to the United States and enslaved as a domestic servant. Adaobi Stella Udeozor was convicted of Conspiracy to Enslave and Alien Harboring. Co-defendant George Udeozor, Stella's husband, is a fugitive in Nige-

ria. Sentencing is set for February 4, 2005.

In the other case, *U.S. v. Mubang*, Criminal Section Attorney Amy Pope and Assistant U.S. Attorney Daphne McFerrin secured a decisive conviction. The victim in *Mubang* was a 10 year-old Cameroonian girl that had been brought to the United States on false pretenses and forced to work as a nanny and domestic servant under violent and harsh conditions for over two years. A call to the Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force Complaint Line (1-888-428-7581) started the investigation,



which took Pope all the way to Cameroon to develop evidence of previous instances of enslavement by the defendant.

"This was more than just another trial," said Pope. "It was inspiring to see how people responded to the victims' plight."

On November 17, 2004, following a two-week trial, Terri Mubang was convicted of Involuntary Servitude and Alien Harboring. Sentencing is set for February 28, 2005.

These convictions are the latest in a series of successful joint trafficking prosecutions conducted between the Civil Rights Division and the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Maryland.

## RECENT NOTABLE PROSECUTIONS

### United States v. Rojas (N.D. GA)

On November 23, 2004, Jose Reyes Rojas, who pleaded guilty to sex trafficking in August, was sentenced to four years and nine months incarceration. Reyes Rojas's younger brother Juan, who pleaded guilty in May to fraudulently inducing a 16-year-old girl and another Mexican teenager into coming to the United States, was sentenced to five years and 11 months.



The defendants admitted to subjecting both victims to perform multiple commercial sex acts with between 10 and 25 men a night. Juan Reyes Rojas admitted to luring the victims to the United States with promises of legitimate employment and long-term romance. Jose Reyes Rojas admitted to helping fund the smuggling of the juvenile into the United States and to transporting her to Atlanta, where he and his brothers profited from her forced commercial sexual exploitation. A third brother, co-defendant Raul Reyes Rojas, is a fugitive who remains charged with sex trafficking, immigration-related offenses, and conspiracy.

### U.S. v. Zavala (E.D. NY)

On November 5, 2004, Mariluz Zavala and her husband, Jose Ibanez, pleaded guilty to labor trafficking charges. Between June 1, 1999 and June 21, 2004, the couple smuggled over sixty Peruvian nationals, including children, into the Un-



ted States for a smuggling fee ranging from \$6,000 to \$13,000 per person, and obtained the labor of the Peruvians through threats of deportation and confiscation of their passports. The victims were required to turn over almost all their earnings to the couple on a weekly basis. Defendants used the money obtained from their victims to purchase houses, real estate, vehicles, and to pay for their living expenses. As a result of their pleas to the conspiracy counts, the defendants will forfeit a house valued at \$175,000 and bank accounts containing approximately \$30,000 generated through their crimes.

### U.S. v. Valle-Maldonado (C.D. CA)

On November 1, 2004, Maria de Jesus Valle-Maldonado, a Mexican national who was the "madam" at a Los Angeles brothel, was sentenced to 54 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$135,542 to nine of her victims. She previously pleaded guilty to bringing her victims into the United States for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. She is the fourth person to be convicted on charges resulting from a trafficking investigation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement that uncovered the brothel. Valle-Maldonado and her accomplices held at least 12 Mexican women and girls, some as young as 14 and 15, and forced them to perform commercial sex acts.

### United States v. Trakhtenberg (D. NJ)

On December 1, 2004, in New Jersey, Lev Trakhtenberg pleaded guilty to labor trafficking charges. Trakhtenberg had previously pleaded

guilty, on November 3, 2004, in the Eastern District of New York, to extortion for having threatened a victim's family in Russia with physical harm unless they paid money he claimed the victim (who had escaped from his clutches) owed him.



In the New Jersey case, Trakhtenberg and two other defendants were charged on August 27, 2002 with devising and carrying out a scheme to obtain the labor and services of Russian women as "exotic" dancers in the New York and New Jersey areas. The women were recruited to come to the United States to perform "cultural dance shows" and with the promises of good pay and adequate housing accommodations. However, once in the United States, they were forced to perform in strip clubs and threatened that they would suffer serious harm and physical restraint if they did not perform. On August 13, 2004, defendant Sergey Malchikov pleaded guilty. No trial date has been set for the other remaining defendant, Trakhtenberg's wife Victoria.

### Featured Next Issue

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**Civil Rights Division Officials Visit Southeast Asia**

**Anti-Trafficking Prosecutor Profiled in Prominent Magazine**