

Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

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Action

Co-Sponsored by:

- Sisters of the Divine Savior
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1 This issue highlights UN reports regarding some root causes of the trafficking of women and children and actions to take regarding labor trafficking. Vol. 3 No. 3 March 15, 2005

United Nations Commission Appraised Worldwide Situation of Women

Ten years after the *Fourth World Conference on Women* took place in Beijing, the United Nations offered an opportunity to policy makers and experts from Governments from around the world to take stock of progress made in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and to recommend concrete steps for future action.

The meeting, known as the *Ten-Year Review and Appraisal*, was held from February 28 to March 11, 2005 at UN headquarters in New York, as part of the *UN Commission on the Status of Women's (CSW)* forty-ninth session.

The Beijing conference in 1995 culminated in a groundbreaking *Platform for Action* that Member States and their UN and non-governmental partners aim to move towards broader and more systematic implementation. This meeting was the first opportunity, since a follow-up session of the UN General Assembly five years ago, for high level Government officials and a wide spectrum of civil society experts to make in-depth assessments of the status of women today.

"A lot of progress has been made since Beijing. We are seeing more equitable laws that protect women from discrimination, abuse, and violence. However, there is much more that needs to be done to put the Platform for Action into

practice, especially in terms of alleviating poverty, improving health, creating opportunity for economic advancement and political leadership, and reducing human rights violations," said Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

The *Commission on the Status of Women* focused on two major themes during the session: a review of progress in implementing both the *Beijing Platform for Action* and the outcome document that emerged from the General Assembly session five years ago, as well as current challenges and strategies. It discussed action at the national level and facilitated the sharing of experiences and good practices in overcoming remaining obstacles.

According to the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, Carolyn Hannan, a large number of non-governmental organizations attended the meeting.

"This level of participation by non-governmental organizations was a testament to the enormous contribution of civil society to the advancement of women's rights over the last thirty years. Their input into the Ten-Year Review and Appraisal and continued collaboration was a crucial element in the process," said Ms. Hannan.

"Certainly the progress in recognizing women's human rights since the First World Conference on Women 30 years ago is cause for celebration. However, we must also acknowledge that women continue to suffer pervasive human rights violations. ...The majority of human rights violations against women are rooted in discrimination based on sex. ...But every success (in gaining human rights), however modest, will benefit all right holders - women, children, men alike - because it is a fight for inclusion."

*Louise Arbour,
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights*



Beijing at ten

achieving gender equality, development and peace



Awareness

Almost half of all AIDS sufferers are now women and the number infected is increasing in every region of the world according to a UN report.
London Times Health News

The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Women

The rates of HIV infection among women and girls are a cause for deep concern, but when combined with the workload that women take on as well—in caring for AIDS patients, AIDS orphans and their own families—the situation becomes untenable, as it already is in Southern Africa. Similar conditions are developing quickly in the Caribbean, and possibly in Eastern Europe and parts of Asia due to rapidly rising rates in those regions.

At its heart, this is a crisis of gender inequality, with women less able than men to exercise control over their bodies and lives. Nearly universally, cultural expectations have encouraged men to have multiple partners, while women are expected to abstain or be faithful. There is also a culture of silence around sexual and reproductive health. Simply by fulfilling their expected gender roles, men and women are likely to increase their risk of HIV infection.

But the gender disparities go far deeper than sexual relations. Women in many regions do not own property or have access to financial resources and are dependent on men—husbands, fathers, brothers and sons—for support. Without resources, women are susceptible to abuses of power.

Violence and the threat of it also limit women's ability to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS. They risk violence if they insist on protection. They may stay in violent relationships because they have nowhere else to go. They may give in to male demands for unprotected sexual relations, even when they know the danger. Whether in conflict areas or in the home, rape and sexual abuse make a mockery of the notion of safer sexual relations.

In addition, poverty pushes some women into risky behavior or dangerous situations. With no other options in sight, they may resort to sex work to feed their families. Women and girls are susceptible to the growing trade of trafficking. In Southern Africa, many older men seek out young women and adolescent girls for sexual favors while providing them with school fees, food and highly sought after consumer goods.

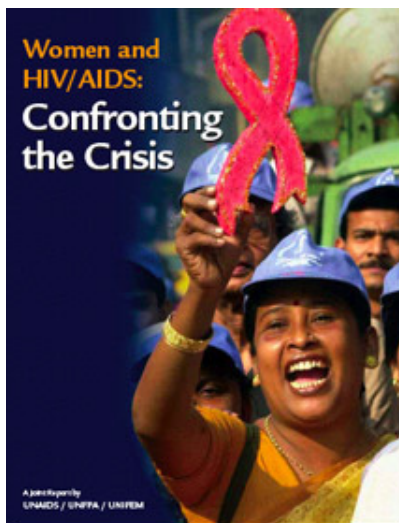
In countries that are hard-hit by the epidemic, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, women have taken on the care of HIV/AIDS patients. They provide home-based care, take in orphans, cultivate crops or find

paid employment to keep families going. They clean, cook and nurse, often without access to clean water and sanitary supplies. Because of the additional work involved in caring for the sick, fields are lying fallow, children (usually girls) are being taken out of school to help and households are not being maintained.

Girls and women know that if they do not do this work, no one else will, and so they take it on at enormous cost to themselves. But women and girls cannot continue to bear this burden alone. And the world can no longer allow them to carry such a heavy load.

Violence, poverty, inequality and the lack of basic rights all need to be addressed if HIV/AIDS is to be brought under control.

Women living with HIV/AIDS have identified actions that would improve their situations. They have called for recognition of their fundamental human rights, and for decision-making power and consultation at all levels of policy and programs affecting them. They have urged economic support for women living with HIV/AIDS in developing countries, support for self-help groups and networks, realistic portrayals of people living with HIV/AIDS by the media and accessible and affordable health care. They also want their reproductive rights to be respected, including the right to choose whether or not to have children. (pgs. 7-9 UNIFEM report)



“This report is an urgent call to action to address the triple threat of gender inequality, poverty and HIV/AIDS. By tackling these forces simultaneously, we can reduce the spread of the epidemic and its devastating consequences.”
Dr. Peter Piot Exec. Dir., UNAIDS
Thoraya A. Obaid Exec. Dir., UNFPA
Noeleen Heyzer Exec. Dir., UNIFEM



Awareness

UN Development Fund for Women: Celebrating Our Gains, Accelerating Change

“International Women’s Day 2005 marks a crossroads for women. In the decade since Beijing, the signs of progress are many. There is growing recognition that gender equality is a prerequisite for eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development, as stated in the *Millennium Declaration*. The spread of HIV/AIDS has been recognized as a gender issue, as well as a health issue, and the impact of war on women and women’s role in peace-building is recognized and validated by Security Council resolution 1325. Women’s human rights — monitored and upheld by the Convention on the *Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*, now ratified by 179 countries — are now on every major agenda, national, regional and international.

Legislation is being drafted to strengthen women’s economic security in such vital areas as land, property and inheritance rights, decent employment, and access to credit and markets. At least 45 countries today have laws against domestic violence, while over 20 more are drafting new legislation or amending criminal assault laws to include domestic violence. Governments are beginning to adopt gender-sensitive laws and policies on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care. And quotas or other affirmative measures have been adopted to increase women’s representation in political decision-making in countries in all regions, including many countries emerging from conflict, which are striving to build peaceful and more democratic societies.

At the heart of all these gains are women’s rights and gender equality advocates. On International Women’s Day, we honour these women, who tirelessly advocate, organize and mobilize to keep gender equality on the table.

And yet, while we celebrate progress, we know that it has been too slow. Thirty years after the beginning of the Decade on Women, and ten years after Beijing, it is still a woman’s face we see when we speak of poverty, of HIV/AIDS, of violent conflict and social upheaval, of trafficking in human beings. Violence against women, already horrific in times of peace, intensifies during armed conflict with sexual violence now routinely used as a weapon of war. And women are everywhere disproportionately concentrated in poorly paid, unsafe and insecure jobs, struggling to lift themselves and their families out of poverty.

To break the cycles of poverty, violence and gender discrimination, we need to accelerate progress, and expand its reach. What will it take? ...”
Noeleen Heyzer, Exec. Dir. UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)





Advocacy

Working against Trafficking Internationally – Using CEDAW at the United Nations

By Catherine Ferguson, SNJM Coalition Coordinator UNANIMA International

International treaties are a means of working to end trafficking in human beings.

An example

Every country, which has signed the *Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, agrees to be reviewed and evaluated regarding its compliance with that treaty which declares in Article 6:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

Italy signed on to the treaty and its compliance was reviewed this past January 2005. The basic document for this review was a report prepared by the Italian government stating how it is in conformity with the terms of the treaty.

But who monitors what the government says?

Who speaks for those who are trafficked? NGOs are the conscience of the UN and its link to the grassroots. So the experts who review the government reports seek grassroots information from the NGOs about what they see is going on in the country.

UNANIMA International is an NGO working on education and advocacy at the UN. Its members are 12 communities of women religious who represent more than 15,000 Sisters and associates in 65 countries. It especially focuses its efforts on

eliminating trafficking in women and children. Because Italy was being reviewed, UNANIMA International invited an Italian anti-trafficking advocate to speak at the regularly scheduled informal session with the experts to provide county-specific information.

Eugenia Bonetti, MSC, spoke to the experts. She is a former African missionary now turned advocate for the more than 50,000 young women, mainly from Africa (principally Nigeria) and Eastern Europe (Romania, Moldova and Russia). About 40% of them are minors between the ages of 14 and 18. Her work on the streets and in liaison with networks in Africa enabled her to tell the experts specifically which laws are in effect in Italy and what effect these laws have on discrimination against these women.

When she spoke to the experts, she expressed her concern about proposed legislation pointing out that, in Italy, *“More than 90% of present street prostitution is by foreign women. This has made prostitution much more visible and obvious as the greatest number of women and girls involved in street prostitution are from Africa--especially Nigeria. Italians tended to blame the foreign women for the ‘moral degradation’ in Italian cities embodied by open street prostitution.”* She reminded her listeners, *“Very seldom do we consider men responsible for encouraging prostitution because of their demands!”*

These developments led to open calls for the reintroduction of brothels as an answer to putting an end to street prostitution. As a result, a recent proposal No. 3826 to reopen brothels

is now being discussed in the Italian Parliament. It is being promoted by the Italian Minister of Equal Opportunities and it is also supported by the



Eugenia Bonetti MSC presenting Nigerian immigrants to Pope John Paul II during a papal audience.



Advocacy

UNANIMA

cont. from pg. 4

government and a majority in Parliament.¹

“Unfortunately”, S. Eugenia explained, “the legalization of prostitution and the re-opening of brothels would not protect and safeguard the interests of prostitutes. On the contrary, studies have shown that legalization of prostitution only safeguards the interest of pimps and of the sex industry and will not at all help women in prostitution.”²

Experience has shown that legalizing brothels would have the effect of further driving underground the victims who would not even have any other possibilities of coming in contact with the general public asking for help to escape. Such effects certainly deepen the victimization of those already exploited.

Finally, S. Eugenia called strongly for the Italian government to work in collaboration with organizations like her own in determining effective policies and programs - especially in conformity with the treaty.

The results

The experts listened carefully, requesting ever more specific information. They repeated to the NGOs, “Keep providing us with country-specific information like this so we can challenge the governments to implement CEDAW Article 6 more effectively.”

The representative of the Italian government responded positively to Sister Eugenia personally. He praised her report and passed it on to his superiors and promised her closer collaboration in the future.

The experts used several of the key points in the report to question the government and as the basis for strong recommendations regarding Italy’s dealing with the issue of trafficking.³

Will this stop trafficking?

Not by itself but it provides one more channel by which all of us together can work against this contemporary face of slavery.

Is it worth it?

UNANIMA International believes so and will continue to encourage its members in countries who have signed CEDAW to provide alternative reports on issues of concern related to trafficking.

¹ The full text of Sister Eugenia’s statement can be found on the resources page of the UNANIMA International web site: <http://www.unanima-international.org>

² *Ten Reasons for Not Legalizing Prostitution and a Legal Response to the Demand for Prostitution*. In M. Farley (Ed.), *Prostitution, Trafficking and Traumatic Stress*. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press. See also <http://www.catwinternational.org>; Sullivan, M. & Jeffreys, S. (2001). *Legalising Prostitution is Not the Answer: the Example of Victoria, Australia*. North Amherst, MA: Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW). Retrieved April 10, 2003 from <http://www.catwinternational.org>

³ Later in the year, the text of the recommendations of the Expert Committee will be found on the UN website at: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw



(Left: Meeting of UNANIMA members in January 2005.)



Action

6 Reducing Demand for Trafficked Women and Girls

The UN Commission on the Status of Women,

- Recalling General Assembly resolution 59/166 and Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/45;
- Acknowledging the fact that the majority of victims of trafficking in persons are women and girls;
- Concerned about the increasing occurrence of trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation and sex tourism;
- Recognizing that prostitution and the trafficking in persons for the purpose of prostitution are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person and endanger the welfare of the individual, the family, and the community;
- Recognizing that the use of women in international prostitution and trafficking networks has become a major focus of international organized crime;
- Convinced that a key element to combating the particular problem of trafficking in women and girls is reducing the demand for victims, including the demand for prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation; and
- Deeply concerned over the commission of unconscionable acts of sexual abuse and exploitation by a number of uniformed peacekeepers and civilian officials of some United Nations peacekeeping missions, and concerned that such activity fuels the demand for victims of trafficking.

Calls upon governments to:

- Adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures, such as educational, social or other measures, including through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, and that leads to trafficking;
- Criminalize trafficking in persons, especially women and children, in all its forms and to condemn and penalize traffickers and intermediaries, while ensuring protection and assistance to the victims of trafficking with full respect for their human rights;
- Enforce or adopt legislative and other measures to deter exploiters and sex buyers who create the demand for prostitution that leads to sex trafficking; and
- Conclude bilateral, subregional, regional and international agreements to address the problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, including mutual assistance treaties to enhance police cooperation, agreements and memoranda of understanding on information sharing, and specific measures aimed at reducing demand.

Calls upon governments and civil society to:

- Take appropriate measures to raise public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly in women and girls, including to address the demand side of the

problem, and to publicize the laws, regulations and penalties relating to this issue, and to emphasize that trafficking is a crime, in order to eliminate the demand for trafficked women and children, including by sex tourists;

- Implement educational programs, including at the local level, to raise awareness of the negative consequences of prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, including the links to trafficking in persons, organized crime, and harmful public health effects, and to inform sex buyers of the violence that prostitutes experience; and
- Conduct research on the relationship between the trafficking of women and children for sex and legislation governing prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation.

Encourages the business sector, esp. tourism industry and Internet providers, to:

- Develop or adhere to codes of conduct with a view to preventing trafficking in persons and protecting the victims of such traffic, especially those in prostitution, and promoting their rights, dignity and security; and
- Collaborate and take action in coordination with governmental and non-governmental organizations to eliminate child sex tourism.

Calls upon the Secretary General, in conjunction with countries contributing troops to UN peacekeeping missions, to:

- ensure the provision of training to peacekeepers and civilian and military advisers on sexual abuse and exploitation, including trafficking, and
- ensure that allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation, including trafficking, will be swiftly investigated and dealt with.



Action

Thank you all for your continued support. It was the concern of consumers like you that helped produce the March 8th historic triumph, and we at Free the Slaves are proud to have you as allies in the modern anti-slavery movement.

Jacob Patton

Taco Bell Accord Reached!

Dear Friends,

I have very exciting news to share with you: we are now one step closer to eliminating slavery from the production of foods we eat!

In a document signed March 8th Yum! Brands and its subsidiary Taco Bell have agreed to take measures to ensure that farmworkers in their supply chain receive better wages and to enforce a code of conduct to ensure that no slavery or worker exploitation is involved in the production of tomatoes supplied to Taco Bell.

This historic agreement is a direct result of negotiations between the fast food giant and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a Florida-based farmworker organization, which has for years sought to eliminate slave-labor in the tomato fields of southern Florida.

"The accord between Taco Bell, Yum! Brands, and the Coalition of Immokalee Workers sets a precedent for how fast food restaurant companies and retailers do business with their suppliers, and in turn, how workers are treated," said Steven Lize, Free the Slaves research associate and current interim director of CIW.

"This proves businesses can come together with non-governmental organizations to collaborate in finding solutions to the problems of slavery and worker exploitation in agriculture," said Jolene Smith, Executive Director of Free the Slaves. *"We commend the Coalition of Immokalee Workers for their success in encouraging, and convincing, Taco Bell and Yum! Brands to step up to the challenge and become leaders of ethical business practices in the fast food industry."*

Yesterday's success was among the first of many in the anti-slavery movement's efforts to eliminate slavery from the goods we purchase. In the coming months, we are looking forward to having even more good news about our work in the realm of slave-free trade.

Thank you all for your continued support. It was the concern of consumers like you that helped produce the March 8th historic triumph, and we at Free the Slaves are proud to have you as allies in the modern anti-slavery movement.

Most sincerely,
Jacob Patton
Director of Outreach and Technology
Free the Slaves
newsletter@freetheslaves.net

CONTACT the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW):

Congratulate them on years of struggle for justice.
Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW)
P. O. Box 603
Immokalee, FL, 34143
Tel. 239-657-8311
Fax. 239-657-8311
E-mail workers@ciw-online.org

CONTACT Taco Bell:

Congratulate them on the accord reached with CIW.
Emil J. Brolick, President and Chief Concept Officer
Taco Bell Corp.
17901 Von Karman
Irvine, CA 92614
Tel. 949-863-4500
Fax. 949-863-4537



Immokalee tomato pickers.



Confirmation of the accord
March 8, 2005.

(Photo: Jacques-Jean Tiziou)



Action

Exploited Thai Guest Workers Need Your Help!

Guest workers continue to be exploited by companies like *Global Horizons*, an international farm labor contractor based out of Los Angeles.

In 2004, Global Horizons brought 167 agricultural workers from Thailand to work in the Washington apple industry under the current guest worker program.

According to the WA Dept of Health, these workers were forced to live in outrageously crowded, unsanitary conditions--with only 21 beds for 45 people at one location, no cooking facilities at multiple locations, and workers were forced to wash their clothes in trash cans. Some of the Thai workers told officials that they weren't receiving pay stubs and that money deducted from their paychecks to be sent back home never arrived.

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) monitors whether employers like Global Horizons comply with labor laws and should take action when companies do not. The DOL allowed Global Horizons to start operating in WA without verifying that the company had the required licenses.

Global Horizons operates in 25 other states...what might be occurring there?

The guest worker program has a history of abuse. It is time to hold the U.S. Department of Labor accountable for enforcing laws that protect workers and to reform our current immigration laws through proposed legislation already in Congress called AgJOBS.

ACTION

Send an e-Mail to
U.S. Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao.

Tell her:

- that you hold the U.S. Department of Labor accountable for these inhumane conditions.
- that the Department of Labor must to do its job and carefully review applications of companies that request guest workers and ensure that companies are in full compliance with the law.

Use: <http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/ThaiH2A/ui853g4l7bwk3w>

Informative Web Sites: (Each contains information related to human trafficking)

AIDS Report

www.unifem.org
(308_filename_women_aids1.pdf)
London Times: Health News
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,8122-1373055,00.html>

Take a virtual tour of Immokalee life:

<http://www.ciw-online.org/images/images.html>

Editor's Note:

If you know of good video/book resources, please notify us so we can pass the word on to other readers.

Thank you!

Toll-Free Hotline: (Trafficking Information and Referral)

1.888.3737.888

Stop Trafficking!

is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

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<http://homepage.mac.com/srjeanschafer/sds/stoptraff/index.html>

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