

# Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

April 2010 Vol. 8 No. 4

This issue highlights successes and failures in the work of anti-human trafficking.

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**For Practical Action**  
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## Iceland Closes Strip Clubs

Iceland, a country with a tiny population of 320,000, is on the brink of achieving what many considered impossible — closing down a sex industry. While activists in Britain struggle to regulate lap dance clubs, the number of which is growing at an alarming rate, Iceland has passed a law that will close every strip club in the country. The law, passed unanimously with only two abstentions, will make it illegal for any business to profit from the nudity of its employees.

It proves that when an entire country unites behind a cause change can happen. It will also encourage the campaign in Britain against an industry that is both a cause and a consequence of growing inequality between men and women.

According to Icelandic police, 100 foreign women travel to the country annually to work in strip clubs. It is unclear whether the women are trafficked. But as the stripping industry grew, the number of Icelandic women wishing to work in it did not. Supporters of the bill say that some of the clubs are a front for prostitution and that many of the women work there because of drug abuse and poverty rather than a free choice.

The success of the bill may be due to the fact that Iceland has a strong women's movement and a high number of female politicians. Almost half the parliamentarians are female and it was ranked fourth out of 130 countries on the international gender gap index (behind Norway, Finland and Sweden). All four of these Scandinavian countries have, to some degree, crimi-

nalized the purchase of sex (legislation that the UK also adopted on April 1st).

Also Iceland's feminists appear to be entirely united in opposition to prostitution, unlike the UK where debates continue over whether prostitution and lap dancing are empowering or degrading to women. There is also public support. A 2007 poll found that 82% of women and 57% of men support the criminalization of paying for sex in brothels or lap dance clubs and fewer than 10% of Icelanders were opposed.

The ban could mean the death of the sex industry. In 2009 Iceland passed a law against the purchase of sex, recently introduced an action plan on trafficking of women, and now has shut down the strip clubs. The Nordic countries are leading the way on women's equality, recognizing women as equal citizens rather than commodities for sale.

Strip club owners are furious about the new law. "I have reached the age where I'm not sure whether I want to bother with this hassle any more," one said. Janice Raymond, a director of *Coalition Against Trafficking in Women* (CATW), hopes that all sex industry profiteers will feel the same. She believes the new law will pave the way for governments in other countries to follow suit. "What a victory, not only for the Icelanders but for everyone worldwide who repudiates the sexual exploitation of women," she said.

(<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2010/mar/25/iceland-most-feminist-country>)



## Awareness

# Traffickers Force Migrants to Yield Organs

*Frontera NorteSur* (FNS) an on-line U.S.-Mexico border news source reported in March 2010 that Bishop Vera, the Bishop of Coahuila, Mexico, denounced a wave of criminal attacks against Central American migrants in his nation. A delegation of church leaders reported on migrant human rights violations in Mexico to the *Organization of American States' Inter-American Commission of Human Rights* (IACHR).

Mexican police officers and *National Migration Institute* (INM) officials were involved in criminal rings that kidnap migrants en route to the U.S. and, under torture, force victims to disclose relatives' names and phone numbers in order to collect ransoms ranging from \$6,000-\$8,000. If family members cannot pay the demands, the kidnapers "*force (victims) to sell organs from their bodies.*"

Mexico's *National Human Rights Commission* disclosed that 9,758 migrants were kidnapped in the country between September 2008 and February 2009. Periodically, Mexican authorities rescue Central American kidnap victims or detain alleged human traffickers and criminals. In March, Mexican news media outlets reported on the army's detention of 98 municipal police officers in Tierra Blanca, Veracruz. The officers were initially accused of organized crime, including trafficking and extorting migrants.

Bishop Vera noted that only 11 of the 98 Tierra Blanca cops originally detained were charged with crimes connected to migrants. Involving multiple authorities, the mistreatment and abuse of migrants in Mexico consti-

tuted a problem of "*structural corruption,*" the Catholic leader contended.

Earlier, El Salvador's counsel in Veracruz called Tierra Blanca "*the most conflict-ridden and dangerous point*" in Mexico for migrants. Counsel Erving Ortiz Luna said his office had turned over more than 20 complaints of migrant extortion against Mexican authorities since 2009, but was never informed about the outcome of the cases.

The Mexico-US security relationship should be broadened to tackle the issue of migrant kidnappings in addition to drug trafficking said a representative of the Washington D.C.-based *Office on Latin America* (WOLA).

Bishop Vera's delegation asked help from the IACHR to get protection from Mexico's federal government for Casa del Migrante Posada Belen in Saltillo, a church-run shelter that provides refuge for Central American migrants. The facility has long been the target of aggressors said Father Pantoja, the shelter's supervisor. According to the Coahuila priest, the shelter is constantly watched by mysterious trucks with tinted windows. Intimidating phone calls and tapped phone lines are other forms of harassment. In its eight year history the shelter has helped 40,000 Central Americans.

The situation has turned desperate for both Mexican and Central American migrants. On Mexico's northern border, especially in the stretch from Baja CA to Sonora, migrants deported from the U.S. stay in border cities because of their reluctance to return home to a life of poverty. Meanwhile, "*reservoirs of people,*" Central Ameri-

cans, are stuck in the Mexican interior, terrorized to move on because of reports of kidnappings on the migrant highways leading north.

Father Pantoja urged Mexican leaders to show more political commitment to ending crimes against Central American migrants and grant migrants access to legal due process. Promoting economic development in impoverished regions is another urgent need, he added.

## Prostituting Teen Girls Online

Three people from Oregon were charged in January 2010 with sex trafficking of minors and conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of minors. Sex trafficking of minors has a mandatory minimum penalty of 10 years and maximum of life in prison. Conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of minors carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

The federal indictment alleges the three defendants were involved in recruiting, enticing and providing minor girls to engage in sex acts for money. The defendants would take photographs of the minors to put into commercial sex ads on *Craigslist* and other online advertising services. Hotel rooms were rented so the minors could engage in sex. All of the proceeds from the illegal activity were given to the defendants.

The charges followed a lengthy investigation by Eugene, OR police and the FBI. (<http://www.kval.com/news/local/80380362.html>)



## Awareness

For the first time, the 2010 *Trafficking in Persons Report* (TIP) will include a ranking for the United States.

*"I believe when you shine a bright light you need to shine it on everyone...we will rank ourselves."*

Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton.

### Federal Judge Asks Prosecutors To Put Price On Child Porn

According to the Alexandria, Va.-based *National Center for Missing and Exploited Children*, officials have analyzed more than 28 million child porn images since 2002, and more than 8 million since the start of 2009. In all, they have identified more than 2,600 victims of child pornography, victims whose images are destined to circulate for years and years.

The photos her uncle took of 'Amy' (not her real name) a decade ago -- when she was 8 or 9 years old -- are among the most widely circulated series of child pornography images in the U.S. Now her fight for damages from those who possess or distribute those photos is emerging as a big issue in federal courtrooms across the country.

The question is: How much can one offender possessing any of the millions of images circulating on the Internet be expected to pay to any of the thousands of victims worldwide? 'Amy' is seeking a total of more than \$3.3 million.

In January 2010, Judge Patrick Schiltz in the U.S. District Court in St. Paul, MN, issued an order demanding to know why restitution was not even requested by the U.S. attorney's office in the case of a Minnesota man who pleaded guilty to possession of child pornography.

When asked about the issue of restitution in child pornography cases, a U.S. Attorney said, *"This is an emerging issue and one we are looking at very closely. We will seek restitution in those cases where we believe it is appropriate and authorized by law."* According to a number of restitution rulings across the country, the courts are not of one mind on the issue.

In dozens of cases involving 'Amy' and another victim over the past couple of years, some courts have awarded large sums. Some have awarded only a few hundred dollars here and there. Some have denied any restitution at all, stating it is impossible to determine how much financial responsibility any single offender bears.

If Schiltz's stance requiring restitution requests becomes the norm and not the exception, the effect will potentially be profound. Many more victims will step forward. (<http://www.startribune.com/local/stpaul/80672902.html>)

### 'Sexploitation' of Children

Pornographers are winning the war against the children. More than four million Internet web sites depict in graphic detail the sexual exploitation of children, with more sites coming online every day. Of the \$14 billion earned annually by the *"adult entertainment industry"* 20% is revenue from the Internet. A recent investigation by the UN *Human Rights Council* found the number of Internet images of brutal rape, bondage and other depraved abuses of children has quadrupled since 2007.

(cont. col. 3)

### 'Sexploitation' cont.

The U.S. Supreme Court recently abolished a 1998 federal law protecting children from commercial Internet porn. The Court said parental filters on computers are sufficient.

The *World Congress Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents*, which met in Brazil in 2009, singled out Internet traffic as key to the sexual exploitation of children.

Internet servers in the U.S. host 62% of the child pornography distributed online worldwide, with a trend toward depicting ever-younger children.

Without effective *"porn-proofing,"* a child today will encounter graphic, X-rated Internet pornography. Nine out of 10 children between ages 8 and 16 have been exposed to free pornographic pictures online, according to a survey by the *London School of Economics*.

The latest challenge to parents is the swelling tide of *"pocket porn,"* graphic images of penetration, group sex, bestiality and incest transmitted via mobile phones, video games, digital music players and hand-held computers. Global revenues from such *"mobile porn"* reached \$1.7 billion in 2007.

Digital and electronic devices have effectively become pornography portals. Parents can filter and monitor children's Internet activity at home and establish porn-proofing rules for when children are elsewhere, but it is difficult to keep up with pornographers' advances on cell phones, PDAs (personal digital assistants) and online games. Peer-to-peer networks, which bypass most filters and, according to a 2007 *Pediatrics* journal study, pose the highest risk for children's unsolicited exposure to pornography, present additional challenges for parents. (Excerpted from commentary by Kathleen Maloney-Dunn, a mother & international human rights lawyer in Portland, OR. <http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/dec/20/sexploitation-of-children/>)



## Advocacy

### Truck Drivers Help Prevent Child Trafficking

There are a number of reasons why truckers are in a special position of power to fight human trafficking. First, much child trafficking goes on at truck stops. Among some truckers, the girls and women sold at truck stops are called “lot lizards,” a derogatory term indicating that the girls are pests. There have been several cases where truck stops were one of the primary locations traffickers sold teen girls. Truck drivers are in an ideal position to observe the prostitution and trafficking that takes place at truck stops and report the presence of minors and adult women who look frightened or like they aren’t in control of the situation.

Another reason truckers are important in the fight against child sex trafficking is that pimps and traffickers use the interstate system to move children from place to place more often than other forms of transportation. As frequent travelers, truckers have the opportunity to observe and report suspicious behavior. Also, the vast majority of truckers are men. Many truckers understand how macho, male-dominated culture can lead to the exploitation of girls and women within the industry.

Education is important, but to truly address the rampant sale of trafficking victims at American truck stops, some aspects of trucker culture will need to change as well. For example, as long as truck drivers, even those who don’t use commercial sex, refer to the young girls sold at truck stops as “lot lizards,” those girls will be seen as objects.

Truckers and truck stop workers need to understand that many of those girls are victims of child sex trafficking, that coming to that truck stop was not their choice, and that they deserve respect and assistance -- not mockery.

*The Defenders USA* is attempting to engage men nationwide to understand the consequences of the sex trade and discourage them from purchasing from the sex industry by signing the pledge not to purchase from the sex industry.

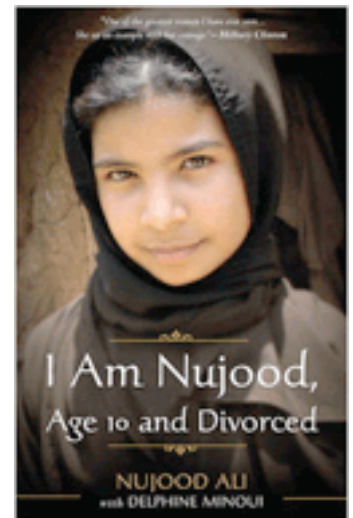
Visit the TAKE ACTION database with over 25 ideas for ways that truckers, truck stop employees and travelers can help: just click the link that applies to you. Go to: [http://endslaverynow.com/take\\_action](http://endslaverynow.com/take_action)

([http://humantrafficking.change.org/blog/view/why\\_truckers\\_are\\_first\\_line\\_defenders\\_against\\_child\\_prostitution](http://humantrafficking.change.org/blog/view/why_truckers_are_first_line_defenders_against_child_prostitution))

*Truckers Against Trafficking* is putting on three free educational webinars for truck drivers, truck stop workers, and other people who are involved with the trucking industry. The goal of these programs is to educate people in the trucking industry about human trafficking and how to identify it, in the hopes that more truckers will report trafficking taking place at truck stops. The webinars will take place on April 14, 21, and 29 at 9:00 pm EST. For more information or to find out how to listen to one of these free educational programs, visit *Truckers Against Trafficking’s* website.

### Divorced Before Puberty

Nicholas D. Kristof, in his *NY Times Op-Ed* column of March 4, 2010, wrote of Nujood Ali, a 10-year old Yemeni girl married to a man in his 30s. Immediately he ordered her to leave school (second grade) and began to abuse her, as did her mother-in-law. She ran away and appealed for a divorce to a local judge, despite the strict Yemeni culture of male dominance. Thanks to much journalistic coverage, she won the case. Her story is recounted in her newly-published autobiography, *I Am Nujood, Age 10 and Divorced*. It is being published in 18 languages, including Arabic. Her royalties help to support her family, who now stands behind her action. Her dream is to become a lawyer. Kristof concludes his column, “*The United States last month announced \$150 million in military assistance for Yemen to fight extremists. In contrast, it costs just \$50 to send a girl to public school for a year — and little girls like Nujood may prove more effective than missiles at defeating terrorists.*” (Excerpted from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/04/opinion/04kristof.html>)



Arlene Flaherty of *Catholic Relief Services* (CRS) invites readers to learn what is being done to prevent child marriage in India through the efforts of CRS. Go to: <http://crs.org/india/child-labor-marriage/>



## Advocacy

### 'Playground'

Sexual exploitation of children is a problem that is too often relegated to back-alley brothels in developing countries — controlled by an inhuman and invariably foreign, criminal element. Such was the initial premise of filmmaker *Libby Spears*. But she quickly concluded that very little thrives without American capital. The commercial child sex industry is thriving.

Spears traced the epidemic to its disparate and decidedly domestic, roots — among them the way children are educated about sex and the problem of raising awareness about a crime that inherently cannot be shown. Her cultural observations are couched in an ongoing mystery story: the search for *Michelle*, an American girl lost to childhood sexual exploitation, who has yet to resurface a decade later.

While traveling to the Philippines in 2001, filmmaker Libby Spears gained first hand knowledge of the horrific practice of trafficking human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation. She discovered most of these victims were young children.

The entire globe is involved in this industry. But she also found the involvement of the United States and the degree to which it influences the global demand and growth of the sex trafficking industry.

A meeting with Ernie Allen, President of the National Center of Missing and Exploited Children, confirmed Libby's research — the trafficking of children for commercial sexual exploitation is very real in North America.

The 2009 film is 85 minutes in length. (<http://www.playgroundpremiereatl.com/film-trailer/>)

*"'Playground' is the best film I've seen on the abuse and exploitation of children. In the tradition of our greatest protest art, it is both aesthetically sophisticated and politically committed. Nuanced and sensitive, it avoids the usual sensationalism surrounding this topic. This is the untold story of an American underworld."* — Zoe Trodd, Harvard University



### 'The Oldest Lie'

Prostitution is a complex issue and is a challenge to address. The *Concertation des luttes contre l'exploitation sexuelle* (CLES) presents an awareness-raising documentary and discussion guide that one can use to encourage discussion about commercial sexual exploitation with young people aged 14 and over, or as an awareness-raising tool with adults in groups, associations or institutions.

The documentary was prepared with the aim of preventing the young, both girls and boys, from participating in any aspect of the sex industry. It also aims to demystify the world of prostitution and the sex industry. Entitled *The Oldest Lie*, the 30-minute documentary produced by filmmaker Ève Lamont debunks the most persistent myth that prostitution is the "oldest profession". Far from being a profession, commercial sexual exploitation is a form of violence against women that can no longer be tolerated. The DVD includes French and English versions. Cost is \$69.95.

To order, contact: CLES, 1150 St-Joseph est, bureau 200, Montréal H2J 1L5 Canada. Order by phone: 514-750-4535; by FAX : 514-750-4538; or by e-mail: [info@lacles.org](mailto:info@lacles.org).





## Action

### Minnesota's 'Clean Hotel' Movement

A state lawmaker, Tarryl Clark (D-MN) from Saint Cloud, has joined the effort to pressure hotels to take violent pornography off their pay-per-view menus. The bill would require state workers to steer clear of hotels and resorts that continue to offer explicit movies depicting sexual violence against women.

The 'clean hotel' movement has drawn support from groups working to reduce violence against women and sexual assault. In a survey of 374 hotels in the state, the MN Department of Health found that 22% offer pay per view movies. In that group 20% offer adult content on that menu.

"Since we know there's a link between sexually violent behavior with watching sexually violent material, the idea would be where possible to have a preference for environment that's clean," Clark explained.

Clark said a group planning a convention at a resort in Brainerd asked if it was a clean resort, and the owner immediately began to try to remove the sexually violent options from his cable system. She said the owner saw it as a marketing opportunity, so that families would be safer there. "We'd like to encourage a market where employees, families with kids, seniors and others who want to go to a hotel that offers a clean environment can do that," she said.

If the measure becomes law, the Minnesota Department of Administration will keep a directory of approved hotels and resorts for state employees to use while on trips sponsored by the taxpayers.

The 'Clean Hotels Initiative' is a collaboration between the Minnesota Men's Action Network and the Minnesota Department of Health's Sexual Violence Prevention Program. A background brief on the effort defines pornography as "sexually explicit material that objectifies and exploits the subjects while eroticizing domination, degradation and/or violence."

To obtain the fact sheet on the 'Clean Hotels Initiative' on the Men's Action Network site: <http://www.menaspeacemakers.org/programs/mnman/hotels> (Excerpted from: [http://www.kare11.com/news/news\\_article.aspx?storyid=843624](http://www.kare11.com/news/news_article.aspx?storyid=843624))

Greetings - -

As a guest at your hotel, I would like to learn what you and your parent company are doing to educate your staff about human rights abuses, particularly human trafficking. People who are tricked or coerced into labor or sexual exploitation deserve our intervention. As a customer, the moral and ethical standards a hotel embraces, as evidenced by its policies and practices, are very important to me. I have not found evidence on your company's website as to your policy regarding safety for children on your premises.

Many major hotels now have or are working to create an ethical policy against commercial sexual exploitation of children, as well as training hotel staff to identify human trafficking, and partnering with government and social service agencies. These efforts are components of an industry-wide Code of Conduct called *The Code* ([www.thecode.org](http://www.thecode.org)), a practical tool facilitating the protection of children's rights by the travel and tourism sector.

To date 947 companies in 37 countries have signed the Code, recognized among tourism industry associations, governments, and child rights and protection organizations, such as the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Signatories include Carlson Companies, Accor, and the American Society of Travel Agents.

Please ask your parent company to help your local franchise become a signatory hotel. By taking action to eradicate human trafficking, including the sexual exploitation of children, your hotel will signal a commitment to human rights. At the same time, I will feel comfortable in continuing to give my business to a responsible member of our local and global community.

Sincerely,

(Provide your name and a mailing or email address)

"We need to move away from general 'awareness.' Make public education about human trafficking specific. Get people actively involved. Communicate the 'who', 'what', 'when', 'where', and 'why'. Break human trafficking apart."

Amanda Kloer, blogger for [humantrafficking.change.org](http://humantrafficking.change.org)

### Hotel Chains & Human Trafficking

The next time you stay at a motel chain, take a step in helping their corporate offices become more proactive about preventing domestic child trafficking. Bring with you a letter containing information on sexual exploitation of children and ask that it be given to their corporate offices.

A sample letter follows in column 3.



## Action

### Stop Child Marriage

There are an estimated 60 million child brides worldwide, some as young as 7 years old. If the present trend continues, another 100 million girls will be forced into marriage over the next decade.

Child marriage is a direct violation of children's rights. That is reason enough to fight against it. But forced marriage is especially dangerous for girls, and the consequences are severe:

- Child brides are often forced to marry much older men and are pressured to bear children as soon as possible. They face risks like increased rates of HIV infection and complications from giving birth before their own bodies have developed fully.
- Married girls may be at greater risk of gender-based violence than women who marry later in life, and often have little decision-making power in their husband's home.
- Married girls are more likely to have less education and fewer schooling opportunities than unmarried girls, thereby jeopardizing future income-generating opportunities.

The *International Protecting Girls by Preventing Child Marriage Act* (S987) was introduced in May 2009 by Richard Durbin (IL) and now has 32 co-sponsors with the last one joining in March 2010. The bill defines 'child marriage' as the marriage of a girl or boy not yet the minimum age for marriage stipulated in law in the country in which the girl or boy is a resident. It would authorize the President to provide assistance, including what is available through multilateral, non-governmental, and faith-based organizations, to prevent child marriage in developing countries and to promote

the educational, health, economic, social, and legal empowerment of girls and women.

The bill is currently in the Senate Committee for Foreign Relations. The equivalent House bill is HR 2103.

Send a letter to your members of Congress, asking them to take a stand against child marriage.

(<http://capwiz.com/ipjc/issues/bills/>)

### 'Trafficking Deterrence and Victims Support Act'

Bill S2925, sponsored by Senators Wyden (OR), Cornyn (TX), Franken (MN) and Merkley (OR), would provide grants to up to six state and local government entities to increase law enforcement efforts against sex trafficking crimes, contract with victim service providers to ensure treatment and care of child victims, and step up outreach and awareness to deter those who might exploit children through prostitution, pornography and striping and who create the demand for sex trafficking.

The 2009 bill also calls for improvements to the *National Crime Information Center* (NCIC) system, which would help law enforcement better recognize at-risk homeless and runaway youth. The bill requires that grant funds be used to train law enforcement and social service providers.

Write to your representatives asking them to support this bill.

### Informative

#### Web Sites:

(Each contains information related to human trafficking)

#### ***United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child***

January 22, 2010

Periodic Report of the U.S.A. & U.S. Response to Recommendations in Committee's Concluding Observations of June 25, 2008)

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/136023.pdf>

#### ***The Defenders USA***

<http://www.thedefendersusa.org/>

### Resource

Fr. Milan Bubák, the Coordinator for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) at the Society of the Divine Word headquarters in Rome prepared an 80-page booklet in English and Spanish entitled, *In Dialogue with the Word: Human Trafficking -- Present-Day Slavery*,

To obtain a copy, contact: [uisgseg@tin.it](mailto:uisgseg@tin.it)

***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.

Use the following web address to access back issues of *Stop Trafficking!* <http://www.stopenslavement.org/index.html>

To contribute information, or make requests to be on the mailing list, please contact: [jeansds2010@yahoo.com](mailto:jeansds2010@yahoo.com)

Editing and Layout: *Jean Schafer, SDS*