



Fact Sheets

Human Trafficking

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

In 2000 the United States enacted the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). TVPA has put forward a comprehensive framework in the approach of Human Trafficking, focusing attention on international trafficking, domestic trafficking, prevention and prosecution. TVPA has not been without controversy and criticism, particularly in relation to the emphasis on sexual trafficking (and discussion of prostitution issues) and the enforcement approach (particularly in relation to the access of victims to benefits, visas, services, etc and its connection to the participation of the victims as witnesses in the prosecution process). TVPA was reauthorized in 2003 and 2005 and was supposed to be reauthorized in 2007/2008 calendar year. Currently there are two bills in Congress: HR 1887, introduced (October 2007) by Rep. Tom Lantos and passed by the House of Representatives on December 2007; S. 3061, introduced by Sen. Joseph Biden (May 22, 2008).

The Issue

Trafficking in persons is modern-day slavery, involving victims who are forced, defrauded or coerced into labor or sexual exploitation. Annually, about 600,000 to 800,000 people -- mostly women and children -- are trafficked across national borders. And that figure does not count millions trafficked within their own countries. Human trafficking is a multi-dimensional threat: it deprives people of their human rights and freedoms; it is a global health risk; and it fuels the growth of organized crime. Human trafficking has a devastating impact on individual victims, who often suffer physical and emotional abuse, rape, threats against self and family, passport theft, and even death.

The impact of human trafficking goes beyond individual victims; it undermines the safety and security of all nations it touches. The major forms of human trafficking include: forced and/or bonded labor, debt bondage and involuntary servitude among migrant laborers, involuntary domestic servitude, forced child labor, child soldiers, sex trafficking and prostitution, children exploited for commercial sex, and child sex tourism. According to the *United Nations Convention* "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation shall be irrelevant where any of the means have been used; the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons".

The Policies of The Episcopal Church

(2000-A057) **Recognize Problem of and Support Efforts to Stop Trafficking of Women, Girls, and Boys Resolved**, That the 73rd General Convention recommend that every diocese bring to the attention of its members the domestic and international problem of trafficking in women, girls, and boys, and *Resolved*, that the Convention support non-violent efforts to stop this abuse, to protect the victims, and prosecute the perpetrators of this injustice.

(2003-D034) **Condemn Sex Trafficking Resolved**, That the 74th General Convention condemn domestic and international trafficking in all persons for sexual purposes as an affront to human dignity and human rights; and be it further