

Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling in Middle East, North Africa and Latin America

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

I. Introduction

A. Committee

1. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) focuses on helping nations battle issues relating to drugs, organized crime, corruption, and terrorism. They recognize peace and the rule of fair law are essential in achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 goals. UNODC offers assistance to member states when issues become too big to battle by a nation on its own.

B. Statement of the Issue

1. Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are two extremely pressing issues that have effects all over the world. There is a very important difference between the two terms. The U.S. Department of State defines human trafficking as “a crime involving the exploitation of an individual for the purposes of compelled labor or a commercial sex act through the use of force, fraud, or coercion.” Meanwhile they define migrant smuggling saying it “occurs when a person voluntarily enters into an agreement with a smuggler to gain illegal entry into a foreign country and is moved across an international border.” These two problems have an impact that is extremely difficult to be quantified in statistics since most cases go undetected.

II. History and Description of the Issue

A. Definitions

1. Human trafficking

- a) Human trafficking can include the recruitment, transport, transfer, or harbor of a person. It is done through the threat of use of force, coercion, deception, and abuse. People who are trafficked can be subject to sexual exploitation, forced labor, slavery, prostitution, removal of organs, etc. Human trafficking affects virtually every country in the world, whether it is the country of origin, transit, or destination for the victims. It is approximated that, globally, it generates a profit of about \$150 billion, \$99 billion of which is generated by sexual exploitation of the trafficked.

2. Migrant Smuggling

- a) Migrant smuggling occurs when a person wants to enter a country through an illegal organization. The main problem with migrant smuggling is that, even though it is done voluntarily, it puts people in a position very vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. The smugglers often treat the migrants as merchandise which can put them at risk

of losing their lives. The two main smuggling routes are estimated to earn about \$6.75 billion a year which makes it very profitable for criminals. These two main routes are from East, North and West Africa to Europe and from South America to North America.

B. Origins and Causes

1. The root causes of migrant smuggling and trafficking are intertwined and intricate. Some of these causes, like poverty and the absence of legal migration routes, make migrants more vulnerable to trafficking, danger, and exploitation. Other factors like violence, persecution, and natural disasters can increase this vulnerability. Furthermore, “racial, ethnic, and gender-based discrimination”, can decrease the resources and opportunities a person has access to and in turn make them more susceptible to smuggling. All of these factors impact a person in their community, during their migration, and once they are settled.

C. Impact

1. There are two main routes in the world which are used for smuggling; from South and Central America to North America, and the second being from Africa to Europe.
 - a) Even though an exact figure doesn't exist for the number of migrants who have been smuggled into the United States, there is an estimation that Latin Americans make up about 3 million illegal entries yearly. In addition, it is also predicted that because of this figure criminals make an annual income of \$6.6 billion dollars. The fees migrants pay depend mostly on the point of origin, but most smugglers charge between \$2,000 to \$10,000 dollars per person.
 - b) Similarly, from Africa to Europe, it is thought that about 55,000 migrants are smuggled annually thus creating a \$150,000 USD revenue for criminals. Despite the figures being lower than the American route, the journey holds the same dangers. In 2008, 1,000 deaths were reported from migrants trying to cross through the sea. Most of the time, the trip isn't done at once, with the majority of migrants staying a period of time in northern Africa to earn more money in order to complete their journey. The fees paid depend on the point of departure, the destination, and the mode of transportation, ranging between \$2,000 to \$7,000 dollars.

III. International Response and Bloc Analysis

A. UNODC

1. UNODC is in charge of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its additional protocols. The committee's primary goal is to promote international adherence to the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol and support states so they can implement it effectively. In addition, the Model Law against the Smuggling of Migrants was created in order to further assist nations when implementing the protocol.

B. Other UN Organizations and Regional Groups

1. Apart from this UNODC works with organizations like INTERPOL to facilitate the disintegration of criminal networks responsible for the smuggling of migrants. Apart from this, basic training modules have been done in order to prevent and combat migrant smuggling. From 2008 to 2009, expert group meetings were given by law enforcers and prosecutors from different parts of the globe, in various international locations so the training would reach everyone.

C. Relevant NGOs

1. Many Non Governmental Organizations exist throughout the world that try to combat these two issues. One of the most well known is Polaris International which works with over 50 developing countries to protect the rights of children and their safety. Another notable NGO is 3Strands Global Foundation which focuses on educating youth on the issue as well as helping survivors of trafficking find employment and continue with their lives. There are many more global organizations as well as those specific to regions or countries.

IV. Links for further research

- www.unodc.org/unodc/en/index.html.
 1. General website for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Can give delegates a better sense of what the committee does as well as provide useful information regarding its past actions and future plans.
- <https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/resource/human-trafficking-numbers#:~:text=A%20Global%20Problem%3A&text=An%20estimated%2024.9%20million%20victims,place%20in%20many%20different%20industries>.
 1. A source to begin investigating statistics about human trafficking and how it affects the world. It contains some specific information to certain regions but it is mostly a general fact sheet that will help with the start of the investigation. Note that this is a report for 2017 and it is not the most recent data, however it can provide an overview of the global issue,
- <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/smuggling-migrants>
 1. An outline of the issue of smuggling migrants. Provides facts and maps that illustrate different routes. Again, this is a general overview of the topic that gives an idea of the issue throughout the world. Further research is needed to specify how it affects each country.
- <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/secondary/human-trafficking-and-migrant-smuggling.html>
 1. Resource that helps further understand the definitions of human trafficking and migrant smuggling as well as their differences. It is simply written and can help clarify doubts if necessary.
- <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/03/05/world/anti-trafficking-organizations-around-the-world/index.html>

1. Useful list of Non Governmental Organizations that are helping combat human trafficking. Includes global networks as well as many specific to countries.

V. Works Cited

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