

## Political-Security Community Human Trafficking

### How can ASEAN alleviate human trafficking between member states?

#### Welcome note

Dear Delegates,

A warm welcome to SRE-Youth Model ASEAN Conference 2017.

We are your Committee Chairs, Yu Yang from the Diploma in Accountancy and Marcus from the Diploma in Engineering with Business.

This issue for this committee is “How can ASEAN alleviate Human Trafficking between member states?”

As Chairs of this Committee, we will be guiding conferences to ensure orderly and effective discussions are made.

We will assist you in understanding the protocols and we hope that this info sheet helps you in your research into the topic.

We are thrilled to meet you during the conference and we hope that you find this conference a valuable one.

Yours sincerely,  
Marcus and Yu Yang

#### 1. Introduction

Trafficking in Persons is one of the most important human rights issues as humans have “the right not to be submitted to slavery, servitude, forced labour or bonded labour” according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2016).

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) (2015), as an organisation independent from ASEAN Member State governmental efforts, have provided aid to 2,000 victims of human trafficking in 2015. Poverty, unemployment, lack of socio-economic opportunities, gender-based violence, discrimination and marginalization are some of the contributing internal factors that make persons vulnerable to trafficking in persons (United Nations, 2010).

Due to its clandestine nature, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2017) has a provision on human trafficking which states the difficulty to obtain authentic statistical data. All the reported statistics mentioned in this Information Sheet are values that have been made known, however many more incidents are undetected.

The scope of debate is to alleviate Human Trafficking *between* Member

States, rather than targeting the specific domestic root causes of Human Trafficking.

## 2. Definition

Trafficking in Person (TIP) is defined by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2008) as an act of recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, through the means of threat, use of force, abduction, fraud or any forms of coercion, for the purpose of, exploitation of people through giving or receiving payments/benefits.

The **Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report** is a resource of governmental anti-human trafficking efforts from the United States Government. Countries are assigned to one of three tiers based on governmental' efforts to comply with the "minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking" of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). The tier 1 ranking indicates that a government has acknowledged the existence of human trafficking, made efforts to address the problem, and complies with the TVPA's minimum standards. (Figure 2 and Figure 3 below).

Types of Human Trafficking	Definitions
Trafficking for forced	<i>Victims are recruited and trafficked using coercion or</i>

labour	<i>deception and find themselves in conditions of slavery in a variety of jobs.</i>
Trafficking in women for sexual exploitation	<i>Women and children from developing countries, and from vulnerable parts of society in developed countries, lured by promises of decent employment and a better life, find themselves being forced into sexual slavery and living in inhuman conditions and under constant fear.</i>
Commercial sexual exploitation of children in tourism	<i>This type of crime is promoted due to low risk of prosecution and prohibition of engaging in sexual acts with minor in child sex tourism destinations.</i>
Debt bondage/ Bonded labor	<i>Debt Bondage involves a debt that cannot be paid off in a reasonable time and the victim is forced into labor to “pay off” the artificial debt as the employer that engages in this criminal activity inflates the amount of debt, adding exorbitant interests while deducting little to none when the victim works.</i>
People smuggling	<i>Organised criminals take advantage of humanitarian crisis to smuggle desperate refugees for financial gains.</i>
Trafficking of tissue, cells and organs	<i>Trafficking in humans for the use of their organs is a rapidly growing and lucrative field in criminal activity. In many countries, the waiting list for organs needed for transplant is very long, with human traffickers exploiting the desperation of patients and potential donors.</i>

Figure 1: Types of human trafficking (Interpol, 2017)

### 3. History

In its inaugural meeting, ASEAN set the foundation in The 30th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, which discussed the dangerous effects of national and

transnational crime, including human trafficking kickstarted the inaugural ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) in Manila, Philippines.

**20th December 1997: ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC)**

combating transnational crime, including trafficking in persons to develop regional cooperation and strengthen Member Country commitments (ASEAN, 2012).

**23 June 1999: ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime**

This establishment improves ASEAN's capacity to combat trafficking in persons (ASEAN, 2012), facilitating intra-ASEAN information exchange and seeking international assistance regarding relevant laws and technicalities (National University of Singapore, 1999).

**29 November 2004: Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons Particularly Women and Children**

This declaration resolves the need for a comprehensive regional approach to combat trafficking in persons. It aims to establish appropriate migration security, like the integrity of passports (National University of Singapore, 2004).

**30 July 2010: United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons**

To reaffirm commitments to combat trafficking in persons, the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund was established to protect people vulnerable to trafficking in persons and data collection of trafficking (United Nations, 2010).

**21 November 2015: ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children**

This convention is a regional instrument to effectively prevent and combat trafficking in persons, ensuring effective prosecution of traffickers and repatriation of victims (Interpol, 2015).

## 4. Recent Developments

### 4.1. ASEAN Trust Fund

The *ASEAN Trust Fund* was established during the 2015 AMMTC in Kuala Lumpur, where member states voluntarily contribute to the fund. Malaysia proposed that every member state contribute a minimum of \$100,000 to go towards humanitarian efforts to kick start the fund (Nikkei Asian Review, 2015).

### 4.2. ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP)

It entered into force in the six ASEAN Member States that have ratified the Convention. The ACTIP will safeguard and protect victims of trafficking as well as strengthening enforcement measures. Member States will also closely cooperate and collaborate to combat human trafficking. (ASEAN, 2017). In June, ASEAN conducted a *Regional Workshop on Effective Investigation and Prosecution of Trafficking in Persons for Labour Exploitation* in Manila, Philippines as a capacity building activity to support the implementation of the ACTIP (ASEAN, 2017).

## 5. Problems (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2015)

However to re-emphasize the scope of debate is to alleviate Human

Trafficking *between* Member States, rather than targeting the specific problems that cause Human Trafficking.

### **5.1. Corrupt government officials**

Organised trafficking cannot take place without corruption. Corrupt officials collude with criminal gangs to traffic victims by allowing the crime to be invisible, facilitate the execution of the crime and to exempt traffickers when they get caught, and assure the re-victimisation of trafficking victims (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017).

### **5.2. Involvement of international criminal organisations**

Criminal organisations exploits their potential victims' desire to migrate for a better life. Victims are coerced, deceived, abducted or sold to human traffickers, who transport the victims to other countries. The goal for human traffickers is to profit by exploiting their victims. To this end, traffickers place victims in a cycle of debt bondage, where the victims believe that they can go free once they pay off the debt, which continuously increases (Lastrada, 2015).

## **6. Solution**

### **6.1. Legislation on border control and immigration**

As mentioned in the history section, ASEAN has made efforts to improve regional communication infrastructure and border control.

To establish an appropriate legislation on border security that aids in covering the loopholes, including bribery, that have allowed the constant transport of

Human Trafficking and providing any resources and rewards that would improve deterrence of human traffickers (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2008).

### **6.2. Enhancing bilateral and multilateral cooperation between member states**

To enhance bilateral and multilateral cooperation between member states to discourage the demand for the exploitation of persons through developing a multi-national agency program to monitor, gather intelligence and administer control to prevent trafficking in persons (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2015).

## **7. Guiding Questions**

- a. What can ASEAN countries do internally in order to reduce the vulnerability of potential human trafficking victims?
- b. How can ASEAN better incorporate the victims of Trafficking in Persons back to society?
- c. How can governments in ASEAN better coordinate their resources to combat human trafficking?
- d. How successful have the ASEAN AMMTC agreements been in alleviating human trafficking between Member States?
- e. What can governments in ASEAN do to support the implementation/execution of ASEAN treaties and agreement.



## 8. Appendix

### Tier placement for ASEAN nations for year 2016

<b>Tier 1</b>	The Philippines
<b>Tier 2</b>	Brunei Cambodia Indonesia Malaysia Singapore Vietnam
<b>Tier 2 (Watch List)</b>	Laos Thailand Myanmar
<b>Tier 3</b>	NIL

Figure 2: ASEAN countries Tier Ranking (United States Department of State, 2016)

<b>Source Countries</b>	Cambodia Indonesia Laos Myanmar Philippines Thailand Vietnam
<b>Transit/Destination Countries</b>	Brunei Cambodia Malaysia Singapore Thailand

Figure 3: Source, transit and destination countries (United States Department of State, 2016)

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