

PRACTICAL ACTION GUIDE 2

Details of two Conventions regarding trafficking, one of which still requires ratification by the UK government (@ March 2007)

Letter writing (pp4-5)

There are currently two important Conventions relating to trafficking, one of which has not yet been ratified by the UK government, though the UK became a signatory on 23 March 2007. Ratification will require the UK Government to implement the recommendations of the Convention, thus improving policy and practice regarding trafficking activity.

(1) UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION

The **UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME** and two related protocols, the **PROTOCOL TO PREVENT, SUPPRESS AND PUNISH TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN** (also known as the Palermo Protocol), and the **PROTOCOL AGAINST THE SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS BY LAND, SEA AND AIR**, can be ordered as a photocopy, together with the Council of Europe Convention, from Women's Network, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR. Tel: 020 7467 5175 (Cost: £8, cheques payable to Methodist Church Fund). Alternatively, they can be downloaded free of charge from the following web links:

UN CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME

http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/

PROTOCOL TO PREVENT, SUPPRESS AND PUNISH TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN

http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime_cicp_signatures_trafficking.html

PROTOCOL AGAINST THE SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS BY LAND, SEA AND AIR

http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime_cicp_signatures_migrants.html

A letter writing campaign, asking the government to ratify this Convention, was planned as part of the project. However, we are pleased to announce that the UK government ratified the Convention and associated Protocols on 9 February 2006, only a few months after the project began.

Ratification means that:

- ◆ Assistance and protection are offered to victims of trafficking;
- ◆ Protection of privacy and identity is assured;
- ◆ Information on court and administrative proceedings is given, and assistance to victims to enable their views and concerns to be presented during criminal proceedings;
- ◆ Victims receive help with physical, social and psychological recovery (i.e. housing, counselling, medical, psychological and material assistance, also employment and educational opportunities);
- ◆ The age, gender and special needs of the victim are taken into account, particularly the needs of children;
- ◆ Physical safety of victims is provided for;
- ◆ Compensation is provided;
- ◆ Victims are allowed to remain in the (destination) State;

- ◇ The Government works with others to research, provide information, undertake mass media campaigns, social & economic initiatives to prevent and combat human trafficking;
- ◇ Policies and programmes include cooperation with non-governmental organisations;
- ◇ Action to make women and children less vulnerable to trafficking is taken by alleviating factors such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity;
- ◇ Measures are adopted that discourage the demand that fosters exploitation, particularly that of women and children;
- ◇ There is provision and strengthening of training for law enforcement, immigration and other relevant officials, which includes protecting the rights of the victims and taking into account gender-specific and child-specific needs

In order to monitor the government's progress, and encourage implementation of all these measures as quickly as possible, it is still worth writing to your MP to ask how these measures and provisions are being monitored.

In particular, you could affirm your support for victims to receive help with physical, social and psychological recovery (i.e. housing, counselling, medical, psychological and material assistance, also employment and educational opportunities). Ask how this support is being given locally and what action is being planned by the UK government to make women and children less vulnerable to trafficking by alleviating factors such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity.

(2) COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION

The text of the **COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS AND ITS EXPLANATORY REPORT**, can be downloaded from the following web link: <http://www.coe.int/trafficking> or requested from the Women's Network Office on 020 7467 5175 (Price £8 for photocopying of this and the UN Convention)

Since the social action project began in September 2005, we campaigned with others for the UK government to sign up to this Convention, which it did on Friday 23 March 2007. We now need to encourage agencies and local authorities, as well as the government, to put in place the measures that should be introduced to domestic policy through *implementation and ratification* of the Convention.

We encourage you to follow the steps highlighted by CHASTE (Churches Alert to Sex Trafficking Across Europe), which is working to bring into legislation and practice the following Articles of the Convention in particular:

Article 6 places a positive obligation on countries to adopt and reinforce measures for discouraging demand whether as regards sexual exploitation or in respect of forced labour or services, slavery and practices similar to slavery, servitude and organ removal. By devoting a separate, freestanding article to this, the drafters sought to underline the importance of tackling demand in order to prevent and combat the traffic itself. The aim of the measures is to achieve effective dissuasion. The article includes a list of such minimum measures. An essential one is research on best practices, methods and strategies for discouraging client demand effectively. The media and civil society have been key agencies in identifying demand as one of the main causes of trafficking, and the measures accordingly seek to create maximum awareness and recognition of their role and responsibility in that field. Information campaigns targeting relevant groups could also be conducted, with involvement, where appropriate, of political decision-makers and public authorities. Lastly, educational measures play an important part in discouraging demand. For example, educational

programmes for school children could not only advantageously tell them about the trafficking phenomenon but also alert them to gender issues, questions of dignity and integrity of human beings, and the consequences of gender-based discrimination.

Article 12 of the Convention requires that each country shall adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to assist victims in their physical, psychological and social recovery. Such assistance shall include at least:

1. standards of living capable of ensuring their subsistence, through such measures as: appropriate and secure accommodation, psychological and material assistance;
2. access to emergency medical treatment;
3. translation and interpretation services, when appropriate;
4. counseling and information, in particular as regards their legal rights and the services available to them, in a language that they can understand;
5. assistance to enable their rights and interests to be presented and considered at appropriate stages of criminal proceedings against offenders;
6. access to education for children.

Under Article 13 each country shall provide in its internal law a recovery and reflection period of at least 30 days, when there are reasonable grounds to believe that the person concerned is a victim. Such a period shall be sufficient for the person concerned to recover and escape the influence of traffickers and/or to take an informed decision on cooperating with the competent authorities. During this period it shall not be possible to enforce any expulsion order against her or him.

If you have not yet seen or received the new leaflet produced by the Methodist Church which highlights some facts and agencies involved in campaigning on this issue, please contact us to request yours. Tel: 020 7467 5175.

LEARN MORE...

Anti-Slavery International, Thomas Clarkson House, 75a St John Street, Broadman's Road, London E1W 5TL. Tel: 020 7261 9620 www.antislavery.org

Department for International Development (DFID), 1 Pall Mall Court, London SW1E 6HE. Tel: 0845 300 4100 www.dfid.gov.uk

not all from, Churches Together in England, 27 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9TH. Tel: 020 7253 6144 www.notallfrom.org

Annually International Ltd., The Human Rights Action Centre, 15-25 Bowlin Road, London E5 8JA. Tel: 020 7483 1900 www.annually.org.uk

FIND OUT MORE...

CRIP (Coalition for the Removal of Prostitution), A voluntary organisation working to end the sexual exploitation of children and young people by a range of methods. Tel: 0149 240 3040/3030 www.crip.org.uk

CHARTE (Charities Alert to Risk Trafficking Across Europe), PO Box 983, Cambridge CB2 4WY. Tel: 0845 456 9229 www.charite.org.uk

DO MORE...

Stop the Traffik, 1a Kensington Road, London SE1 7QP. Tel: 020 7261 4650 www.stopthetraffik.org

National Children's Alliance on Prostitution, PO Box 2027, London E16 4DP. Tel: 0845 014431 www.nacp.org.uk

www.kennethethelings.org
A web resource for combating human trafficking

The Methodist Church
Women's Network Office, Methodist Church House, 23 Mark Lane, London EC3A 7LE. Tel: 020 7467 5175
E-mail: network@methodistchurch.org.uk
www.methodist.org.uk (Site Ref: 10617101)

The Trafficking of Women and Girls in Europe
The Women's Network in the Methodist Church

NOT FOR SALE The Trafficking of Women and Girls in Europe

17 year old Ella from Albania was promised a better life with a job in the UK. She was taken to a flat and beaten and raped. When a man arrived she thought she was being rescued but after arriving in England she was forced into prostitution. Her trafficker demanded that she give him her earnings, kept her locked in a room and expected her to service 15 to 40 men a day.

"No-one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms."
Article 4 Universal Declaration of Human Rights

SOME FACTS

- Sex trafficking is defined as being the recruitment and movement of people by force or by any fraudulent means for purposes of exploitation, deception and abuse of power. At a minimum this exploitation shall include the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation.
- The Palermo Protocol as well as the European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings urges each nation signing to provide for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims of trafficking. It is urgent that our Government puts these things in place now.
- Since 1949 world governments and the UN have been legislating to suppress and prevent trafficking. But the crime continues and goes on growing.

- 127 countries around the world are caught up in trafficking.
- During 2016, 80 people were arrested in the UK as a result of Operation Fortitude. (A police initiative to arrest the growth of the crime).
- At a very conservative estimate 4,000 women are trafficked into this country each year.
- Evidence is being uncovered of trafficked women forced to work as prostitutes near YOU, in cities and towns from Glasgow to Brighton and London to Cornwall.
- The only centre for victims of human trafficking in Europe is based in Sheffield.
- Poverty, social exclusion and the devastation of war and famine are at the root cause of human trafficking.
- There is only one national safe house funded by the Government for victims of trafficking.

Writing to your MP

Details of your MP are on the Internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/directories/directories.cfm>

If you do not know the name of your MP, but know the name of the Constituency, the website can help you out. **Alternatively, ask someone in church, or the Women's Network office to send you a printout from the website.** (Women's Network office Tel: 020 7467 5175).

Write to your MP at:

House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

You are legally entitled to receive a reply from your MP.

A Sample Letter

Contact CHASTE (0845 456 9335) or visit their website (www.chaste.org.uk) to ask for or download information, postcards and posters, and to find out how you can support safe houses being established by the Salvation Army and some Roman Catholic religious orders in consultation with CHASTE. You can use their information in your letters, too!

Page 4 contains a sample letter to your MP. However, the Women's Network task group recommends that you use your own words when writing to your MP, in order to attract their attention.

Write as a concerned member of the constituency in which you reside.

Read through the details of the Articles 6, 12 and 13. Refer to the action you would like to see implemented to show that you know what you are talking about.

Highlight the issues raised and explain why you support the Convention. Explain, in particular, that you are concerned about the safety, and safe exit, of women who have been trafficked, and their aftercare.

Explain that you would like to see funding increased for safe housing around the UK and in your constituency.

MPs often hold a local "surgery" time if you would like to see them in person. You could organise to go as a small group if you don't feel like doing this on your own. The MP's surgery will advise on the size of groups. Let your local newspaper know when you are going.

Sample letter

Your name
Your address
Your tel. no.
Your e-mail

(Name of your MP)
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Date

Dear (Name of your MP)

Council Of Europe Convention On Action Against Trafficking In Human Beings

I am a member of the X constituency and have lived here for x years.

I have become increasingly aware of the issue of trafficking and am concerned that the UK Government continues to take action on this issue. I commend its ratification, on 9 February 2006, of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol To Prevent, Suppress And Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women And Children and becoming a signatory to the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings.

I would like to ask you to encourage the government to put in place, as soon as possible, the measures that can lead to our subsequent ratification of the Convention.

I am concerned for the victims of trafficking, particularly women and girls, who are often marginalised because of their gender and find themselves victims of poverty and unemployment more often than men, even before they become victims of trafficking.

I would ask you to urge the government to include financial provision in the annual budget to help provide safe housing for these victims whose trauma is substantial. [Here, you could affirm your support for victims to receive help with physical, social and psychological recovery (i.e. housing, counselling, medical, psychological and material assistance, also employment and educational opportunities). Ask **how this support is being given locally** and what action is being taken to make women and children less vulnerable to trafficking by alleviating factors such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity.

The demand for paid sex is considered to be a contributory factor in trafficking and this demand must be addressed. I would support any legislation that follows the example of Sweden in making the purchase of sex a criminal offence.

Please could you let me know how you are working on this issue, and whether you can suggest how I and others in my community might support implementation of the Convention without danger to ourselves?

Yours sincerely

(Your name)