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COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM IN THE WORLD

In countries of Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, most cases of trafficking are related to sexual exploitation. Forced labor trade is also booming in Central Asia. The countries of the region are mostly suppliers of «live goods», however, in recent years, Russia and Kazakhstan have become destination countries. Hundreds of thousands of people around the world are becoming victims of smugglers. They are sold for the purpose of sexual or labor exploitation, for recruitment into the armed forces, for participation in criminal activities, or for the purpose of extracting vital organs for sale [1].

According to the UN, trafficking in human beings brings \$ 600 million in profits annually worldwide. This was reported by Prensa Latina, citing the United Nations Regional Office for Drugs and Crime. The United Nations Development Program recognizes this form of human trafficking along with another 23 illicit products most common in Central America and the Caribbean.

In the past few years, the number of identified victims of human trafficking has increased significantly, especially in the countries of America and Asia, but this, according to experts, indicates not only an increase in crime, but also that countries are able to solve more and more such crimes and find victims. Criminals exploit the most defenseless: 30 percent of the identified victims are children, almost 70 percent are women and minor girls.

Globally, sexual exploitation remains the primary target of trafficking, with 59 percent of all cases identified. 34 percent of the victims were sold for labor exploitation. In addition, for example, in some states of South Asia they trade brides. In Central and South America, cases of trafficking in children for illegal adoption have become more frequent. In southern and central Europe, people are being trafficked for coercion and begging. In North Africa, Central, Southeastern Europe and Eastern Europe, cases of trafficking in “live goods” for the removal of organs have been reported.

Most of the victims of human trafficking in Eastern Europe and Central Asia are adults. Compared to other regions, there is a relatively low number of minors among them. Among the victims, as elsewhere in the world, there are more women than men, with the exception of Armenia and Moldova. According to information from Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova, in these countries 97% of all identified victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation are women. As for victims of forced labor in the region, 76 percent of the victims are men. The countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia belong mainly to the category of countries of origin of victims of human trafficking. Most of them were identified in the same region, but many Central Asians are illegally transported to countries in the Middle East and East Asia. And citizens of Ukraine are often found in countries of Western and Central Europe. In the region itself, the main countries of destination are Kazakhstan and Russia. UN experts noted that in recent years, the international community has made significant progress in implementing the provisions of the Protocol on preventing and combating trafficking in persons, especially women and children. However, so far it has not been possible to completely end impunity for these crimes [2].

The spread of human trafficking is due to the limited access of the population to effective employment, education, social protection and other resources, as well as to the spread of poverty, segregation in the labor market. Among the main reasons pushing women in the situation of human trafficking, experts name poverty and gender discrimination - factors that impede education, employment and confidence in the future. Interesting fact that among the factors that impede the fight against trafficking in human beings is that the majority of convicted traffickers manage to avoid imprisonment due to lenient sentences and possible corruption [3].

Summarizing the above, Trafficking in persons means recruiting, transporting, transferring, harboring or getting people through the use of force or other forms of coercion or deception. Annually thousands of men, women and children fall into the hands of traders in their own countries and for abroad. All countries of the world are affected by human trafficking, whether as countries of origin, transit or destination of victims [4].

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