
AMERICA'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ON COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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American leadership is critical to combating human trafficking, a global crisis that recognizes no borders and devastates individuals and families. Trafficking undermines the global economy and threatens our national security. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the risks and the challenges of fighting human trafficking with millions of people vulnerable to exploitation worldwide including women, children, and men out of work, school, and without social support.

- In 2016, the International Labor Organization estimated that **40.3 million people** live in modern slavery, controlled and forced to work by others and sold as commodities (24.9 million in forced labor and sex trafficking, and 15.4 million in forced marriage).
- Trafficking is estimated to have grown into a **\$150 billion business**, one of the world's biggest illicit industries, undermining economic growth and trapping victims and their families in inter-generational cycles of debt bondage.
- Trafficking disproportionately impacts women and children. Women and girls account for 99% of all victims of sex trafficking, and 58% of all other forms of trafficking. Children account for 26% of all victims of forced labor. In low-income countries, children account for half of the victims of human trafficking detected.

This is a crisis that affects nearly every country including the United States. Many of America's state leaders across the country – in cities like Houston and Phoenix, and states including Alabama and Missouri – have established human trafficking task forces to combat the problem. As Arizona Governor Doug Ducey has observed, “We know what a pervasive evil human trafficking is in every state. This is not a partisan issue. This is a ‘what is the right thing to do’ issue.”

AMERICA'S TRACK RECORD IN PROSECUTION, PROTECTION, AND PREVENTION:

Over the past two decades, Democratic and Republican Presidents with bipartisan support in Congress have driven U.S. leadership in the global fight against human trafficking. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), authorized by Congress in 2000 and re-authorized in 2019, established the President's Interagency Task Force on Trafficking, which coordinates the efforts of 15 U.S. government departments and agencies – including the State Department and USAID – to maximize effectiveness and impact of programming.

The **Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report** ranks the efforts of governments to combat human trafficking each year. The TIP Report is a critical tool to monitor country progress in addressing trafficking, and shape future U.S. country strategies through its recommendations.

- The Report may recommend that countries with the worst records face cuts to non-humanitarian and non-trade-related U.S. assistance, which the President has the authority to waive if assistance is determined to be in the United States' national interest or if restrictions would negatively impact vulnerable populations in the country. For example, members of Congress expressed concerns that cutting assistance based on the TIP Report to the Democratic Republic of Congo, one of 21 countries with the worst records in the 2019 TIP Report, could have harmed U.S. efforts to help it respond to outbreaks of Ebola.

The United States has demonstrated a strong track record in fighting traffickers and strengthening the rule of law, supporting survivors, and raising awareness that advances our interests abroad and at home. These efforts have been complemented by the international community to monitor progress and mobilize support.

Prosecution: Fighting Traffickers and Strengthening the Rule of Law

- Thanks to support from the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP), there were 11,841 prosecutions of traffickers around the world in 2019 – a significant increase from 9,460 prosecutions in 2013.

- TIP helped to train 4,530 criminal justice practitioners in FY17 – ranging from prosecutors to judges to law enforcement officials – subsequently strengthening both investigations and prosecutions in 20 countries.

Protection: Supporting Survivors

- Congress established an Advisory Council on Human Trafficking in 2015, which consists of trafficking survivors who advise the State Department on best practices in combating human trafficking.
- The share of children among trafficking victims tripled over the past 15 years, with girls mainly trafficked for sexual exploitation, while boys were primarily used for forced labor. In 2017 alone, USAID programs reached more than 15,000 survivors of trafficking, providing services such as legal support, medical care, skills training, and job placement.

Prevention: Raising Awareness

- With State Department support, 118,932 cases of trafficking were identified around the world in 2019 – more than double the 44,758 cases identified in 2013.
- In FY 2019, the U.S. government provided 3,564 notifications to 127 countries to alert foreign law enforcement of a convicted child sex offender’s intent to travel to their country.
- In FY 2020, USAID launched the Safe Migration in Central Asia Project with the goal to strengthen the ability of all stakeholders to become more self-reliant in efforts to prevent human trafficking, protect trafficking survivors, and promote safe migration.

MOBILIZING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- The **Global Fund to End Modern Slavery (GFEMS)** works to improve the rule of law, develop economic opportunities to prevent trafficking, and reintegrate and aid survivors around the world. The United States has contributed nearly \$50 million to the fund, in addition to support from the United Kingdom. GFEMS ultimately hopes to catalyze \$1.5 billion in both public and private investment, mobilizing stakeholders from around the world to tackle this crisis effectively.

BIPARTISAN COMMITMENT TO FIGHTING TRAFFICKING

- “Human trafficking is one of the world’s most heinous and profitable criminal enterprises. It is unconscionable that each year, thousands of vulnerable children and adults are forced into labor and prostitution. Those who buy trafficked labor must also be held accountable for their outrageous crimes.”
– **Vice President Kamala Harris**
- “As we reflect on the work ahead of us to combat human trafficking and the entrenched disparities in laws and public policies, the Department of State will do everything in its power to revitalize its commitments and strengthen efforts to address these issues globally.” – **Secretary of State Antony Blinken**
- “Our freedom, our dignity, is bound up with the fates of millions of victims of trafficking...victims who possess tremendous dignity and courage. We ensure our freedom by fighting to give them their freedom.”
– **USAID Administrator Samantha Power**
- “Human trafficking erodes personal dignity and destroys the moral fabric of society. It is an affront to humanity that tragically reaches all parts of the world.” – **Former President, Donald Trump**
- “I will continue to fight against human trafficking in all its forms. All of us must remain vigilant – constantly aware that the cost of human trafficking is not just far away — across the ocean in a distant country. It’s moral crisis of international proportions that has reached our shores – right here in our own backyard.” – **Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ)**
- “Ending human trafficking is one of the most important human rights issues of this century.” – **Senator Rob Portman (R-OH)**
- “[Human trafficking] is an issue that has claimed our attention for decades...If we can eliminate this scourge, I think all of us will find peace.” – **Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA)**
- “I call on Congress, the State Department, and all citizens to redouble efforts to eradicate the scourge of human trafficking once and for all. Evil thrives in the shadows—we must bring to light the prevalence of this multi-billion dollar industry, punish the perpetrators, and help the victims.” – **Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ)**