

Chapter 44

Combating Human Trafficking: Recommendations for Police Leadership in Establishing Transnational Collaboration

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ABSTRACT

Human trafficking is one of the fastest and continuously evolving transnational crimes of this century, preceded only slightly by gun and drug trafficking; yet it is projected that human trafficking will soon surpass both unless government and nongovernmental officials throughout the world take immediate, collaborative action to deter and punish traffickers and educate and protect prospective trafficking victims. For that reason, combating human trafficking requires ongoing national and international communication, cooperation, and collaboration, particularly amongst law enforcement leadership across the globe. Only then will law enforcement be able to limit the ability of traffickers to operate freely and help prevent future victims from being trafficked. The primary purpose of drawing international attention to this chapter is in illuminating the challenges of police leadership in combating incidents of transnational human trafficking as well as to propose plausible to assist and support future global leadership and collaboration within and across police agencies.

INTRODUCTION

“For the Department of Justice, our commitment to preventing human trafficking, bringing traffickers to justice, and assisting victims has never been stronger and our approach has never been more effective. Our work has sent a clear and critical message: that, in this country and under this Administration human trafficking crimes will not be tolerated. . . . This work has saved lives, ensured freedom, and restored dignity to women, men, and children in virtually every corner of the country. And while we can all be encouraged by our many recent achievements in the fight against human trafficking, we have more to do. And far too many people remain in desperate need of our help. That’s why our joint efforts and our outstanding progress must continue.” ~ Eric Holder, Former Attorney General of the United States (2012)

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7912-0.ch044

Combating Human Trafficking

Slavery has been forbidden for decades within nearly every country; yet, slavery has reemerged vigorously and on a global scale in the form of human trafficking, a highly lucrative multibillion-dollar criminal enterprise that is often coordinated and carried out by transnational organized crime syndicates (United States Trafficking in Persons Report, 2014). Human trafficking is a horrific international crime that has always existed in various forms throughout history; nevertheless trafficking was not considered a significant global social problem until most recently (Bales, 2007; Fry, 2008; Neubauer, 2012; Polaris Project, 2012; Shinkle, 2007, Weitzer, 2014). . International interest and attention concerning human trafficking, also known as *Trafficking in Persons*, largely emerged in 1995 as the number of trafficked women and children from the former Soviet Union joined victims from Asia and other parts of the world, thereby attracting international attention and widespread reaction (Smith, 2011). Since traffickers target and exploit an estimated 30 million men, women, and children globally, this problem requires international attention and intervention; therefore, global leaders must come together and unite to combat trafficking. Furthermore, since police officers are often the first to encounter victims, transnational collaboration, communication, and cooperation are so vitally important for them (United States Office of the Attorney General, 2012).

HUMAN TRAFFICKING DEFINED

Although definitions of human trafficking vary slightly from country to country, the definition used within this chapter will be that from the United States as initially defined within *The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000* (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2014). The *Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000* (P.L. 106-386) and the *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Acts of 2003, 2005, 2008*, and most recently, *2013* provide the tools to combat human trafficking both worldwide and domestically (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2014).

Furthermore, the Acts collectively authorized the establishment of The US Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (G/TIP) office, which engages in discussions with governments to help strengthen international cooperative efforts to eradicate trafficking. G/TIP releases an annual Trafficking in Persons Report as required by the United States *Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000*. The annual report is a diplomatic tool for the U.S. Government in combating trafficking in persons; thereby, serving as an instrument for continued dialogue and as a means to encourage increased prosecution, protection, and prevention programs worldwide. The G/TIP office also makes available millions of US dollars in grants to organizations all over the world to implement programs in order to combat trafficking. G/TIP and the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons assist in the coordination of anti-trafficking efforts domestically and internationally (US Department of State, 2014). With that being said, *The United States Trafficking in Persons Annual Report (2014)* defines trafficking in persons, hereafter referred to as human trafficking, as:

Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age; or The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery (p. 11).

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