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# **International Dimensions of Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes**

**Child Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Child Welfare  
Fedele F. and Iris M. Fouri Memorial Conference  
University of Michigan School of Social Work  
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# Agenda

- **International Standards**
- **Status Update**
- **The United States and the International Standards**
- **Conclusions**

# International Standards

- **As determined by international bodies**
  - League of Nations
  - United Nations
  - Others
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)**
- **Optional Protocol to CRC (2000)**

# International Standards (cont'd)

- **Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2002)**
  - **Optional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (2002)**
    - **International definition of trafficking**

## **International Standards (cont'd)**

**Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.**

# Status Update

- **Convention on the Rights of the Child**
  - 193 signed
  - 190 ratified (excluding Somalia, South Sudan & USA)
- **CRC Optional Protocol**
  - 150 signed
  - 122 ratified (including USA)
- **CTOC Optional Protocol**
  - 126 signed
  - 117 ratified (including USA)

# The United States and the International Standards

- **General Measures of Implementation**
  - Law does not address all offences
  - Law is ambiguous and is being interpreted inconsistently
  - Law is being applied using the narrowest of definitions
  - Dearth of legislation on child economic exploitation (agricultural sector)
  - No prohibition on sale of children
  - Not enough states have passed “safe harbor” laws

# The United States and the International Standards (cont'd)

- **Data Collection & Training**
  - No national data collection system
  - Insufficient research and evidence based policy
  - Training is not sufficiently child-specific
- **Prevention**
  - Law-enforcement oriented to detriment of broader approach
  - Lack of efforts to reduce demand
  - Limited or no attention to children in vulnerable situations



# The United States and the International Standards (cont'd)

- **Child Protection**
  - **No shelter beds for victims**
  - **Law narrow definition**
  - **Interviews by inexperienced officials**
  - **Testify in open court against offender**
- **Next report: 2016**

# Conclusions

- **Coordinate within and negotiate between systems: Research, business (conventional and underground), legislative, education, law enforcement, judicial, social services, religious, health care, media, child welfare**
- **Improve legislation (“safe harbor” with immunity) + create dedicated task forces**
- **Clearly define the terms and then collect the data**

# Conclusions

- **Establish local missions, set objectives, develop plans of action, monitor progress and report publicly (individual agency or preferably coalition-based)**
- **Prevention by education on both the supply and demand side**
- **Private sector engagement (new technologies, media, motels)**

**Thank-you!**

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