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ABSTRACT

LET'S TALK ABOUT SLAVES... HUMAN TRAFFICKING: EXPOSING HIDDEN VICTIMS AND CRIMINAL PROFIT AND HOW LAWYERS CAN HELP END A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC.

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“Islamic State radicals gain more than \$3 million per day just from oil sales, while also earning huge sums from human trafficking and extortion, report US intelligence officials and experts. They are wealthier than any other terror group in history”¹.

Human trafficking is a highly lucrative industry that extends to all corners of the globe. The phrases human trafficking, slavery and forced labour are used interchangeably but essentially amount to exploitation for profit and power. Developed countries have become the destination for slaves plucked from source countries and people are trafficked within their own states. These are generally the impoverished, the un-empowered, the uneducated and the dispossessed and largely women and girls, particularly in the context of sexual exploitation. The urgency with which this issue needs to be tackled nationally and transnationally has recently been fuelled by reports that profits are being used to fund terrorist activity². It makes cooperation between nations imperative.

¹ Russia Today: ISIS daily profits from oil, theft, human trafficking exceed \$3mn – report. Published time: September 14, 2014 18:24 <<http://rt.com/news/187720-isis-millions-daily-profit/>>

² Islamic State says it is buying and selling Yazidi women, and using them as concubines. Sydney Morning Herald: <<http://www.smh.com.au/world/islamic-state-says-it-is-buying-and-selling-yazidi-women-and-using-them-as-concubines-20141014-115kp0.html#ixzz3GTDM2y8X>>

1. The potential profits from human exploitation are huge when it is considered that the number of human trafficking victims in the world is an estimated 21 million men, women and children³:
 - Of the total, an estimated 9.1 million people (44%) moved either internally or internationally.
 - The Asia-Pacific region has the largest number of forced labourers, at almost 12 million (56% of the global total and 89% of those in bonded labour and debt bondage.
 - Women and girls make up about 55 per cent of all forced labour victims, they represent the vast majority of victims exploited for commercial sex work.
 - The estimated total profits made by forced labour each year worldwide was estimated in 2012 at US\$150.2 billion per year with profits highest in Asia (US\$51.8 billion)
 - Sexual exploitation makes up two-thirds of these profits at an estimated \$105 billion a year.
 - Annual profits made per victim range from \$4100 to \$37,100. This includes construction, manufacture, mining and utilities, agriculture, fishing and domestic work. Profits are highest in forced sexual exploitation⁴.

2. The 2014 International Labour Office report (the ILO report), “Profits and Poverty” concludes that the 21 million victims are a “vast nation of men, women and children...virtually invisible, hidden behind a wall of coercion, threats and economic exploitation”. Socio economic factors for global forced labour include lack of education and literacy, poverty and other wealth and income shocks all of which need to be addressed to empower people to avoid exploitation⁵. The ILO report concluded that “there is an urgent need to address the socio-economic root causes of this hugely profitable illegal practice if it is to be overcome⁶. In 2013 the UN's Office on Drugs

³ 2014 International Labour Office report, “Profits and Poverty: The economics of forced labour”
<http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS_243391/lang--en/index.htm>

⁴ Ibid n3

⁵ 2014 International Labour Office report, “Profits and Poverty: The economics of forced labour”
<http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS_243391/lang--en/index.htm>

⁶ 2014 International Labour Office report, “Profits and Poverty: The economics of forced labour”
<http://www.ilo.org/global/publications/ilo-bookstore/order-online/books/WCMS_243391/lang--en/index.htm>

and Crime reported on transnational organised crime in East Asia and the Pacific (the UNDOC Report)⁷. The UNDOC Report identified human trafficking as a major issue and found that human trafficking is on the rise in a quarter of countries around the world.

3. Taking a focus on Australia and Indonesia, this paper will consider exploitation of people and international cooperation. It will focus on how criminal and corporate lawyers can help to end a global slavery epidemic by identifying victims and diverting them out of justice systems, by reporting suspicious transactions and by ensuring international corporate responsibility.

⁷UNDOC Report “Transnational Organised Crime in East Asia and the Pacific: A threat Assessment” < http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/TOCTA_EAP_web.pdf>