

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
COATNET  
Biennial Affiliates Meeting (BIAM)**

**Global Analysis of Human Trafficking: Trends & Challenges**

**Bangkok, March 5, 2024**

**Professor Michel Veuthey  
Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta  
to monitor and combat human trafficking**

**DIA TITLE 1**

Thank COATNET for inviting the Sovereign Order of Malta to this critical event.

Human trafficking, a form of contemporary slavery, affects all countries. It is an ever-growing scourge that cannot leave us indifferent.

Next year, in 2025, we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the [Palermo Protocol](#). This anniversary should be the occasion for a call to action to prevent and combat human trafficking. It should be the beginning of a mobilization of all actors to achieve the total eradication of slavery.

Let us begin with some telling figures.

**DIA 2**

Human trafficking-related criminal activities generate illegal profits of \$150 billion. If slavery were a country, it would have the same population as South Korea, and its economic output would be greater than Oman and Kuwait combined.

In addition, HT's annual net profits exceed those of Apple, Microsoft, Samsung, BP, and Exxon combined.

It would be the world's third-largest producer of CO<sub>2</sub>, after China and the United States.

Source: Kevin Bales, [Blood and Earth: Modern Slavery, Ecocide, and the Secret to Saving the World](#). New York, Random House, 2016, 304 p.

Fifty million people today are victims of contemporary slavery!

Source: [International Labour Organization](#) (ILO), IOM, Walk Free. [Global Estimates of Modern Slavery](#). September 2022

Most of the victims are invisible or unseen.

## DIA 3

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

- A contemporary form of slavery
- **Invisible** (on purpose or not)
- **Everywhere in the world**
- **Even in New York**

**Human trafficking is a scourge, a monstrous plague that continues to evolve and grow**

**There have never been as many slaves in history as there are today.**

The scourge is further exacerbated by:

- The consequences COVID-19 **pandemic** (isolation and increased use of the internet)
- **Armed conflicts**, situations of violence and economic and political instability
- **Climate change** (increasing conflict, poverty, vulnerability)
- **Waves of migration** (national, regional, international)
- Increased difficulties in protecting vulnerable people and victims
- Excessive **impunity** for traffickers (criminal and civil): 1 in 2,150 ...
- Misuse of **technology** (by traffickers and also victims)
- **Lack of limits to the economic exploitation of vulnerable people**

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## DIA 4

**We are here to reflect and act together.**

Contemporary slavery affects millions of people in different forms:

1. Forced labor in agriculture, fishing, construction, domestic work, and industry.
2. Sexual slavery.
3. Sale and abduction of children, forced motherhood, surrogacy
4. Child pornography, including online.
5. Organ theft.
6. Forced crimes, from begging to terrorism and online fraud.

Different forms of trafficking in human beings require other forms of prevention and various forms of care and rehabilitation of the victims.

### 2. DEFINITIONS AND FORMS OF HT

**Trafficking in human beings:**  
It is characterised by the **exploitation** of a human being, **combined with coercion or deception.**

This constraint can take the form of physical or psychological **violence**

The different forms of human trafficking:

<b>Forced labour</b>	Women, men, children, in industry, agriculture, construction, fishing, domestic work and so on.
<b>Sexual exploitation</b>	Forced prostitution, forced marriage, forced motherhood
<b>Child recruitment</b>	Recruitment of child soldiers
<b>Purchase and theft of children</b>	For adoption, abuse, sale, organs
<b>Child Pornography</b>	Mainly on Internet
<b>Organ harvesting and trafficking</b>	For transplantation
<b>Forced Crime</b>	Begging, theft, drug trafficking, terrorism

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Allow me to mention **Valiant Richey**, a former US prosecutor specializing in the sexual exploitation of adults and children, who, until April of last year, was the [OSCE's Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings](#):

"Some 20 years ago, in 2000, the Palermo Protocol provided us with the first international definition of trafficking and highlighted the three pillars of our response: protection, prosecution, and prevention. But sadly, more than two decades later, trafficking is worse than ever, and no country has defeated it. We need States to implement their international legal obligations. In our study on how to discourage demand, we identified that of the 57 OSCE countries, 20 had no identifiable initiatives to address the demand that fosters trafficking for sexual exploitation. This means that they are not complying with their international legal obligations. The main challenge remains the need for political will to address these issues by providing the necessary resources for any government intervention and ensuring we fund all other protection and victim assistance programs."

Source: Valian Richey, Webinar on Human Trafficking “[Demand for human trafficking: we are all responsible for human trafficking as consumers of forced labour and sexual slavery. How can we end this cycle?](#) » 14 June 2022

**DIA 5**

**INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS**

**HUMAN RIGHTS**

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women New York, 1979
- Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 2000**
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990
- Convention No. 182 against the worst forms of child labour, 1999
- **Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000**
- COE European Convention on Human Rights, 1950
- COE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, 2005
- UE, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2000
- OAS American Convention on Human Rights, 1969
- AU, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1981
- ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, 2012

**LABOUR LAW**

- Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949
- Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975
- COE European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers, 1977
- UE, Directive 2014/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on the conditions of entry and stay of third-country nationals for the purpose of employment as seasonal workers

**INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW**

- Geneva Conventions of the 12 August 1949
- Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of the 12 August 1949, 1977

**INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW**

- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), 1998

**ITF as a war crime and crime against humanity**

**INTERNATIONAL MARITIME LAW**

- International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974
- International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR), 1979
- U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982
- 2004 Amendments to the SOLAS and SAR

**REFUGEE AND MIGRANT LAW**

- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951
- Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, 1967
- Convention relating to the status of stateless persons, 1954
- African Union for the protection and assistance of IDPs in Africa (Kampala Convention, 2009)

**U.N. CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (UNTOC) 2000**

- Palermo Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children
- Palermo Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air

Do not forget **restorative justice**: rehabilitating victims and offenders through reconciliation

We must recognize the crucial efforts to codify treaties that could prevent trafficking and protect victims and survivors.

We should make full use of all legal instruments to prevent and combat human trafficking: human rights, refugee law, labor law, international humanitarian law, and international criminal law (in certain

circumstances, human trafficking could be prosecuted as a war crime or a crime against humanity), international maritime law, the Palermo Convention and its Protocols, without forgetting restorative justice.

Some legal experts, including Kevin Hyland, Fausto Pocar, and Valiant Richey, have argued that implementation is failing at both the domestic and international levels.

**DIA 6**

Remember the relevant [ASEAN Convention](#) and [Action Plan](#) at the regional level, which addresses challenges common to all ASEAN Member States. They aim to

- Prevent human trafficking
- Protect victims
- promote law enforcement and prosecution, and
- improve regional and international cooperation.

**DIA 7**

By 2025, the [ASEAN Roadmap aims to protect children and prevent and eliminate child labor](#). What has been accomplished so far?

## DIA 8

At the international level, the [Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons \(ICAT\)](#) recommends that Governments strengthen public procurement and transparency measures and cooperate with key stakeholders to bridge the gap between policy and implementation.

It is essential that all States adopt and implement comprehensive and ambitious approaches in coordination with the private sector and that anti-trafficking tools and measures focus on government procurement.

## DIA 9

**Together, it is possible to break the chains of slavery.**

At the end of the last century, in 1997 and 1998, two coalitions achieved a result that no one expected:

- In 1997, the [Coalition for the Total Abolition of Anti-Personnel Mines](#) won the adoption of the [Ottawa Convention...](#)
- In 1998, the [Coalition for the International Criminal Court \(ICC\)](#) achieved the adoption of the [Rome Statute](#).

**To achieve the abolition of modern slavery, we need a similar coalition of like-minded States, international organizations, regional organizations, humanitarian organizations, human rights NGOs, faith-based organizations, businesses, academia, artists, and the media, not forgetting victims and survivors.**

## DIA 10

**Cooperation between all stakeholders is needed** to prevent, protect, and rehabilitate victims and survivors effectively. Training is essential if Governments, civil society, and all stakeholders are to become aware of and able to implement the legal, political, economic, and social instruments needed to combat the scourge of human trafficking and, for the second time in history, undertake to eradicate slavery.

## DIA 11

Let me give you two examples of international cooperation, including COATNET and the Order of Malta, which involved several countries.

In December 2023, the Order of Malta and COATNET organized an event related to the Global Refugee Forum on protecting refugees and combating human trafficking.

## DIA 12

In March 2023, the Order of Malta and COATNET organized a side event on human trafficking and armed conflict in connection with the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

## DIA 13

**Training is a must.** We are finalizing an online course on human trafficking, which will soon be available for free. We are discussing with the [Pontifical Gregorian University](#) and the UN University for Peace (UPEACE) to have it accredited.

## DIA OM 14

We also held nearly 40 webinars. I want to highlight two elements:

- First, the **concrete contribution of religious communities** in understanding the suffering of victims and survivors and their commitment to care for them.
- Second, **the need for believers to never lose sight of the spiritual dimension** of modern slavery, and we must all pray for victims and survivors, for those who help them, and for the conversion of traffickers.

## The contribution of the Order of Malta



- **(1) Raising awareness:** Raising awareness through
  - its [bilateral](#) (110 States) network.
  - its [multilateral](#) (UN, European Union, etc.) diplomatic network.
  - A [conference in Paris with international experts](#) (Oct. 2019) to create new synergies
  - Regulate side events in New York (UNGA) and Geneva (HRC and Global Refugee Forum)
- **(2) Medical and social programs** through
  - its [National Associations](#)
  - his worldwide humanitarian organization "[Malteser International](#)".
  - a pilot project in Lagos: "[Bakhita Center](#)" with [Sr. Patricia Ebegbulem, SSL](#) (Sisters of Saint Louis)
  - Collaboration with local Bishops: Boston, Salzburg, Sydney, Tangiers
- **(3) Online free training for helpers** (English [www.cuhd.org](#)) and **partnership with universities:**
  - Webster, Geneva, Switzerland: "[The Use and Abuse of High Technology in Human Trafficking](#)."
  - Nice, France: [Legal Clinic on the implementation of the European Union Directive on combating trafficking in human beings](#)
  - Memoranda of Understanding with UPEACE and the the Gregorian Pontifical University
- **(4) Webinars on human trafficking** ([www.adlaudatosi.org](#)) with English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish subtitle: in collaboration with Sr. Mirjam Beike, [Community of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Charity of the Good Shepherd \(RGS\)](#).
- **(5) Collecting best practices on a website** ([www.christusliberat.org](#)) **to assist survivors to empower themselves, through a platform to share their stories and insights and engage themselves in support of other survivors)**
- **(5) Participation in the World Day of Prayer against Human Trafficking (February 8, Saint Bakhita)**

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The **Order of Malta** contributes to the fight against human trafficking by:

- **Advocating** through its bilateral diplomatic network (113 States) and diplomatic network through statements at each session of the Human Rights Council, UN General Assembly, and even at the Security Council (last month, on the 7th of December 2023, [Ambassador Beresford-Hill, the Order's Ambassador in New York, made a statement before the Security Council on human trafficking as a threat to international peace and security](#))

- **Offering a free online training course for helpers** in English, French, and now in German, Italian, and Spanish as well, on <https://www.cuhd.org>
- **Organizing webinars on best practices** to prevent and combat human trafficking ([www.adlaudatosi.org](http://www.adlaudatosi.org)) with subtitles in seven languages (Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish) with leading international specialists. These webinars are free of charge. Thirty-seven webinars have been organized since October 2020. The video recordings, transcripts, and handouts are freely available.
- **Collecting best practices on a website** ([www.christusliberat.org](http://www.christusliberat.org)) to assist survivors in empowering themselves through a platform to share their stories and insights and engage themselves in support of other survivors)
- **Cooperating with Universities:**
  - Implementing a [Memorandum of Understanding, the Sovereign Order of Malta, signed with the University of Peace](#) (UPEACE). With the cooperation of UNHCR and IOM, we shall organize training courses on human trafficking, online and in person.
  - Last December, the Order of Malta signed a [Memorandum of Understanding with the Pontifical Gregorian University](#) for the protection of minors and vulnerable persons to prevent abuse of minors and vulnerable persons, encouraging the implementation of good practices and raising awareness around safeguarding issues. Present for the Order of Malta was the Grand Hospitaller, Fra' Alessandro de Franciscis: *"The agreement signed today is the starting point of a comprehensive program of initiatives of listening and of training our members, volunteers, and employees to safeguard those we assist and all minors and vulnerable people."*
    - **Participating in the [World Day of Prayer against Human Trafficking](#) on February 8th, the Feast of [Saint Bakhita](#).**

The **Order of Malta's [international status](#) and [diplomatic network](#)**, as well as its National Associations and worldwide relief corps, [Malteser International](#), will continue to raise awareness of contemporary forms of slavery, increase assistance and protection to its victims, and contribute to their rehabilitation.

Thank you in advance for your support. I will remain available to answer any questions. Thank you for your attention.