



(index.shtml)

Search

# International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

## 2 December

Menu



*Woman from Morocco trapped in forced labour. "Whenever the lady of the house left, she would lock me up for hours in the veranda, with only one small bottle of water." © PAG-ASA, Massimo Timosi*

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Slavery is not merely a historical relic. According to the [International Labour Organisation](http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/lang--en/index.htm) (ILO) more than 40 million people worldwide are victims of modern slavery. Although modern slavery is not defined in law, it is used as an umbrella term covering practices such as forced labour, debt bondage, forced marriage, and human trafficking. Essentially, it refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or leave because of threats, violence, coercion, deception, and/or abuse of power.

In addition, more than 150 million children are subject to child labour, accounting for almost one in ten children around the world.

## Facts and figures:

- An estimated **40.3 million people** are in modern slavery, including **24.9 in forced labour** and **15.4 million in forced marriage**.
- There are 5.4 victims of modern slavery for every 1,000 people in the world.
- **1 in 4 victims** of modern slavery are **children**.
- Out of the 24.9 million people trapped in forced labour, **16 million people** are exploited in the **private sector** such as domestic work, construction or agriculture; **4.8 million people** in forced **sexual exploitation**, and **4 million people** in forced labour imposed by **state authorities**.
- **Women and girls** are disproportionately affected by forced labour, accounting for **99% of victims** in the commercial **sex industry**, and 58% in other sectors.

ILO has adopted a new legally binding [Protocol designed to strengthen global efforts to eliminate forced labour](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:P029) (http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\_ILO\_CODE:P029), which entered into force in November 2016.

The [50 for Freedom campaign](http://50forfreedom.org/) (http://50forfreedom.org/) aims to persuade at least 50 countries to ratify the Forced Labour Protocol by 2018.

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