

WOMEN GRADUATES–USA

WG-USA is the USA affiliate of Graduate Women International

Resolution

Issue: Human Trafficking

Resolution Title: Human Trafficking Violate Human Rights

Resolution Number: 2010.1.R2

Resolution Text:

Resolution for IFUW (International Federation of University Women) proposed by WG-USA.

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

1. *National Federations and Associations (NFAs) will educate their members about the issue of trafficking as it relates to their country, including addressing the primary causes that contribute to the practice;*
2. *NFAs urge their respective governments to ensure that they have not only signed but have also ratified the United Nations Protocol against Trafficking in Persons passed in 2003; if their countries have done so, NFAs will monitor the status of their government's implementation of the Protocol and take appropriate action where needed; and*
3. *IFUW will utilize its standing committees, its consultative status with ECOSOC at the United Nations, its website and member networks to advocate for measures that would reduce the incidence of trafficking.*

Supporting Statement:

Trafficking is a violation of human rights in that it destroys the lives of its victims while creating an illegal 32 billion-dollar business each year. It involves citizens in 161 of 192 countries.

Trafficking is in many cases a trans-border crime that affects all regions of the world; according to a 2006 UN global report on trafficking, 127 countries have been documented as countries of origin, and 137 as countries of destination. However, most exploitation still takes place close to home. A significant proportion of prostitutes, including most child prostitutes, are either forced or tricked into the trade. The increasing ease and frequency of international travel, together with the growing phenomenon of temporary migration for work, has increased the opportunities for trafficking. Development projects in comparatively undeveloped regions and countries often bring with them a rapid increase in the demand for commercialization of sex by those workers temporarily living in the area.

There are almost no reliable estimates on the number of women who are trafficked or data on from where and to where they are trafficked which hinders development of strategies to combat trafficking. Since the United Nations Protocol on Trafficking in Persons passed in 2003, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) indicates that 125 of the 155 signatories are “seriously implementing the Protocol” but the need remains to address root causes of trafficking such as poverty, statelessness, powerlessness and gender discrimination. From a February 2009 UN Report from the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, a mandate emerged stating that “the real challenge is not just in adopting strategies that will effectively lead to catching the perpetrators and punishing them. Rather, it is preferable to put in place strategies that will focus equally on the victim by recognizing and redressing the violations suffered. We must recognize the dignity of the victims and their right to survival and development. Thus, restorative justice is central to combating human trafficking.”

This is a global issue that affects all countries that are members of IFUW. As early as 1968, IFUW passed a Resolution related to Slavery (No. 13), and according to UNODC estimates today there are 27 million people involved in this modern-day slavery. Later, IFUW Resolutions on Trafficking and Exploitation of Women and Children (1998 No. 6) and Commercial Exploitation of Children (2004 No.6) added emphasis to issues of slavery. Both the current IFUW Board programme focus and the results of this triennium Consultation with members, branches and NFAs, identified “the empowerment of women” as one of the four areas of study and action.

Plan of Action:

1. SWC and Resolutions Committee will develop a list of websites and bibliography for use by NFA branches to educate themselves and their communities about trafficking issues and laws that exist in their countries.
2. NFAs are urged to identify existing national laws and policies that support the UN Protocol Against Trafficking in Persons. To the extent possible, evaluate the effectiveness of these laws at the national level. Propose better methods of implementation when necessary.
3. NFAs are urged to work at the community level to identify which agencies and organizations are responsible for enforcing anti-trafficking laws. Determine how serious the problem is at the community level, and partner with other NGOs involved in anti-trafficking efforts. Publicize the issue through the local media and public forums such as parents and education groups.
4. IFUW representatives to the United Nations should present this resolution at appropriate meetings with relevant commissions.

Resolution approved at WG-USA Annual General Meeting, October 2010



“empowering women and girls to create a secure and just world”

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