

## **THE EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE TO TACKLE TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS AND SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS**

*Hamish McCulloch\**



I hope to be able to stimulate a number of thoughts in your mind and assist you in understanding the intricate problems faced by law enforcement when having to deal with the crime areas involving the smuggling and trafficking of people. I will start by providing you with a very brief overview of the history of Interpol and then look at the history of law enforcement's involvement in both the smuggling and trafficking of people. I will touch upon the amounts of money that can be earned by the criminal gangs, the human suffering endured by the victims and the role of Interpol in combating these crime areas.

Interpol has existed for almost 80 years, its roots go back to 1914 when the concept of an international criminal police organisation originated and police officers from 14 countries met at the first International Criminal Congress, to discuss the possibility of establishing an international criminal records office and harmonising extradition proceedings. It was, however, a further 9 years before the second International Police Congress met and an agreement was reached to set up the International Criminal Police Commission with its own statutes and official headquarters in Vienna, Austria. Hence, 1923 is recognised as the year that the Organization was conceived.

In 1946 new statutes were adopted, the commission's headquarters moved to Paris and 'Interpol' was chosen as the telegraphic address. In 1956 the International Criminal Police Commission became the International Criminal Police Organization, which currently has 179 member states co-ordinated through the General Secretariat, situated in Lyon, France.

In recent months both civil society and law enforcement have been repeatedly exposed to shocking reports about the ruthless methods used by criminals involved in the smuggling and trafficking of human beings. Globally the message is the same: people desperate to create a better future for themselves are exploited by individuals or organised gangs, who transport them over borders without any consideration for their safety, who demand huge payments for smuggling them, and who leave them indebted at the hands of pimps or other exploiters in the countries of destination.

Within Europe, the discovery during the summer of 2000 of 58 Chinese citizens, dead in a refrigerated truck, having asphyxiated whilst trying to enter the United Kingdom illegally became an eye-opener for many politicians and the public, however, the sad fact is that the bodies of desperate people trying to move to another country illegally are being discovered on a weekly basis and many more are never discovered when the overcrowded and un-seaworthy ships they are sailing on sink without trace in the shark infested waters of the China Sea's or the containers they are hidden in are washed overboard as the ships they are on navigate torrential storms that most of us will never witness.

Shortly after the incident in the United Kingdom, 300 illegal immigrants lives were at risk when the ship transporting them towards Italy ran into heavy seas just off the coast. They were fortunate, they were rescued by an Italian navy vessel. Unlike the 350 people who drowned off the coast of Indonesia, the eight Turks who died in Ireland starved of oxygen as a result of being locked in a container and the similar fate which took the lives of several Chinese families stranded on a dock side

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\* Assistant Director,  
Trafficking in Human Beings,  
INTERPOL, Lyon, France

122ND INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE  
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

in South Korea last year. This year is no different, 24 reported drowned in the Dead Sea in the Middle East, 13 who suffocated in Burma, and 179 who perished during the first half of the year attempting to cross the Arizona desert to find a new life in United States of America. More disturbing is the plight of many Tanzanian citizens who pay the organised criminal gangs to take them to Europe by sea, only to be forcibly thrown into the seas off the coast of Africa.

During the same year, police in Nepal arrested a man on charges of selling more than 300 women and children into prostitution in India, after having promised them proper jobs or marriages. Traffickers are treating human beings merely as a commodity to be bought, transported, exploited and sold.

Making such trade possible is on the one hand a situation of poverty, economic crises, political upheaval and unrest, creating an urge or need for people to leave their homes. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) now has responsibilities for as many as 21.5 million people, many of whom are potential victims for traffickers.

On the other hand there is the widespread demand for cheap labour and prostitutes in a large and growing number of countries.

In such a situation, migrants' smuggling becomes a very attractive market for criminal organisations. In 1999, the worldwide profits made by individual smugglers and smuggling networks, have been placed between US\$ 3 billion and US\$ 10 billion. By the end of this year, some sources say that the worldwide trade in human trafficking is worth around US\$ 30 billion a year. According to that estimation, trafficking in human beings is now the third largest source of profits for organized crime, behind drugs and arms trafficking.

These figures are of course estimates, and what they don't include is the un-measurable suffering that is imposed on these unfortunate human beings who are often physically and sexually exploited by the criminals involved.

These estimates can of course not be confirmed, but it's obvious that smuggling in people is a very lucrative business for criminal organisations, taking into account the prevailing low risk of being arrested and heavily sentenced.

The number of individuals estimated to be smuggled by criminal networks into countries of the European Union alone are in the region of 500 000 per year. From the Far East through Turkey and its neighbouring countries and from South America and Africa to the Western Countries of mainland Europe, which serve as major transit points for migrants and centres of human beings smugglers.

The one common link between all of these individuals is that they are desperate people who are willing to sacrifice their families, friends and homeland to make, what they believe is, a better life for themselves. They often pay many thousands of dollars to be transported. It is difficult to imagine the levels of desperation that these human beings have stooped to.

But try to imagine yourself as one of these 20 Chinese nationals recently found welded into a false bottom of a container which had been shipped from China to Europe. The height of the compartment was 50cm, they had a number of battery powered torches for light and oxygen bottles to provide air to breathe. Between them they will have paid in the region of 500,000 US Dollars; half a million Dollars to the Snakeheads in China: those responsible for facilitating their movement. This is Organised Crime which is damaging the world economy and funding other types of crime; drug production and distribution, violation of international property rights and the trade in endangered species, for example.

While law enforcement can not treat the root causes of trafficking and alien smuggling, we can certainly contribute to reducing the trade in human beings by attacking the criminals who profit from illegal activities.

A major area of discussion is trafficking of women, a subject high on the world's political agenda. It has become an important issue for law enforcement.

It's not a new problem, having been debated for over a century. One of the first major international conferences was held in Paris in 1902, and here we are today, continuing discussions, more or less on the same topics as 100 years ago.

What do we mean by the expression "trafficking of women for sexual exploitation"?

Be aware that people might have different interpretations. However, it means basically the recruitment, transportation, and harbouring of women in order to submit them to mainly prostitution purposes, by the use of a control mechanism such as force, deception or coercion. Trafficking often includes an offence of illegal immigration, but differs because of the intended exploitation.

The main form of sexual exploitation is prostitution, which is the exchange of sexual services for payment. Within all societies, the existence of prostitution has been, and still is, a source of heated debate. It's necessary to take a look at this ageless debate to fully understand the problems surrounding trafficking.

Simply speaking, we can divide the approach to prostitution into three main groups:

- Prostitution can be regarded as a positive and acceptable fact of life, where prostitutes even enjoy a status as respected professionals.
- Prostitution can be viewed as a necessary social evil, a phenomenon that can not be removed.
- Prostitution might be viewed as a social evil that should be actively combated and discouraged.

The legal approach will accordingly mirror the general view of prostitution.

- The law can decriminalise the field of prostitution. Prostitution can be allowed to develop freely without state intervention. With what one can call a human rights approach to the issue, laws can provide rights for sex workers, giving them social benefits as any other professions.
- Laws can provide regulations for prostitution. Prostitutes can be obliged to register themselves, they can be submitted to compulsory health checks, brothels can be allowed to function within a licensing system and areas for street prostitution can be geographically defined. Limitless possibilities exist for regulation systems.
- The laws can criminalise prostitution. Anyone involved in the trade can be made offenders: sex workers themselves, clients, procurers, brothel owners. In a more tolerant approach, one can leave out certain groups, for example the prostitutes or the clients.

I would now like to provide a brief historic overview of the European approach to prostitution during the last couple of hundred years. I choose Europe as it is most documented and, in my view interesting.

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, prostitutes in the larger cities globally increased, prostitution became widely viewed as a dangerous urban social problem. At the same time, prostitution was accepted as a necessary social phenomenon, to contain the sexual urges of men. Prostitutes were identified as a source of spreading venereal diseases such as the then much feared syphilis. As long ago as 1835, a French Doctor published a document arguing for a system of regulations as a way of stopping the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

At that time his ideas were accepted as the best approach towards eliminating the negative elements of prostitution, a system of strict regulation spread and by 1870 the whole of Europe had adopted the system in one way or another.

The main elements of this regulatory system were the mandatory registration of prostitutes, and the establishment of licensed brothels. Regular health checks were made compulsory, and prostitutes

## 122ND INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE REPORTS OF THE COURSE

who were ill were hospitalised. Municipal regulations decided where the prostitutes could walk in the towns when not working in the brothels, and also could decide what they were allowed to wear.

It is important to notice that the police became a central element in this policy, being given the power to control the brothels and the prostitutes. Special police doctors were given the task of conducting health checks on the prostitutes.

In England the regulation system came into effect from 1850, when the police in London were given increased powers to control prostitutes. During the 1860's, a series of laws were passed, known as the Contagious Diseases Act's, which spread the regulation system to the whole British Empire which at that time involved many countries around the world.

Shortly after these laws were passed movements developed to have them abolished. People did not accept prostitution as just a health problem or that it could be regulated. Prostitution was viewed by many as a social evil that the state should not support by regulating the sexual exploitation of the prostitutes.

As a result regulations were removed or weakened. Police involvement was subsequently reduced and by 1888 many countries had changed their laws. The system of state regulated brothels continued however in certain countries until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but prostitution moved outside the brothels and in to the streets and call-girl systems.

Today we see a great variety in the way many countries legislate on prostitution. In most the legislation comes under heated debate from time to time, underlining that prostitution still represents a dilemma for societies. There is no consensus on the nature of prostitution. Laws are shaped by cultural traditions and changing social and political forces, and debates on prostitution will tend to be a muddle of morals, feminism, pragmatism, human rights thinking and religion.

Laws tend to be compromises, in various ways accepting that prostitution will not disappear by using legislation. Certain countries still have several regulations, others prohibit prostitution. The majority of countries, however, have no regulations, but outlaw the exploitation of prostitutes, with a more or less tolerant approach towards the prostitutes themselves.

Modern legislation in developed countries is intended to send a message that prostitution should not be accepted and that human beings should not be treated as merchandise in sexual matters.

This is not the case everywhere, however, as in one Western European country they have decided to legalise brothels nearly 90 years after banning them. The new law came into effect in October 2000, and has opened the debate in other neighbouring countries. The logic is that by legalising the employment of prostitutes it will be possible to exercise more control over the sex industry and counter abuse. This remains to be seen, as many of the sex workers are unhappy about having to pay income tax on their earnings and having to ensure that the premises they work in are equipped in accordance with health and safety regulations. An example being the requirement for separate toilets and washing facilities for clients.

Written laws on prostitution do not give good guidelines on how a country actually handles prostitution. Frequently a very wide gap exists between written laws and actual enforcement practices. The conflicting views of society get passed down the line to law enforcement, leaving them with a very unclear impression on what area to prioritise. One thing is clear, however, the main priority has to be the prevention, identification and protection of children who are, or are likely to be, sexually abused within the commercial sex industry.

A growing number of countries are now experiencing an increase in visible street prostitution. The problems are not going to go away. It is therefore necessary to face up to reality, and the reality is that as long as there is a growing demand for the services, particularly of women, within the commercial sex industry then they have to be recruited from somewhere. Domestically, within the developed western

world, there are insufficient women prepared to enter the sex industry. As a consequence, the rapidly growing trade of trafficking has developed to service the demand.

This is, however, not a new phenomena. Women have been moved for prostitution purposes throughout history. However, in Latin America, Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa, the numbers of women being moved and traded is disturbingly high.

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, women were seen working in foreign brothels all over the world. Questions were being asked. 'How could this be happening'? Stories were published in the newspapers about young virgins abducted from city streets and waking up in brothels in different countries. The public were horrified by the idea that young women were being forced into prostitution in uncivilised countries. Not long after the issue of this, the "white slave trade" was on the political agenda. The reports and discussions all focused on how white females could appear in foreign brothels, which at that time was perhaps to be expected.

At the turn of the century a massive migration wave took place, individuals and families were leaving their homes and travelling all over the world seeking work or a better life. However, many of those leaving were single men, and it is not surprising that women choosing to work as prostitutes would follow.

International meetings and conventions followed public pressure in an attempt to stop the trade in women. Eventually, the term trafficking in women replaced the expression "white slave trade".

Campaigners and public opinion resulted in the 1910 convention making it a crime to exploit the prostitution of minors, and outlawed the forced trafficking and prostitution of adults.

The First World War prevented nations from building on this convention, however, some 23 years later, in 1933, a further convention made it an offence to traffic adult women, even with their consent, to another country.

Laws were enacted in many countries and shortly after the 2nd world war, in 1949, the United Nations adopted a convention that remains the major international text on trafficking and prostitution. The convention condemns prostitution, but does not prohibit prostitution in itself. The convention demands that states must punish those who traffic, procure or entice another person for prostitution purposes or who exploit the prostitution of others, even if those people consent. Trafficking in the conventions sense simply means bringing someone into prostitution. It also outlaws brothels, and abolishes the registration of prostitutes.

However, the convention has not been a great success. Few countries have ratified it. For those countries who agree on the text, it was a disappointment that the UN did not set up any treaty body to monitor enforcement of the treaty.

As the convention condemns prostitution in general, it is not acceptable to countries that want to allow and regulate a prostitution sector for women who freely wish to be prostitutes, while outlawing forced trafficking. For those who want a comprehensive treaty on all forms of trafficking, for forced labour or other purposes, the convention is too narrow in its definitions.

Following the 1949 convention, the issue of trafficking more or less disappeared from the agenda in Europe, however, in less developed parts of the world the practice of trafficking women to new areas of growing population continued.

More recently, in 2000 a new international agreement, in connection with the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, was opened for signature in Palermo, Italy. This was warmly welcomed and attracted more than the expected number of signatures. However, nearly 3 years on, none of those countries have ratified.

122ND INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE  
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

A main part of this protocol deals with measures to protect the victims of trafficking, and for the first time we have a recognised definition of the term “Trafficking”.

- **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 a 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.

Going back to the sex trade and its spiralling development. From the beginning of the 1970's and onwards, women from developing third world countries began appearing in the sex industry in Western Europe. This did not create any major political problems and prostitution was controlled on a national basis. Problems, however, did arrive after the fall of the iron curtain, dividing East and West Europe, in 1989. Women from Central and Eastern Europe began to appear on the sex scene. One could hear stories of forced prostitution, young girls from Eastern Europe wanting to work as au pairs and were deceived by organised crime gangs, given false papers, smuggled over borders, raped and threatened into prostitution. They were held as slaves and worked for no pay.

If one examines the global sex industry we can see clearly that the number of sex workers, pimps and other organisers who are operating in a country other than their own has increased dramatically in most, if not all regions of the world.

Women from developing countries are ever present, but globally the major shift is the movement of women from Eastern Europe. They are appearing as street workers, in various clubs and in private houses in residential areas. They are changing their locations often. They are often in possession of false documents. Interpol receives information from the various countries suggesting a high presence of women who must be classified as victims of trafficking, but it is not possible to estimate the number of victims accurately.

In respect of the organisers, the trend is moving towards nationally mixed groups, as well as co-operation between different nationalities. There is also evidence of an increase in the numbers of women involved as organisers of trafficking, some of whom are former prostitutes.

The number of investigations are low, and getting offenders convicted of trafficking crimes, and obtaining proper sentences for the ones who are convicted, seems difficult in all countries.

### **Demands on Society**

On the political side, politicians are becoming aware of the suffering of victims, and of the dangerous way that organised foreign criminal groups are working their way into the sex industry. Nothing suggests that the supply side or the demand side will decrease in the coming years, so politicians are discussing three main issues:

- How can one Prevent the trafficking of women from countries; the main strategy being used requires funding for information campaigns among young women in areas of recruitment.
- How to Protect victims of trafficking; in this respect witness/victim protection schemes are being discussed, as well as measures to aid women who are sent back to their home countries with different reintegration efforts.
- How to Prosecute more traffickers; making the cross border exchange of evidence easier is a major challenge.

Interpol also believe that it is not just law enforcement's responsibility to eradicate the trafficking of women, it is the responsibility of many agencies, both Governmental and Non Governmental.

### **Demands on Law Enforcement**

Societies demands will inevitably be placed on Law Enforcement, however, many countries are now destination countries, meaning that they have foreign prostitutes being exploited within the sex sector.

For these countries, the main aim is of course simply to:

*Reduce the exploitation of foreign prostitutes, and dismantle trafficking networks.*

For most however, there is no uniform national policy for law enforcement to approach trafficking. There is also a lack of active policy. Trafficking in women remains an invisible crime because the authorities in many countries do not pay enough attention to this type of criminality.

So what can be done? Victims themselves will seldom complain which places the initiative on law enforcement.

Countries must conduct a proper assessment of the situation. At the moment a general lack of knowledge by law enforcement of the sex industry is common place. Few countries have officers specifically appointed to identify aliens working in prostitution.

Generally investigators have some idea of the street prostitution situation, or even of the red light districts, but few know enough about the clubs, the escort agencies or the brothels in private apartments. Officers think they are aware of the situation, but their assumptions are too often based on narrow personal experiences and prejudices. So one has to start by gathering intelligence and, therefore, being in an informed position to provide an open minded assessment of the situation. Do we have foreign sex workers in our district? What countries are they from? What is their background? What conditions are they living under? Are they controlled by pimps? Who are the pimps? Very basic questions really.

After making an assessment it is imperative for countries to identify it's legal foundation and enter into co-operation with the prosecution service. Ensure both have the same understanding of the rules, so that a proper follow-up is made on the investigations.

To successfully tackle trafficking it is essential that countries allocate resources, devise a strategy and identify goals, which could be either investigation or disruption. Trafficking may be a complex phenomenon, but the reality is that it is just a brutal international pimping network.

It is pointless sitting and waiting for complaints to arrive. They do, but very infrequently. You will experience victim-led investigations, but the main thrust must come from investigations led by the intelligence that is collected. Successful investigations are generally the ones where there is a high use of surveillance, the use of informants, and good luck when it comes to seizure of documents.

Police should be giving thought to the question of how to organise investigations, considering if a specific unit should be responsible, or if other options are better. It can be linked to groups combating organised crime, as trafficking can certainly be defined as a phenomenon within organised crime. It all depends on the strategy choices that are made. It's certainly important to destroy the myth among certain investigators, that victims of trafficking are stupid women who have themselves to blame.

### **Victims**

In trafficking cases, one of your main problems will be coping with the victims.

Who are the victims? Well, they are women with very different backgrounds. Some are resourceful people determined to improve their living conditions by going abroad, while others have learning difficulties or are thought of as outcasts of society. Some have no sexual experience before going abroad, while others are seasoned prostitutes.

The victim's backgrounds for entering the sex industry in another country can be roughly divided in three groups:

122ND INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE  
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

- Women who have been completely duped and coerced.
- Women who are told half-truths about the nature of the work they will perform.
- Women who are informed about the work, but relinquish control to traffickers all the same.

Even women who know they will be working as prostitutes abroad under the control of pimps seldom imagine the extent to which they will become exploited in terms of living and working conditions.

What can you expect from a trafficking victim, and what do you do with them?

It can not be expected that trafficking victims will give evidence to the police or the courts. Their situation must to a certain extent be respected; they are often scared of reprisals against themselves or their families. They are often illegally residing in the country, so they also face deportation, and have little trust in the police. This means that you have to place a great deal of emphasis on the first contact you have with possible victims, so that it will be possible to gain a good level of confidence.

If you are lucky enough to get a victim to talk, you must consider the possibilities of her giving pre-trial evidence, if your legal system allows this. This can save the victim from a long period of fear and uncertainty awaiting a trial.

There must be co-operation with the immigration enforcers if the victims are staying illegally in your country. In some countries one can suspend the expulsion of a possible victim for a certain period, while transferring the women to an authorised organisation, which will provide accommodation and advice. This enables the victim to reflect on her experiences and decide in her own time whether or not she is willing to file charges, based on the assumption that victims will only be able to express themselves about their experiences after a longer period of time. If there are no such arrangements in your country, you must identify possible NGO partners, or develop a policy with the social services.

For “countries of origin”, or countries that women get trafficked from, the same process of assessment and strategy choice must be undertaken. They must seek to determine where women are going, and in what ways they are being exploited. Similarly, in transit the process must include information on where the women are from and where they are going. All this information is required to build up a picture of what is happening on a global basis. It is also necessary to assess whether it is possible to prosecute recruiters operating in your country.

Special consideration must be given to cases of missing women. We see a high number of women who manage to call home and who say they are being held captive and forced to work as prostitutes. When requests like this are passed on to the police, they must be given immediate attention.

### **INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION**

The main aim of Interpol is to promote the widest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities. It's my firm belief that trafficking investigations will not be successful if one does not fully exploit the possibilities of exchanging information with other countries. In trafficking cases, co-operation can be complicated by the fact that laws on trafficking are so different, but I want to urge investigators to use your contacts and develop new ones.

Interpol provides technical tools for sending and receiving requests between countries through National Central Bureaux, or NCB's. Every one of our 179 member countries has one such central link to the Interpol communications system. If information is needed from law enforcement anywhere in the world this can be obtained through our networks. Interpol can guarantee that the requests get transmitted via our systems, but we can't promise that the quality of the response from the country of request is up to their expectations.

An example of how Interpol communications networks recently assisted an investigation was where a Ukraine women who had been prostituting herself in Germany found the courage to tell the police she had been trafficked into that country by a Polish criminal and then sold to a pimp from Turkey who



raped her and made her work for him. She said she was married in her home country, had children who were ill, and for that reason became involved in prostitution. The Police asked Interpol to verify her background story. A simple but necessary request which we facilitated through our international network thus providing corroboration for the courts, making it easier for the judges to rely on her evidence.

The message that law enforcement around the world must accept is that the investigation of trafficking cases is not impossible, but they must be aware that the odds are against them in ways they will not experience in other criminal cases. The people who take on these tasks will, however, reap great rewards as the crimes they prevent are so brutal and totally unacceptable in modern societies.

The primary requirement by many countries is the need for updated and effective legal instruments in order to provide the foundation for co-operation in the field of trafficking and smuggling. I previously mentioned the very positive international development currently being undertaken by the United Nations in the creation of the convention against transnational organised crime. This convention is viewed as the best way forward and includes protocols on the trafficking of persons and the smuggling of migrants. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the text of the convention and the protocols, opened it for signature and attracted international media attention and far more signatures than expected. What is needed is ratification and legislation backing the convention.

Law enforcement needs to constantly update its knowledge of current trends and methods used to traffic and smuggle human beings. Trends are ever changing, and do not always follow expected patterns. For example in August this year, a group of women from Eastern Europe were rescued by the police from a hotel in Cambodia where they had been taken for prostitution purposes after being recruited to work as dancers in Japan. Cambodia, until now had been considered an unlikely destination for women from Eastern Europe.

In 1999, Interpol created a new group at the General Secretariat, the Trafficking in Human Beings Branch. In 2001 the branch was elevated to a Sub Directorate in its own right alongside, Public Safety and Terrorism, Drugs and Organised Crime and Financial and High Tech Crime. Resources have been strengthened and crime area responsibilities include not only trafficking in women and illegal immigration, but also offences against children, who are sadly, very often the victims of smugglers and traffickers.

The Trafficking in Human Beings Sub Directorate collates information from law enforcement agencies as well as from open sources, and seeks to support law enforcement and spread knowledge by participating in international meetings and by organising training when asked for.

Further evidence of Interpol's commitment to eradicating the trafficking of women was the passing of a resolution at the Interpol general assembly in October 1999 establishing an international working group on trafficking in women.

This has provided a structured platform for raising awareness, building competence and identifying best practices within law enforcement worldwide. The working group acts as a forum for exchanging information on current trends and investigations and as such provides ideas for possible projects and analyses work for the general secretariat to undertake.

One of the main aims of the working group will of course be to promote the widest possible international co-operation between law enforcement agencies. It is evident that trafficking investigations will not be successful if one does not fully make use of the possibilities of information exchange with other countries. Another aim of the working group is awareness raising within all sectors of society when it comes to combating trafficking in women for sexual exploitation.

Reports also suggest that victims of trafficking are afraid of talking to the police about their ordeals as they perceive the police as corrupted, hostile towards prostitutes and without real willingness to protect them against reprisals from the traffickers. In addition, reports also suggest that in too many places, foreign prostitutes are indeed treated as just criminals and illegal immigrants. They are subject

122ND INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE  
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

to deportation without any serious efforts to gather evidence about the way they were recruited in their home countries; the way they were transported across borders or the way they were exploited by pimps in the places they worked as prostitutes.

There is little doubt that in many countries the low level of successful investigations are as a direct result of prevailing negative attitudes within the police. If that negative attitude exists in your country, energy and resources must be put in place to change them. We must remember that combating trafficking might be simpler than we believe, if it is given the right approach and the right priority.

Interpol also proactively involve themselves in the analysis of information and intelligence received in order to provide our member states with a strategic overview of trends. For example, in July 1999, Interpol launched Project "Bridge", a general project on illegal immigration focusing on organised crime groups involved in the illegal immigration of Chinese nationals. It was noted in the past that much of the information regarding illegal immigration cases concentrated on the illegal immigrants themselves and not the organisations, methods and routes utilised. The project's emphasis was placed on identifying the membership and hierarchy of organisations that work in numerous countries, to facilitate a more effective and efficient program for the collection of information on organised crime groups involved in trafficking in people and to assist operational units with ongoing investigations.

Interpol members involved in Project Bridge have appointed contact officers who meet regularly in working group meetings. The information gathered allows Interpol to identify organisations that operate both nationally and internationally and conduct analytical studies.

Project Bridge focuses on people smuggling and is a success. Consequently we have extended this analytical method to other crime areas. In 2000 a study concentrating on trafficking of human beings from Latin America to Europe was undertaken. This study confirmed much of what was suspected, however, the findings are interesting.

Little information was available concerning trafficking in Latin American women for sexual exploitation. The scarce estimates concerning the number of women trafficked range from 2,000 women leaving their country of origin to 100,000 Latin American and Caribbean women being trafficked per year. The factual information showed that in general, the women range in age from 17 to 28, were of urban origin and had attained a medium-high level of education with some holding university degrees.

The Latin American countries most affected by trafficking in women for sexual exploitation include Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, and potentially women from Argentina, Peru and Venezuela. The most frequent destination countries for the victims are Spain, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland and the United States. Many routes used by the traffickers have been identified, however, the one that appeared most often in the framework of the analytical study is Colombia - Spain - Japan, although Japan was not the most popular destination.

The modus operandi employed by the traffickers involve a combination of the following tactics and confirmed what was already known:

- False promises of work abroad; in the majority of cases this involves work in childcare, housekeeping, waitressing or the hotel or entertainment industries. On rare occasions the women knew or suspect that they would be involved in prostitution but were not aware of the slave-like conditions in which they would find themselves.
- Debt bondage, in other words, upon arrival the women were told that they owed a certain amount of money for the voyage, etc. and must work to reimburse the debt.
- Retention of identity documents; often used to force the women into prostitution, controlling them and keeping them from fleeing or going to the police. This method was primarily employed when the women entered the country as potential tourists.
- Threats and the use of violence; mainly directed at the woman but occasionally extended to her family abroad. The threats most often involve physical violence, in particular when family is

concerned, or being turned over to police who, the women are told, will beat and rape them before repatriating them to their country of origin.

- Captivity was used in certain cases where the women were either locked in the brothel, a room or even chained to a bed.
- False identity documents were used on a few occasions to bring the women into the country clandestinely.
- Kidnapping has been employed in a small number of cases.

In general, the nationality of the offenders involved in the trafficking of Latin American women for sexual exploitation corresponded to that of the country of origin of the women, or that of the destination country. Various organized crime groups were mentioned as being vaguely implicated in the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation, however, more precise information on the identities of those involved was lacking.

Little information was forthcoming concerning the financial aspects of trafficking in Latin American women and where figures were mentioned it was not clearly indicated whether they referred to the profits or turnover. In one case, however, it was plainly stated that US \$2.5 million was earned over a two-year period from the trafficking of Mexican women and children to the United States for prostitution.

Following this study, the General Secretariat has now embarked on analysing the flow of women being trafficked into Western Europe. This project will focus, as does Project Bridge, on the organised criminal groups profiteering from the trafficking and despite its short life span to date has already provided valuable links with other crime areas.

To conclude, harmonisation of international legal instruments in the fight against human traffickers, at least between neighbouring countries, needs close co-operation between law enforcement agencies at the national and international level. An intensified comprehensive information exchange is of the utmost importance to avoid the effect of displacement of criminal activities.

In the present climate of general globalisation, a multi disciplinary approach which includes not only law enforcement, but also legislators, non-governmental organisations, development agencies, education, health and civil society is needed. In the future, Interpol will seek this approach and intends to continue to develop new methods of co-operation with the many organisations joining us in the fight against smuggling and trafficking in people.

We simply cannot allow the brutal criminality linked to smuggling and trafficking of people to continue. By working together, law enforcement authorities certainly have the means and ways to dismantle these criminal networks.