

Trafficking in Children: The Scope of the Problem and the International Legal Framework

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Note:

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In this paper, considering trafficking as modern-day slavery which affects more than 1.2 million children worldwide, the author deals with the various purposes of trafficking in children all over the world.

The slavery in the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam is focused and the applicable international laws against trafficking in children are enumerated and explained in this paper. Then the author gives several guidelines for drafting model legislation for protection of children and in the end claims that Islamic Law provides a comprehensive legal system that fully protects women and children and prohibits all forms of exploitation of human beings although contemporary practices in some Muslim countries contradict Islamic rules and principles and must be reformed

1. Trafficking as Modern-Day Slavery. Estimates suggest that trafficking in children affects more than 1.2 million children worldwide, and the Middle East is a region which is no exception to this tragic phenomenon. Trafficking in persons, especially children, represents a gross violation of human rights, namely the rights of children. Children who are trafficked become slaves for labor, sex, begging.

1.1. Definition of Modern-Day Slavery. The term ‘modern-day slavery’ means the status or condition of a person over whom any power attaching to the right of ownership or control is exercised by means of exploitation through involuntary servitude, forced labor, child labor, debt bondage or bonded labor, serfdom, peonage, trafficking in persons for forced labor or for sexual exploitation (including child sex tourism and child pornography), forced marriage, or other similar means.

1.2. What Does Slavery Look Like? A slave is not entitled to property because all of his possessions belong to his master. Slaves are forced to obtain the permission of their master to get married and are forced to marry one another. There is no punishment for a master who beats his slave to death.

1.3. Scope of the Problem of Trafficking in Children. Children may be trafficked for the purposes of illicit inter-country adoption, sex tourism, forced labor, the military, and for the purpose of the removal of organs.

1.3.1. Trafficking in Children for the Purpose of Illicit Inter-Country Adoption. The institution of inter-country adoption may be considered by some as a form of exploitation. “To some, international adoption presents in extreme form some of the problematic issues that are at the heart of all adoption. It can be viewed as the ultimate in the kind of exploitation inherent in every adoption, namely the taking by the rich and powerful of the children born to the poor and powerless. It tends to involve the adoption by the privileged classes in the industrialized nations of the children of the least privileged groups in the poorest nations, the adoption by whites of black- and brown-skinned children from various Third World nations, and the separation of children not only from their birthparents, but from their racial, cultural and national communities as well.”¹

Islamic countries do not allow adoption.² According to Islamic law, only guardianship (legal fostering or “care taking” or kafala) is allowed.³ For example, Muslims may support a child whose father is not known, however the child cannot inherit.⁴ The foster child retains inheritance rights from the birth family only.⁵ Furthermore the child is not allowed to take the name of the family providing support.⁶ So the child’s last name is not to be changed to that of non-biological parents. The guardian of the Muslim child must be Muslim.⁷

1.3.2. Trafficking in Children for the Purpose of Sex Tourism. Child sex tourism is an important form of sexual exploitation of children that often gets overlooked when attention is given to broader notions of commercial sexual exploitation of children under the umbrella of “child prostitution” or to child pornography. However, child sex tourism is a vast and extremely profitable business around the world and is linked to trafficking, with children from rural and impoverished areas trafficked toward tourist destinations or between countries for this purpose.

1.3.3. Trafficking in Children the Purpose of Forced Labor. Children are trafficked for the purpose of child labor in the forms of begging, camel jockeying, sweatshop labor, distribution of drugs and other criminal activities, and domestic service.

1.3.3.1. Trafficking in Children for the Purpose of Begging. This form of trafficking in children is prevalent in many countries around the world, including the Middle East. Children may be kidnapped, or sold with the permission of their parents for this purpose. They may be trafficked within or across borders, and then forced to beg on the street for a minimal compensation, or their earnings may be completely taken away and they are only provided with a little food and shelter. Children often work long hours, are physically abused by their exploiters if they collect less money than the exploiter expects, and, since they are working on the streets, are extremely vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

1.3.3.2. Trafficking in Children for the Purpose of Camel Jockeying. Children have traditionally been trafficked to countries of the Middle East to serve as camel jockeys, and are often placed into situations of compulsory or forced labor in slave-like conditions, which are frequently accompanied by physical abuse. Reports indicate that children as young as three may be either sold by their parents in exchange for as little as US\$500, or kidnapped, and taken to the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf States, where camel racing is a popular sport among the wealthy. Children are trafficked from Sudan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Today, these abusive practices are prohibited and various measures have been adopted by the Gulf States to protect the children. For example, in 2004 the government of Saudi Arabia has required that any camel jockey should not be less than eighteen years of age or weigh less than fifty-two kilograms. In the United Arab Emirates, a September 1, 2002 Decree prohibited the use of children under the age of fifteen, or children who weigh less than forty-five kilograms, as camel jockeys. However, the Emirates Camel Racing Federation should be sure to enforce the law, since failure to enforce this prohibition will contribute to the continued trafficking of children for the use as camel jockeys.

1.3.3.3. Trafficking in Children for the Purpose of Sweatshop Labor. Trafficking for the purpose of sweatshop labor is also an extremely profitable and widespread form of trafficking. Children may be trafficked for the purpose of forced labor in the textile and

light manufacturing fields.

1.3.3.4. Trafficking in Children for the Purpose of Distribution of Drugs and other Criminal Activities. Children may likewise be trafficked for the purposes of drug distribution, as well as theft and other criminal activities. In countries where the drug trade is prevalent, and large populations of children are impoverished (especially in areas where organized crime may be operating or where plants that are cultivate for drug production are grown), they may be extremely vulnerable to this type of exploitation. According to the International Labour Organization Convention 182 (on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour), the use children in the production, sale, and trafficking of drugs is one of the worst forms of child labor.

1.3.3.5. Trafficking in Children for the Purpose of Domestic Servitude. Another form of trafficking, which still poses a significant problem in countries of the Middle East, is domestic service. This form of trafficking also affects children, who may likewise be trafficked for this purpose. It is reported that domestic servants are required to work twelve to sixteen hours a day with little or no pay, are rarely given free time, are malnourished and often abused verbally and physically, and suffer from sexual exploitation. Out of fear, domestic servants often do not complain or report cases of sexual exploitation or abuse to the appropriate authorities. Employers often hold the domestic servants' passports and other travel documents, thus preventing them from leaving their jobs for other work, or returning home.

1.3.4. Trafficking in Children for Military Purposes. During armed conflicts in some parts of the world, children as young as eight-years-old are compulsorily recruited into the military and are subject to forced labor. Trafficking for military purposes entails the conscription, coercion, kidnapping, press-ganging and/or manipulation of persons, especially children under the age of 18, into armed forces (whether governmental or rebel groups) either to become a child soldier or to engage in military-related services, such as by becoming servants to military commanders. The most vulnerable victims of this form of trafficking are impoverished children with marginalized backgrounds who have become separated from their families in periods of armed conflict. However, in many cases, children may be forcibly separated from their parents and conscripted by armed groups during attacks on civilian populations.

1.3.5. Trafficking in Children for the Purpose of Removal of Organs. Reports indicate that in some countries, a trend of the trafficking of children for the purpose of removal of their organs may be noted. Anecdotal evidence exists of trafficking in organs, as reported by trafficked children from Albania returning from Greece; some NGOs have corroborated this evidence. A recent report stated that a considerable number of Albanian children have disappeared, often with the consent of their families, and investigations have shown that they may have been used for the sale of their organs.

1.4. Slavery and The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam. Article 11 of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam provides that “Human beings are born free, and no one has the right to enslave, humiliate, oppress or exploit them, and there can be no subjugation but to God the Most-High.” The Declaration further includes a number of other articles that are incompatible with slavery, although the Declaration, itself states: “All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are subject to the Islamic Shari’ah.” The Declaration clearly states that every man shall have the right, within the framework of Shari’ah, to free movement, that everyone shall be free to choose the work that suits him best and which serves his interests and those of society and, finally, that everyone shall have the right to privacy in the conduct of his private affairs, in his home, among his family, with regard to his property and his relationships. It is not permitted to spy on him, to place him under surveillance or to besmirch his good name. The Qur’an even rewards those who free slaves, for example [24:33] states:

“Those who cannot afford to get married shall maintain morality until God provides for them from His grace. Those among your servants who wish to be freed in order to marry, you shall grant them their wish, once you realize that they are honest. And give them from God’s money that He has bestowed upon you...”

[2:177] also provides:

“[R]ighteous is he who believeth in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Scripture and the prophets; and giveth wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free... Such are the Allah-fearing.”

2. Modern-Day Slavery in the Middle East. Slavery was explicitly outlawed by Qatar in 1951, Yemen and Saudi Arabia in 1962, and Mauritania in 1980.

2.1. Rights Accorded to Slaves in the Middle East: Recognition of the Principle of Non-Punishment of a Victim of Prostitution in Qu'ranic Legislation. Female slaves cannot be forced into prostitution. Qur'anic legislation, states: “And force not your maids to prostitution, if they desire chastity, in order that you may make a gain in the (perishable) goods of this worldly life. But if anyone compels them (to prostitution), then after such compulsion, Allah is forgiving, Most Merciful (to those women, i.e. He will forgive them because they have been forced to do this evil action unwillingly).”⁸

3. Rescuing Children. Rescuing child victims of trafficking is extremely difficult because the police lack the resources to locate the children and to take care of them once located. There is a need for a national plan to fight the practice of child slavery. In providing protection to child victims of trafficking or smuggling, due regard is supposed to be given to and all efforts shall be made in accordance to Article 39 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, stating that “States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.”

4. Applicable International Laws against Trafficking in Children. The applicable legal framework on trafficking in children consists of several provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Trafficking Protocol, and the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Human Trafficking.

4.1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The special rights and needs of children are enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, stating: “States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.”⁹

4.2. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Article 1 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and

Child Pornography provides that “States Parties shall prohibit the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.”¹⁰ Article 10 of the same Protocol provides that States Parties shall take all necessary steps to strengthen international cooperation by multilateral, regional and bilateral arrangements for the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution and punishment of those responsible for acts involving the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and child sex tourism. States Parties shall also promote international cooperation and coordination between their authorities, national and international non-governmental organizations and international organizations. States Parties shall promote international cooperation to assist child victims in their physical and psychological recovery, social reintegration and repatriation and promote the strengthening of international cooperation in order to address the root causes, such as poverty and underdevelopment, contributing to the vulnerability of children, to the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and child sex tourism.¹¹

4.3. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts. Article 2 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts provides that “States Parties shall ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces.”¹² Article 3 further provides that “States Parties that permit voluntary recruitment into their national armed forces under the age of 18 years shall maintain safeguards to ensure, as a minimum, that: (a) Such recruitment is genuinely voluntary; (b) Such recruitment is carried out with the informed consent of the person's parents or legal guardians; (c) Such persons are fully informed of the duties involved in such military service; (d) Such persons provide reliable proof of age prior to acceptance into national military service.¹³

4.4. The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The UN Protocol specifically addresses trafficking in children. According to Article 3(c) of the Protocol:

- (a) “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; (b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used; (c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article; (d) “Child” shall mean any person under *eighteen years of age.*¹⁴

4.5. The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The European Convention imposes upon the states an obligation to ensure that the following circumstances are regarded as aggravating circumstances in the determination of the penalty for offences established in accordance with Article 18 of the Convention:

- a) the offence deliberately or by gross negligence endangered the life of the victim;
- b) the offence was committed against a child;
- c) the offence was committed by a public official in the performance of her/his duties;
- the offence was committed within the framework of a criminal organization.¹⁵

4.5.1. Identifying Victims under the European Convention. In identifying victims of trafficking, the European Convention calls for “taking into account the special situation of [...] child victims,” especially “when the age of the victim is uncertain and there are reasons to believe that the victim is a child, he or she shall be presumed to be a child and shall be accorded special protection measures pending verification of his/her age.” Under the European Convention, once an unaccompanied child is identified as a victim, the child should be entitled to representation by a legal guardian or other, and the state must take the necessary steps to establish identity and nationality and unite the child with his or her family.

5. The Vulnerable Victim Doctrine. Children are especially vulnerable and have special needs that must be addressed in the context of trafficking. The “vulnerable victim” is a victim who is

unusually vulnerable due to age, physical or mental condition, or who is otherwise particularly susceptible to the criminal conduct. A child victim is always a vulnerable victim who should be entitled to special protection under anti-trafficking laws. The U.N. Protocol in article 6 recognized the “special need[s] of children, including appropriate housing, education and care.” The European Convention is more detailed in providing for such special needs. It calls for a “child-rights approach” and “a child-sensitive approach in the development, implementation and assessment of all the policies and programs.” In addition, the European Convention states that the privacy of the child victim must be protected, any residence permit must be issued for a child victim in the best interest of the child, and such child should be allowed this status if it is not in the best interest of the child to return to his/her country of origin based upon “a risk and security assessment.”

6. Guidelines for Drafting Model Legislation. One of the most important elements of any model legislation is the recognition of the trafficked person as a victim who is entitled to basic human rights, especially when the victim is a child. It is also important to resolve any inconsistencies between current laws and the provisions of the UN Conventions.

6.1. Establishing a Universal Definition of a “Child.” Especially important is to adopt a universal definition of a “child” in all national legislation in compliance with international legal standards that recommend defining a “child” as any person below the age of 18 years old, such as per Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 2 of the International Labor Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, and Article 3 of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

6.2. Increasing the Minimum Age of Marriage. It is suggested that the minimum age of marriage should be raised 18 years old in order to counter vulnerabilities created by early marriages of children, which may deprive them, especially girls, of the right to education, health, and make them vulnerable to trafficking and smuggling.

6.3. Enforcing the Minimum Age of Employment. The ILO Minimum Age Convention n. 138 of 1973 provides in article 3 that the minimum age of admission to any work that is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of young persons shall not be under 18

years. However, national laws or competent authority may authorize work from the age of 16 years.¹⁶ The convention further provides that in a State whose economy and educational facilities are underdeveloped the minimum age should be 14 years.¹⁷

6.4. Incorporating the Vulnerable Victim Doctrine into Legislation. Children must be recognized as an especially vulnerable population and child victims of trafficking have special rights and needs that must be protected, therefore the vulnerable victim doctrine must be codified.

6.5. A Minor whose Age is Unknown Should Be Presumed a Child. When the age of the victim is uncertain, and there are reasons to believe that the victim is a child, the presumption must be that the victim is, in fact, a child. Pending verification of the victim's age, the victim will be treated as a child and will be accorded all special protection measures as specified throughout this paper.

6.6. Decriminalization of the Child Victim. The involvement of a child victim in criminal activities should not undermine their status as both a child and a victim, and his/her related rights to special protection. Children should always be deemed incapable of consent, whether such consent relates to sex, or dangerous or inappropriate labor.

6.7. The Best Interest of the Child is Preeminent. In all actions concerning child victims, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, police, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration.

6.8. To the Extent Appropriate, Children Should Be Allowed to Participate in Decisions Regarding Their Future. A child victim who is capable of forming his or her own views enjoys the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting him or her, for example, in decisions concerning his or her return to the family or country of origin. The views of the child shall be given due weight in accordance with his or her age, maturity and best interests.

6.9. Guardianship. As recommended by UNICEF, a “guardianship” office should be created under the auspices of an appropriate ministry, for repatriated child victims of trafficking. Finalize the mandate of the guardianship, including the responsibilities of the guardian, the definition of the “best interests of the child,” the requirements for the selection of a

guardian, and necessary training for the guardian. A guardian shall be appointed to a child as soon as that child victim is identified, and shall serve in that capacity until a durable solution in the best interests of the child may be determined.

6.10. Identification and Prevention Measures. Pro-active strategies to identify child victims of trafficking before they are trafficked should be developed and implemented. This includes raising awareness among members of civil society. Training police officers and teachers, for example, may help those persons to identify victims and potential victims.

6.10.1. Special Training for Law Enforcement. The child shall be interviewed and debriefed by the law enforcement authorities in the presence of an NGO representative or the guardian, as appointed. Only trained law enforcement officials familiar with the special needs of children shall interview the child victim.

To this end, a special anti-trafficking and smuggling of children police unit shall be established and equipped with the appropriate training for working with children, as per the United Nations Regional Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in the Middle East and North Africa, stating that “States shall establish specialized operational law enforcement units at the national level to combat trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants in cooperation with other relevant agencies.”

6.11. Ensure the Child Receives Benefits and is Provided with Rehabilitative Services. Following identification and interviewing of a child victim, the child shall be immediately transferred to a shelter. Ensure that the child has access to legal representation, psychological and medical care, and support of appropriate NGOs.

Emphasize psychological rehabilitation and train appropriate personnel to assist the recovery and rehabilitation of child victims of trafficking, recognizing that large numbers of children trafficked may have undergone deprivation of shelter, life on the street, physical abuse and sexual exploitation.

Develop referral networks connecting law enforcement, the guardianship office and NGOs so as to provide rapid, efficient and structured assistance and protection to children identified as victims of trafficking and smuggling: put in place cooperation agreements between law enforcement and NGOs.

Develop policies that would allow social workers to regularly check with the family to which a child has been returned to be sure that the child is being taken care of and has not been trafficked again.

Develop and implement programs that provide the children with shelter, necessary and competent psychological and medical assistance, as well as education programs and vocational training. In shelters, provide activities for the children that are beneficial to their future. Develop shelter regulations and rules that would be followed as a standard and train personnel.

6.12. Hold the Child's Family Accountable Where Appropriate.

Severe penalties should be imposed against families that have repeatedly facilitated the trafficking of their own children or allowing the same. A standard protocol shall be developed for social workers working with these families in making the decision regarding whether the child may be reunified with the family. For example, the newly proposed article 262 of the Criminal Code of Yemen for instance makes a guardian liable if he gives his child over to another person with the knowledge that his child will end up in a situation of exploitation, i.e. begging.

6.13. Reintegration where Appropriate. Creation of a fund assisting the families in reintegrating their children shall be considered. Work likewise toward reintegrating the families of returning children. In making determinations regarding the reunification of the trafficked or smuggled child with a family that consented or initiated the trafficking or smuggling of the child, the State must take into account Article 9 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child stating that appropriate judicial determination may be necessary in cases “involving abuse or neglect”.

The best interests of the child must be determined and followed in all such cases. According to Article 20 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, “A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State... State Parties shall in accordance with their own laws ensure alternative care for such a child”.

6.14. Birth Registration. Birth registration is critical for the protection of children especially when they return home after being trafficked. If the child has no identity, it is impossible to reunify the child with the family, if such a course would be beneficial to the child. This is why it is imperative to work to ensure that every child is registered at birth, as required by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, stating in Article 7 that:

"The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents."¹⁸

Provide children with no documentation with temporary documents. In this regard, article 7 of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children provides that each State Party shall consider adopting legislative or other appropriate measures that permit victims of trafficking in persons to remain in its territory, temporarily or permanently, in appropriate cases.

7. Toward a Comprehensive Islamic Legal Framework to Combat Trafficking in Children. Islamic Law provides a comprehensive legal system that fully protects women and children and prohibits all forms of exploitation of human beings. Islam prohibits compulsory labor, forced labor, child labor, prostitution and trafficking for the purpose of prostitution. However, these general provisions should be carefully studied to form a legal framework that specifically addresses the issue of trafficking in children. Specific provisions of the Quran and the traditions of the prophets should be analyzed in the context of trafficking in human beings. It is not enough to refer to the general rules of Islam.

Another problem that should also be examined is Islamic institutions that may constitute forms of trafficking in accordance with international human rights law. These institutions include early marriage, child marriage, slavery and practices similar to slavery. An argument should be made that Islam does not allow slavery and requires maturity for marriage, although it did not specify a specific age for marriage.

Finally, contemporary practices in some Muslim countries contradict Islamic rules and principles and must be reformed and changed, whether using children as camel jockeys or in armed conflicts or exploiting domestic servants and other forms of exploitation that we witness today in the Muslim world.

1. Elizabeth Bartholet, *International Adoption: Current Status and Future Prospects*, 3 THE FUTURE OF CHILDREN 89, 90 (1993).

2. Atiqah Ghaffar, *Adoption in Islam*, IICA, Jul. 11, 2002, <http://www.iica.org/iica/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=1>. Accord Daniel Pollack et al., *Classical Religious Perspectives on Adoption Law*, 79 NOTRE DAME L. REV. 693, 732-752 (2004).

3. *Id.*

4. *Id.*

5. *Id.*

6. *Id.*

7. *Id.*
8. Qur'an 24:33
9. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, (1989) Article 35.
10. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography A/RES/54/263 of 25 May 2000, article 1.
11. *Id.*, article 10.
12. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts, A/RES/54/263 of 25 May 2000, article 2.
13. *Id.*, article 3.
14. The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, article 3.
15. Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, Council of Europe Treaty Series - No. 197, article 18.
16. ILO 183 Minimum Age Convention (1973), art. 2.
17. *Id.*
18. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, (1989) Article 7.