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## 1. Letter from the Chair.

Dear Delegates, Esteemed Advisors, and distinguished guests,

Our names are Martin Bernal and Luisa Cano, and we are more than pleased to be participating in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) committee at the MOSMUN XV Internal Model. It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the Chair of this committee, and we are eager to engage in constructive dialogue and collaborative problem-solving throughout our session.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, founded at a time of great worry regarding the rise of international crime and drug trafficking, represents a historic effort to establish and conserve measures aimed at solving these issues. The aim is to create a more prosperous, peaceful, and safe future for all. As we gather in the spirit of safety and peace, we must approach our discussions with an open mind, a commitment to understanding diverse perspectives, and a dedication to finding innovative solutions to the challenges before us.

Slavery in South and South East Asia is a topic that goes beyond the immediate impact of the infringement of the human rights of the enslaved. It rather is a representation of the scourges that soar across many-if-not-all nations globally. Whether it be by collective ignorance, or a fear to accept the realities of the world, most have ignored not only the long-lasting impacts of slavery across our planet, but the crude reality millions suffer every day.

To ensure a productive and orderly committee session, we kindly request that all delegates familiarize themselves with the Rules of Procedure and adhere to the established guidelines. Courtesy and a spirit of collaboration will be paramount as we navigate the complexities of international relations.

If you have any questions or concerns before the session, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to meeting each of you and embarking on a rewarding and impactful Model United Nations experience.

Kind regards,

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## 2. Introduction to the committee.

### *a. Historical context.*

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has a rich history that reflects the evolution of international responses to the pressing issues of drug trafficking, organized crime, and corruption. Established in 1997, UNODC was created from a need for a coordinated approach to these interrelated challenges, based on decades of prior efforts by the United Nations and its member states.

The roots of UNODC can be traced back to the early 20th century, with the establishment of various international drug control treaties. The first significant step was the 1912 Hague International Opium Convention, which aimed to regulate the opium trade. This was followed by the 1936 Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs, which sought to combat drug trafficking on a global scale. In the post-World War II era, the UN took a more active role in drug control. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs was adopted in 1961, consolidating previous treaties and establishing a framework for international drug control. This convention marked a significant milestone, as it aimed to limit the availability of narcotic drugs for medical and scientific purposes while combating illicit trafficking.

In the 1990s, as drug-related issues became increasingly complex and globalized, the UN recognized the need for a dedicated agency to address these challenges. This led to the establishment of the United Nations Drug Control Programme in 1991, which focused on coordinating international efforts to combat drug trafficking and abuse. Concurrently, the Centre

for International Crime Prevention was created in 1992 to address a broader range of transnational crimes, including organized crime and corruption. The emergence of these organizations highlighted the growing recognition of the interconnectedness of drug-related issues with other forms of crime and corruption. The need for a comprehensive approach encompassing drug control and crime prevention became increasingly evident.

In 1997, the UNODC was officially established through the merger of the UNDCP and the CICP, creating a unified entity with a broader mandate. This merger aimed to enhance the effectiveness of international responses to the many challenges posed by drugs and crime. The new office was tasked with coordinating efforts to combat drug trafficking, organized crime, corruption, and terrorism, reflecting the UN's commitment to a comprehensive and integrated approach. In 2002, the organization adopted its current name, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to better reflect its expanded mandate and focus on these critical issues. The committee's establishment marked a significant turning point in the global fight against drugs and crime, providing a platform for international cooperation and collaboration among member states.

Since its formation, UNODC has played a pivotal role in shaping international drug and crime policies. A notable milestone was the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in 2000, also known as the Palermo Convention. This treaty aimed to promote international cooperation in combating organized crime and established protocols to address human trafficking and migrant smuggling. This organization has also been instrumental in the development of various international drug control treaties, including the United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2003, which aimed to promote integrity and

accountability in public and private sectors. These conventions reflect the UNODC's commitment to fostering a global response to drugs, crime, and corruption challenges.

### **Recent Developments and Future Directions**

In recent years, UNODC has continued to adapt to emerging threats, such as cybercrime and the evolving landscape of drug trafficking. The organization has expanded its focus to include issues like the trafficking of synthetic drugs and the impact of globalization on crime. Additionally, the committee has emphasized the importance of evidence-based policies and the need for comprehensive data collection to inform decision-making.

The UNODC's strategic vision for the future aims to enhance international cooperation, strengthen the rule of law, and promote sustainable development. By addressing the root causes of drug abuse, crime, and corruption, this organization seeks to create a safer and more just world.

In conclusion, the historical context of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reflects a long-standing commitment to addressing the complex challenges posed by drugs, crime, and corruption. Through its evolution from early drug control efforts to a comprehensive agency tackling a wide range of issues, UNODC plays a crucial role in promoting international cooperation and supporting member states in their fight against these global challenges.

#### ***b. Functions and objectives.***

#### **Functions of the UNODC**

##### **1. Research and Data Collection**

The UNODC is recognized as a leading authority in the fields of drugs and crime. It conducts extensive research to provide evidence-based insights that inform policymaking. The organization publishes key reports, such as the *World Drug Report*, which assesses global drug trends and informs member states about the evolving landscape of drug trafficking and abuse. This research underpins UNODC's initiatives and helps governments understand the implications of drug-related issues on public health and safety.

## 2. Policy Guidance and Support

One of the UNODC's primary functions is to assist member states in adopting and implementing international conventions and treaties related to drug control, crime prevention, and anti-corruption. This includes providing technical and financial assistance adapted to the specific challenges faced by different countries. The organization helps develop national legislative frameworks and strategies to combat organized crime, human trafficking, and corruption, thus enhancing the capacity of governments to address these issues effectively.

## 3. Capacity Building and Training

UNODC emphasizes the importance of building national capacities through training and workshops. It organizes programs to enhance the skills of law enforcement agencies, judicial authorities, and other stakeholders involved in combating drugs and crime. For example, the Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities facilitates cross-border cooperation and information exchange among anti-corruption authorities, which is crucial for tackling transnational corruption effectively.

## 4. International Cooperation

Given the transnational nature of drug trafficking and organized crime, UNODC fosters international cooperation among member states. It encourages the sharing of best practices and intelligence to disrupt criminal networks. The organization contributes to the coordination of global responses to emerging threats, such as cybercrime and terrorism, by facilitating dialogues among governments, civil society, and the private sector.

### Objectives of the UNODC

#### 1. Combating Drug Trafficking and Abuse

The UNODC's primary objective is to combat the illicit drug trade and reduce drug abuse and its associated health consequences. This involves implementing international drug control conventions, promoting evidence-based drug policies, and supporting treatment and rehabilitation services for individuals affected by drug use. By addressing demand and supply, UNODC aims to mitigate the impact of drugs on societies.

#### 2. Addressing Organized Crime

UNODC works to dismantle transnational organized crime networks that engage in activities such as human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and money laundering. The organization assists countries in developing effective legal frameworks and institutions to combat these crimes, thereby contributing to global security and stability. This includes initiatives to strengthen border control and strengthen law enforcement capabilities.

#### 3. Preventing Corruption

Corruption undermines the rule of law and hinders development. UNODC's anti-corruption efforts focus on promoting integrity in public institutions and enhancing cooperation among law enforcement authorities. The agency provides tools and resources to help countries implement the United Nations Convention against Corruption and strengthen their legal frameworks to prevent and combat corruption effectively.

#### 4. Countering Terrorism

In counter-terrorism, UNODC supports member states in preventing and addressing terrorism-related activities. This includes providing guidance on legal frameworks, enhancing international cooperation, and developing strategies to counter-finance terrorism. The organization recognizes that effective criminal justice systems are essential for addressing the root causes of terrorism and promoting peace and security.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime serves as a crucial entity in the global fight against drugs, crime, and corruption. Through its many functions and objectives, UNODC assists member states in addressing immediate challenges and promotes long-term strategies for sustainable development and peace. By fostering international cooperation and providing essential resources, UNODC contributes significantly to creating a safer and more just world.

### 3. Topic A: Modern-day Slavery in South and South East Asian countries

#### *a. Historical background.*

Slavery in South and Southeast Asia has a complex history that spans centuries, influenced by local traditions, regional power dynamics, religious practices, and the interaction with external forces such as colonialism, war, and trade. The institution of slavery in these regions, while different from the Atlantic slave trade in the Americas, was deeply rooted in the social, economic, and political structure of societies across Asia.

In South Asia, particularly in the Indian subcontinent, slavery has a long history that dates back to ancient times. The earliest references to slavery in this region are from the Vedic period between 1500 and 500 BCE. During this time, slaves were often prisoners of war or people who had fallen into servitude due to economic hardships. Over time, slavery in South Asia evolved into various forms, including domestic slavery, temple slavery, and bonded labor. In the medieval period, especially under the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire, the institution of slavery expanded significantly. Enslaved people were frequently employed in the army, administration, and as domestic workers. The arrival of Islamic rulers brought new changes to slavery in the region, including the importation of slaves from Central Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. However, unlike in the transatlantic slave trade, the practice in South Asia was less characterized by racial distinctions, and slaves could sometimes achieve positions of power and influence, particularly in the military.



The caste system, deeply rooted in the social structure of South Asia, especially India also played a significant role in perpetuating various forms of servitude. Certain lower-caste groups, particularly those deemed untouchable, were subjected to hereditary forms of servitude and exploitation. Although not always legally classified as slavery, these practices often amounted to similar conditions of oppression and lack of freedom.

In Southeast Asia, the history of slavery is equally intricate, influenced by the diverse cultures, kingdoms, and empires that dominated the region. Slavery in this region typically involved a variety of practices, including debt enslavement, prisoner slavery, and even voluntary servitude. The nature of slavery varied from region to region, reflecting local customs and economic needs.

In the powerful kingdoms of mainland Southeast Asia, such as the Khmer Empire in present-day Cambodia and the Ayutthaya Kingdom in Thailand, slavery was a significant institution. Slaves were frequently used for labor-intensive projects such as building temples, palaces, and infrastructure. They also served in households and were used as a form of currency in trade and tax systems.

The Malay Archipelago, in what is now Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, also had a history of slavery. The maritime nature of these societies meant that slaves were regularly used in trade and as labor on plantations and in ports. The practice of *debt bondage* was particularly prevalent, where individuals would become slaves to pay off debts. In some cases, entire villages could be enslaved due to warfare or raids by neighboring tribes or kingdoms. The arrival of European colonizers in Southeast Asia in the 16th century introduced new dynamics to the existing systems of slavery. The



Portuguese, Dutch, and British, among others, integrated local slavery practices into their colonial economies. The Dutch East India Company, played a significant role in the slave trade, using enslaved people as labor in their colonies, particularly in Batavia, modern-day Jakarta. The British, who later controlled much of South and Southeast Asia, also relied on various forms of forced labor, including the transportation of enslaved laborers from India to work in Southeast Asia.

The abolition of slavery in South and Southeast Asia was a gradual process influenced by internal reforms and external pressures. In South Asia, British colonial rule played a significant role in the abolition of slavery. The British, who abolished slavery throughout their empire in 1833, implemented legal measures to end the practice in India. However, these measures were often only partially successful, as various forms of bonded labor and servitude persisted long after formal abolition. In Southeast Asia, the abolition of slavery occurred at different times in different regions, depending on the colonial powers in control. The Dutch abolished slavery in the Dutch East Indies in 1860, while the British abolished slavery in their Southeast Asian colonies over the 19th century. In some areas, such as Thailand, slavery was abolished through internal reforms; King Chulalongkorn implemented a series of legal changes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that gradually ended slavery without significant social upheaval.

*b. Current situation*

Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.” Although there have been numerous world attempts to forfeit slavery, it is still present in the society of today, taking both its old tendencies and newer ones. Modern-day slavery is described as any situation where a person is exploited, and cannot leave or refuse because of violence, abuse of power, threats, deception, coercion, or anything similar. Individuals in these circumstances work in various industries, like textile or garment manufacturing. They are found in all contexts, for instance in private settlements, and are subject to labor and poor treatment. As per the Global Slavery Index 2023, an estimated 50 million individuals were residing in modern-day slavery on any given day in the year 2021. According to that report, its largest numbers are in countries such as India, China, Russia, Indonesia, Türkiye, and the United States. Women, children, migrants, and people belonging to any marginalized group, are often the ones living in these kinds of circumstances, nevertheless, modern-day slavery can affect anyone.

In the same way, everything else evolves as time passes, modern slavery is not the exception. Common forms the slavery of today takes include human trafficking, where violence, threats, and coercion are the methods used to make use of its victims for forced labor, marriage, prostitution, and even organ removal. Forced labor takes place when individuals are pressured to work or provide services against their will, or with fear of severe punishment. Debt bondage or bonded labor, also known as debt slavery, is the world’s most common form of modern slavery, given it takes advantage of people in situations of poverty who resort to borrowing money and are ultimately forced to work in

poor conditions to pay off debt. Descent-based slavery, similar to ancient times, is when people are treated as property. Therefore, their “slave” status can be passed down from generation to generation, which can also lead to cases of child slavery, where children are abused for someone else’s gain, no matter what it is. Forced and early marriage is also considered a form of modern slavery, as individuals are married against their will and with no way to leave, this type of slavery also covers most child marriages. Finally, there is domestic servitude, although when it is regulated properly it can become an important source of income for many. However, there are instances where individuals may be vulnerable to all kinds of abuses, exploitation, and slavery, as these situations may lack legal protection or are hidden from public sight.

Asia and the Pacific are highly vulnerable regions, with an estimated 15 million people in forced labor. Yes, modern-day slavery can happen anywhere and to anyone, however, countries with circumstances such as conflict, political instability, and economic insecurity increase vulnerability rates. Not only that, but the aftermath of the pandemic and climate change, which increased unemployment, gender inequality, and poverty, contribute to the risk of individuals becoming victims of modern-day slavery. In addition, due to the declining humanitarian situation in certain countries and regions, collecting data, and conducting surveys and studies to give an outlook on the situation has become difficult. This makes it much more likely that the rate of people living in modern slavery is higher than expected.

Modern-day slavery can be found in any kind of industry, especially those with high demand, like, for instance, in garment factories. Modern slavery is tainted all over the textile and garment-making industry, from stages like the acquisition of raw materials

to manufacturing products to distribute to brands and buyers. Acts of exploitation include little to no pay, forced labor, working long hours and locking workers in factories, lack of social benefits or access to healthcare services, sick pay, pensions, and many more. Companies pushing for lower costs to maximize profits and the high demand for fashion make the textile and garment industry the perfect place to indulge in exploitative practices. These tendencies range from poor working conditions and low wages to worsening cases like forced labor and debt bondage, as previously explained.

There may indeed be cases where someone may willingly decide to take on any job they want, nonetheless, the issue begins when they are obliged against their will to do so. This is the case for sex workers, as there are individuals who choose to participate while others are simply victims of modern slavery and sex trafficking. However, it is true that this field of work, regardless of why an individual has or has not chosen, often experiences a constant violation of work integrity and human rights, due to the lack of protection sex workers have. Now add to the fact that sex workers are frequently excluded from society, and susceptible to mental health issues, and violence, among others. That there are individuals having people who are forced to go through this and have no say about it. Slavery among sex workers is also related to sex trafficking, and in both, people are subjected to violence and forced to provide a service without their consent. The situation goes to such an extent, that things like consent age are ignored, making anyone of any age or group completely vulnerable, especially those living in poverty and who are presented with sex work as an escape route.

Traces of the exportation of slave laborers to Europe date way back in human history, however in today's modern world it has shape-shifted into something different.

What before was the exportation of slave laborers, today is human trafficking and forced labor. These clear acts of violence against human rights often occur in South and Southeast Asian countries, where many undeserving people live with low-quality lifestyles, poor healthcare, and horrid working conditions with no escape. Just to mention some of the challenges they face. Individuals are treated like objects and machines rather than human beings, and the purpose they have been given degrades being alive, turning their existence into torture just to serve industries that lack transparency. Thousands of consumers are clueless about the countless lives going into the products they purchase.

*c. Previous resolutions.*

Modern-day slavery continues to be an issue in the society of today, nevertheless, throughout history, there are existing measures taken to tackle this global problem which affects the lives of thousands. Measures taken by international bodies and launching organizations worldwide to combat modern slavery include:

- ActionAid International:

They launched the Combatting Modern Slavery Project in 2021, which aims to eradicate modern slavery by working collaboratively with governments, businesses, and vulnerable groups. The project mainly focuses on victims, which is why it highlights the importance of the identification process, protection, and remediation for them.

- Anti-slavery International:

This organization focuses on shifting the way the system works by partnering up with survivors of modern slavery, governments, businesses, international organizations, and communities to establish long-term and realistic solutions in systems that allow slavery to exist. They mainly focus on fomenting responsible business practices, ending child slavery, migration, and trafficking, and even the relation between modern slavery and climate change.

- International Labor Organization (ILO):

It has created key conventions and protocols to fight forced labor and provides crucial guidance when developing National Action Plans. Additionally, it partners up with businesses through initiatives such as the ILO Global Business Network on Forced Labor. Some of the protocols that the ILO has established include the Forced Labor Convention (No. 29), the Abolition of Forced Labor Convention (No. 105), and the Protocol to the Forced Labor Convention (P029).

- United Nations:

Among the efforts made by the United Nations, besides the treaties and conventions addressing the issue, what may be highlighted the most is establishing the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery on December 2nd of every year. The focus of the day is to find measures that eradicate acts of modern slavery like trafficking in persons, forced labor, sexual exploitation, child labor, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict, among others. Not only this, but back in 2007 a mandate by the name of “Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery” to enhance the current

response the United Nations withholds. Overall, the mandate covers aspects like the promotion of international norms, gathering information, advising for measures, distinct focus areas of modern slavery, and looking into different work methodologies to tackle the problem.

- Walk Free Foundation:

The Walk Free Foundation's initiatives towards forfeiting modern slavery include providing an annual Global Slavery Index, which provides key data on the current circumstances, informing the international community to grasp an idea of the situation. It advocates for law reforms that hold businesses accountable for their actions and contributions to modern slavery. They partner up with numerous governments, stakeholders, community organizations, and businesses to lead systemic change and progress with the creation of effective strategies to better the situation. Walk Free emphasizes in the importance of granting the power to survivors when it comes to decision-making processes and constantly involving them in advocacy efforts. Finally, this foundation shows constant support and research to fill up the knowledge gaps regarding modern slavery, this way they ensure effective and accurate interventions and responses.

In addition, in recent years, countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Australia have some of the world's best and strict legislation to combat modern slavery. Highlighting measures taken by such nations and others include:

- Modern Slavery Act, 2018 (Australia)



- Loi de Vigilance or French Corporate Duty of Vigilance Law, 2017 (France)
- Supply Chain Act, 2021 (Germany)
- The Modern Slavery Act, 2015 (United Kingdom)
- The California Transparency in Supply Chains Act, 2010 (California, USA)
- State of New York 2022, Assembly Bill A8352 (New York, USA)
- United States 2022, S. 3578 Slave-Free Business Certification Act (USA)

Finally, regarding specific issues of modern slavery like what can be found in the garment-making industry and sex workers, several organizations and guidelines have been created to address specific issues in industries prone to modern slavery. For slavery for sex workers in South and Southeast Asia, there is an existing organization called the Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers (APNSW), which branches out of the Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP). The APNSW veils for the protection of sex workers to end violence in this field of work and combat issues related to modern slavery. On the other hand, when it comes to slavery in the garment industry, the United Nations established the “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights” which ought to reduce the abuse of human rights in the field of work and business. Organizations like the Slave-Free Alliance work towards a slave-free supply chain, helping protect those in modern slavery and labor exploitation. Not only do organizations contribute to the cause, but activist movements like the Fashion Revolution advocate for citizen mobilization, brands, and policymakers to change the system into a slave-free one, where people and the environment are more valuable than profit.



*d. QUARMAS*

1. What is the history of slavery in your country? And has it had a long-lasting impact on your country's economy, culture, demographics, politics, etc.? If so, explain this impact.
2. What elements have caused the particular rise of slavery in South and South East Asian countries? What historical, cultural, political, or economic factors create an environment where slavery is widespread?
3. What are the most prevalent forms of modern slavery in your country or region today, What groups are the most vulnerable, and what role do organized crime networks play in it?
4. What legal frameworks exist at both the national and international levels that aim to prevent slavery? What can be done to improve the effectiveness of these measures?
5. How can South and South East strengthen regional cooperation to address this issue? Should an international body be created, or what specific measures should be adopted?
6. What role should international organizations such as the UN and the UNODC play in combating slavery?

*e. Delegation's positions.*

- United States of America

The U.S. acknowledges that the most prevalent forms of modern slavery in these regions include human trafficking for labor and sexual exploitation, child labor, and forced marriage. The U.S. recognizes the role of organized crime networks in facilitating

these forms of exploitation and advocates for stronger regional cooperation to dismantle these networks. At the international level, the U.S. emphasizes the importance of adhering to frameworks like the Palermo Protocol and the International Labor Organization. Domestically, the U.S. supports strengthening legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms in South and Southeast Asian countries through educational initiatives, financial assistance, and technical support. The U.S. advocates for enhanced regional cooperation, with organizations such as ASEAN to coordinate anti-slavery efforts. Furthermore, the U.S. believes in the crucial role of international organizations such as the UN as vital networks for the prevention and prosecution of international slavery.

- Russian Federations

The Russian Federation acknowledges the complex historical, cultural, and economic factors contributing to modern slavery in South and Southeast Asia. However, Russia emphasizes the importance of respecting national sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs. Russia recognizes that poverty, inequality, and lack of education are causes of slavery and advocates for addressing these issues through economic development. Russia stresses the need for stronger national legislation and effective law enforcement to combat these issues. While Russia supports international legal frameworks, it emphasizes that each country should be free to implement these according to its legal traditions and circumstances. Russia is cautious about the creation of new international bodies, preferring to strengthen existing mechanisms such as the UNODC and ILO, and enhancing cooperation through existing channels.

- People's Republic of China

The People's Republic of China attributes the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia to a combination of historical legacies, economic disparities, and the influence of organized crime. China acknowledges that human trafficking, forced labor, and child exploitation are significant issues in the region. Vulnerable groups such as migrant workers and ethnic minorities are particularly at risk. China advocates for a collaborative approach, emphasizing the need for stronger regional partnerships and the implementation of national strategies tailored to each country's unique challenges. While China supports international cooperation, it emphasizes respect for national sovereignty and prefers that existing international organizations, including the UNODC, focus on capacity-building and technical assistance rather than creating new bodies.

- Federal Republic of Germany

The Federal Republic of Germany identifies the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia as a consequence of deep-rooted economic inequalities, weak governance, and the influence of organized crime. Germany is particularly concerned about the trafficking of persons, forced labor, and the exploitation of women and children in the region. Germany strongly supports the strengthening of national and international legal frameworks and advocates for enhanced regional cooperation to address these challenges. Furthermore, Germany believes that international organizations such as the UN and the UNODC should play a key role in coordinating efforts, providing technical assistance, and promoting human rights standards. Additionally, Germany calls for increased

international funding and support to help countries in the region build the necessary infrastructure to combat slavery effectively.

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The United Kingdom recognizes that slavery in South and Southeast Asia is driven by economic disparities, social inequalities, and weak governance structures, which are often exploited by organized crime networks. The UK considers forced labor, human trafficking, and child exploitation as the most prevalent forms of modern slavery in the region, with women, children, and migrant workers being the most vulnerable. The UK strongly supports international legal frameworks like the Palermo Protocol and emphasizes the need for their rigorous implementation. The UK advocates for stronger regional cooperation and believes that existing international organizations, particularly the UNODC, should lead efforts in providing technical assistance, promoting best practices, and enhancing cross-border collaboration to combat slavery.

- French Republic

The French Republic views the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia as a consequence of persistent economic inequalities, cultural practices, and political instability that create an environment ripe for exploitation. France is particularly concerned about human trafficking, forced labor, and the exploitation of women and children. France calls for the reinforcement of both national and international legal frameworks, including the adoption of stricter measures to combat organized crime. France supports the idea of enhancing regional cooperation through existing bodies like ASEAN and believes the UNODC should focus on capacity-building and technical

support to ensure these measures are effectively implemented. France also encourages international collaboration to share best practices and resources in the fight against modern slavery.

- Japan

Japan attributes the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia to historical economic disparities, inadequate legal protections, and the influence of organized crime. Japan is particularly concerned about the trafficking of persons, forced labor, and child exploitation. Japan advocates for a collaborative approach, emphasizing the importance of strengthening national legal frameworks, improving enforcement mechanisms, and enhancing regional cooperation. Japan supports the role of the UNODC in coordinating international efforts and providing technical assistance, but it also calls for more robust regional initiatives that respect the sovereignty of individual nations while promoting shared goals. Japan is committed to working with both regional and international partners to address the root causes of modern slavery and protect vulnerable populations.

- Republic of India

The Republic of India acknowledges that slavery in South and Southeast Asia is driven by economic challenges, social inequalities, and the activities of organized crime networks. India identifies forced labor, human trafficking, and child exploitation as the most pressing issues, with marginalized communities, including women, children, and migrant workers, being the most affected. India emphasizes the importance of national legal frameworks and their effective enforcement, while also advocating for enhanced regional cooperation to address cross-border trafficking. India supports the role of the

UNODC in providing technical assistance and promoting regional collaboration but stresses that any measures must respect national sovereignty. India is committed to strengthening its own legal and institutional frameworks to combat modern slavery better.

- Islamic Republic of Pakistan

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan views the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia as a result of deep-rooted economic inequalities, weak governance, and the influence of organized crime. Pakistan is particularly concerned about forced labor, human trafficking, and child exploitation, especially in marginalized communities. Pakistan advocates for stronger national and international legal frameworks and calls for enhanced regional cooperation to address these issues. Pakistan supports the UNODC's role in coordinating efforts and providing technical assistance but believes that any international measures must be adapted to the specific needs and circumstances of each country. Pakistan is committed to working with regional partners to strengthen legal frameworks and improve enforcement mechanisms to combat slavery.

- People's Republic of Bangladesh

The People's Republic of Bangladesh attributes the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia to economic disparities, social vulnerabilities, and the activities of organized crime networks. Bangladesh identifies forced labor, human trafficking, and child exploitation as the most significant challenges, particularly for women, children, and migrant workers. Bangladesh supports the strengthening of national legal frameworks and advocates for enhanced regional cooperation to address cross-border issues. Bangladesh believes that international organizations like the UNODC should

focus on capacity-building and technical assistance, helping countries in the region to develop effective strategies to combat slavery. Bangladesh is committed to working with its neighbors and the international community to address the root causes of slavery and protect vulnerable populations.

- Republic of the Union of Myanmar

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar recognizes that slavery in South and Southeast Asia is exacerbated by economic hardships, ethnic conflicts, and weak law enforcement, which allow organized crime networks to thrive. Myanmar is particularly concerned about human trafficking, forced labor, and the exploitation of ethnic minorities and displaced populations. The country acknowledges the need for stronger legal frameworks and better enforcement mechanisms at the national level. Myanmar supports regional cooperation initiatives that address the unique challenges faced by countries in the region, while also emphasizing the importance of sovereignty. Myanmar believes the UNODC should focus on providing technical assistance and capacity-building to help strengthen national institutions and combat slavery effectively.

- Kingdom of Thailand

The Kingdom of Thailand views the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia as a result of economic disparities, migration flows, and the influence of organized crime networks. Thailand identifies human trafficking, forced labor, and sexual exploitation as the most prevalent forms of modern slavery, with migrants, women, and children being the most vulnerable groups. Thailand supports strong national legal frameworks and is committed to their effective enforcement, while also advocating for increased regional



cooperation to tackle cross-border trafficking. Thailand believes that international organizations, including the UNODC, should play a crucial role in facilitating regional collaboration, providing technical assistance, and promoting best practices to combat slavery.

- Socialist Republic of Vietnam

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam attributes the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia to economic inequalities, lack of education, and weak legal systems that are often exploited by organized crime networks. Vietnam is particularly concerned with human trafficking, forced labor, and the exploitation of women and children, especially in rural and ethnic minority communities. Vietnam advocates for the strengthening of national legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, as well as enhanced regional cooperation to combat these issues. Vietnam supports the role of the UNODC in providing technical assistance and fostering collaboration between countries in the region to address the root causes of slavery and protect vulnerable populations.

- Republic of Indonesia

The Republic of Indonesia recognizes that slavery in South and Southeast Asia is driven by economic challenges, migration, and the activities of organized crime networks. Indonesia is particularly concerned about human trafficking, forced labor, and child exploitation, especially in remote and rural areas. Indonesia supports the strengthening of national legal frameworks and their effective implementation, while also advocating for regional cooperation to address cross-border trafficking and slavery. Indonesia believes that international organizations like the UNODC should focus on



capacity-building and providing technical assistance to help countries in the region develop and enforce effective strategies to combat slavery. Indonesia is committed to working with its regional and international partners to protect vulnerable populations and eradicate modern slavery.

- Republic of the Philippines

The Republic of the Philippines views the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia as a result of economic disparities, migration issues, and the exploitation of vulnerable populations by organized crime networks. The Philippines is particularly concerned about human trafficking, forced labor, and the exploitation of women and children, especially among migrant workers. The Philippines supports the strengthening of national legal frameworks and advocates for their rigorous enforcement, as well as enhanced regional cooperation to combat these issues. The Philippines believes that the UNODC should play a key role in providing technical assistance, promoting best practices, and facilitating regional collaboration to address the root causes of slavery and protect those most at risk.

- Federation of Malaysia

The Federation of Malaya (Malaysia) recognizes that slavery in South and Southeast Asia is fueled by economic inequalities, migration, and the activities of organized crime networks. Malaysia is particularly concerned about human trafficking, forced labor, and child exploitation, with migrant workers and vulnerable communities being the most affected. Malaysia supports the strengthening of national legal frameworks and emphasizes the need for effective enforcement, while also advocating for

greater regional cooperation to address cross-border trafficking. Malaysia believes that international organizations such as the UNODC should focus on providing technical assistance, capacity-building, and facilitating regional collaboration to combat slavery. Malaysia is committed to working with its neighbors and the international community to protect vulnerable populations and eradicate modern slavery.

- Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal

The Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal identifies the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia as being fueled by economic hardship, lack of education, and weak law enforcement, which are often exploited by organized crime networks. Nepal is particularly concerned about human trafficking, forced labor, and child exploitation, especially among women, children, and migrant workers. Nepal supports the strengthening of national legal frameworks and their effective enforcement, alongside enhanced regional cooperation to combat cross-border trafficking. Nepal believes that international organizations like the UNODC should play a crucial role in providing technical assistance, promoting best practices, and facilitating collaboration between countries in the region to address the root causes of slavery and protect vulnerable populations.

- Lao People's Democratic Republic

The Lao People's Democratic Republic recognizes that slavery in South and Southeast Asia is driven by economic disparities, cultural practices, and the activities of organized crime networks. Laos is particularly concerned about human trafficking, forced labor, and child exploitation, especially in rural and ethnic minority communities. Laos

advocates for the strengthening of national legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms, as well as greater regional cooperation to address these challenges. Laos supports the role of the UNODC in providing technical assistance and fostering regional collaboration, helping countries to build their capacities and develop effective strategies to combat slavery. Laos is committed to working with regional partners to protect vulnerable populations and eradicate modern slavery.

- Kingdom of Cambodia

The Kingdom of Cambodia attributes the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia to economic inequalities, migration flows, and the weak enforcement of legal frameworks, which are often exploited by organized crime networks. Cambodia is particularly concerned with human trafficking, forced labor, and sexual exploitation, especially among women, children, and migrant workers. Cambodia supports the strengthening of national legal frameworks and their effective enforcement, alongside enhanced regional cooperation to combat cross-border trafficking. Cambodia believes that international organizations such as the UNODC should focus on providing technical assistance, capacity-building, and facilitating collaboration between countries in the region to address the root causes of slavery and protect those most at risk.

- Kingdom of Spain

The Kingdom of Spain views the rise of slavery in South and Southeast Asia as a result of deep-rooted economic inequalities, migration challenges, and the exploitation of vulnerable populations by organized crime networks. Spain is particularly concerned about human trafficking, forced labor, and sexual exploitation, especially of women and

children. Spain strongly supports the strengthening of both national and international legal frameworks and advocates for their rigorous implementation. Spain believes in enhancing regional cooperation and supports the idea of existing international organizations like the UNODC playing a central role in coordinating efforts, providing technical assistance, and promoting best practices to combat slavery. Spain is committed to working with international partners to protect vulnerable populations and eradicate modern slavery globally.

*f. Support links.*

[Slavery and South Asian history - University of Arizona](#)  
[The University of Arizona](#)  
<https://experts.arizona.edu/publications/slavery-and-s...>

[modern slavery prevention and responses in south asia: an evidence map - gov.uk](#)

[Thailand leads first modern slavery conference in Southeast Asia - ASEAN–Australia Counter Trafficking](#)

[Forced Labour in Asia and the Pacific](#)

[Modern slavery and child labour: Asia's unacceptable record | International Labour Organization](#)

[What is modern slavery?](#)

[Stitched with slavery in the seams | Walk Free](#)

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