



MUNIAL'26

SOCHUM

Study Guide

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**EPSTEIN FILES
TRANSPARENCY ACT**

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Letter from the Secretary-General

Dear Attendees,

It is an honor to welcome you all to the 7th annual session of İzmir Atatürk Lisesi Model United Nations Conference. I am Duru Kılıç, your Secretary-General. If you are reading this letter, you probably already know why you should be here, but let us remind you once more.

MUNIAL is a legacy preserved by generations, now bestowed upon us by our upperclassmen. Being entrusted with this conference was not an easy feat; so you can be sure that we are no amateurs when it comes to MUN, and that it isn't a coincidence you are attending the best. Our esteemed Director-General, Can Karadağ, and I have sacrificed months, if not years, working for our titles. But it wasn't just for MUNIAL; it was for the journey where we grew, improved, and found the best versions of ourselves. Now we stand proud, confident that this year will be no short of what our upperclassmen showed us, if not better.

MUN isn't just an academic achievement, though. This is a free space where you can improve your people skills, make new connections, have fun, and enhance your cultural knowledge. For me, this journey was one where I found family, and now I am honored to be the one creating the opportunity for others to do the same.

Sincerely,

Duru Kılıç

1. Introduction to the Committee

Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM), The United Nations General Assembly Third Committee stands as one of the six central committees at the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Each year, the Committee holds a meeting in early October with the aim of completing the goals by the end of November. This ensures an environment for all 193 member states to focus on the examination of human rights, and reports of the special procedures of the UNHRC (The United Nations Human Rights Council).

SOCHUM is responsible for:

- The advancement and well-being of women,
- The protection and security of children,
- Youth, family, and aging,
- Crime prevention and criminal justice.



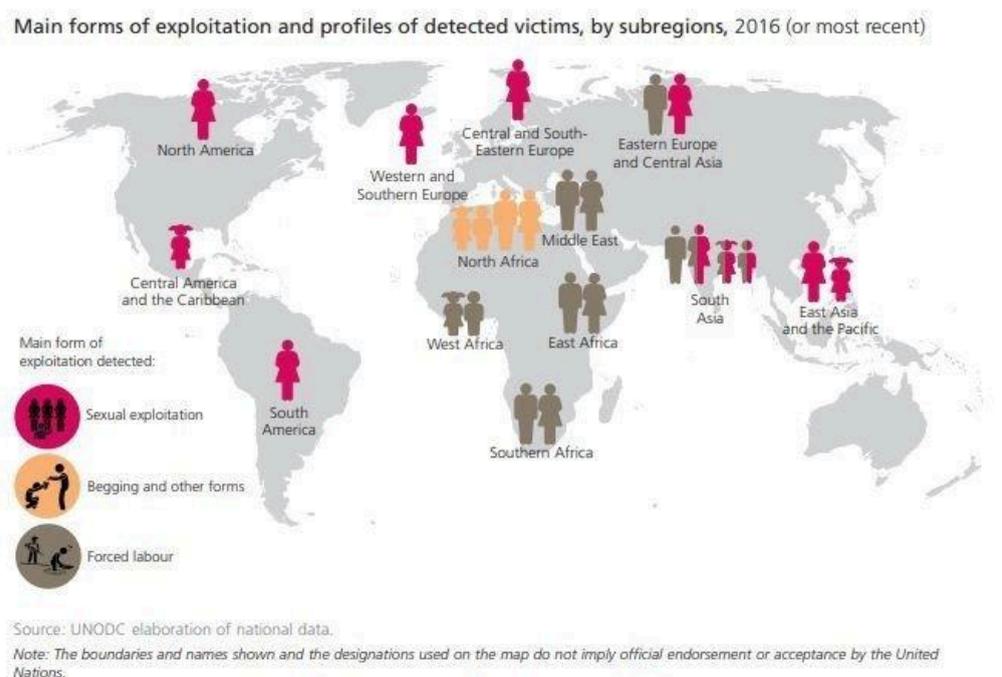
2. Agenda Item: Preventing the Sexual Exploitation and Business Models in Child Trafficking

a. Introduction to Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of people through force, fraud, or deception, intending to exploit them for profit. Men, women, and children of all ages and from all backgrounds can become victims of this crime, which occurs in every region of the world.¹ There is no debate about the fact that human trafficking is a systematic violation of some of the most fundamental human rights, including the right to liberty and the right to security of a person. It is not an uncommon occurrence in various countries, as human trafficking has a global nature that can adapt across borders, economies, and legal systems.

The motive behind human trafficking and the reasons that the perpetrators traffic humans can vary; however, it is known that human trafficking can be encountered in several different forms. Some of the most common forms and the reasons behind them are forced labor, debt bondage, organ trafficking, and sexual exploitation. Various methods can be used during the act of trafficking, and behind the scenes, the visibility of the acts can vary, and the impact can be different in every case of human trafficking.

Even though there can be different particular features of different human trafficking cases, some mechanisms are widely encountered. Coercion is one of the most encountered methods in cases of human trafficking. People who hold power or perceive a reasonable motive to perpetrate tend to coerce and control victims for their own benefit. Profit can be deemed one of the prominent reasons for human trafficking.



¹ [Definition of Human Trafficking.](#)

b. Sexual Exploitation in Human Trafficking and Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking is a kind of human trafficking that disregards a series of human rights, but is also relatively commonly encountered. Often, the adverse effects of sex trafficking are on women and children. To concretise, 61% of trafficking victims were women and children in 2022.² It is usually carried out through mechanisms that coerce, deceive, and abuse the victim by leveraging the perpetrator's power. The concept of consensus is not feasible given how these mechanisms operate, which effectively leaves no room for victims to exercise their free will and do as they wish. In this case, it is essential to emphasize that sex trafficking can be deemed a systematic human rights crisis, rather than a collection of isolated events.

Organised groups and individuals can do it for the reasons already mentioned. First, victims are targeted based on specific criteria. Some of the relatively more targeted groups are people who are economically disadvantaged, socially isolated, minors, people who lack guardianship, and migrants. This committee needs to find the underlying reasons and the ways that perpetrators abuse victims to solve the issue from the start. Preventing sex trafficking from the first step is a crucial part of the agenda item.

It is also essential to remember that SOCHUM is a United Nations sub-body and not a court of law where a particular case is being discussed or a resolution is written to stop one specific case of human trafficking. Again, the fact that sex trafficking is not a collection of isolated events, but a systematic human rights crisis, should be emphasized.

After victims are acquired, transportation may be required in some cases. Sex trafficking is not limited to cross-border movement, and it can take place within a city or a single community. Another vital part of the agenda item is that some steps of the actions taken by the perpetrators, including the transportation, during the act of trafficking, are often hidden behind legal activities. Some of the main reasons for transportation are to isolate victims, remove them from their possible safe space, cut off channels that might help them get help, and possibly elude the mechanisms that hold them in the hands of the perpetrators. While transportation is a step of the human trafficking mechanisms that commonly take place, it is not legally required for an act to be defined as trafficking. What matters for it to be described as an act of trafficking is control.

Sex trafficking does not have to be an act of abduction necessarily. As mentioned before, the victims can be coerced by different methods. Debt bondage, threat against family members, confiscation and/or exploitation of identification documents regarding the cases of migrants, profit, and emotional manipulation are some of the reasons that perpetrators present as the reasons for the trafficking. In simpler words, physical restraint is not always the case when it comes to trafficking. In fact, physiological control can be considered more efficient and less visible from the perpetrators' perspective.

² [UN Data Regarding Human Trafficking](#)



c. Business Models Related to Human Trafficking

Another important part of the agenda item is the relation between business models and human trafficking. Perpetrators often implement business models to hide their acts of trafficking to maximize profits while taking minimal risks in legal, financial, and reputational departments. These business models are difficult to distinguish from legitimate enterprises because they not only exist on paper but also operate as any other legitimate business would. Perpetrators use this strategy to ensure operational continuity while reducing exposure to outsiders and avoiding detection. In other words, they aim to hide their trafficking activities under business models to fly under the radar.

The organisational structure of these illegitimate models may vary. To gain a general understanding of how an illegitimate model may operate, it is important to conceptualise common patterns in such models. Division of labor is a common feature of illegitimate business models. Division of labor is basically deliberately fragmenting the components of the trafficking operations, such as recruiters, transporters, exploiters, financial operators, etc. This way, people who are actually leading the operations, who we can call the owners of the trafficking chain, are kept distant from the actual operations so that they have a lower chance of getting caught. It also reduces the risk of traceability for the perpetrators. It would be easier for the authorities if the same individual did every action taken during the act of trafficking, as it would increase the risk of getting exposed if an individual were out doing more work regarding trafficking. Another critical factor is that this method decreases liability on each person. This model resembles a real-world business model, in which the head of all operators is kept safe because responsibility is compartmentalised.

While said traffickings take place under an illegitimate business model, perpetrators almost always take precautions against the complications that might cause them legal trouble. They tend to operate under businesses that are not illegal, such as modeling agencies and massage services. Creating a legitimate front acts as a legal cover for their actions and it enables them to deny trafficking accusations. These models also normalize exploitative fields of work to some extent. Trafficking victims might be forced to work in these businesses, ultimately providing profit for the perpetrators. In short, this method allows illegal activities to blend into legal fields of work.

In addition to the legal coverage these models provide, they also enable perpetrators to launder money through mostly cash-based transactions. These illegitimate business models are mostly chosen from sectors with strong cash flow. Operating on cash provides financial concealment for these illicit businesses, helping them avoid tax audits and regulatory scrutiny. From a business standpoint, it also helps them maintain long-term profitability. Cash is not the only way to ensure concealment; these companies and perpetrators often layer their financial transfers when necessary. They might also have shell companies and offshore accounts.³

Human trafficking from one country to another is not an uncommon occurrence. Perpetrators may exploit jurisdictional gaps between countries during different parts of their actions. Some countries may have weaker child and labor protection laws, or their implementation may be weaker than in other countries. Perpetrators might find trafficking people into certain countries more feasible, as it would likely help them make more profit and would lower their risk of getting caught in said countries. This is a key point of the agenda item if the committee wants to identify global, prominent solutions to the issue. There can be specific global patterns that are established as mechanisms of human trafficking. Certain countries might host more human trafficking victims compared to others. It is essential to understand the reasons behind this circumstance. It is equally important to detect the already-visible patterns of human trafficking.

In cases where perpetrators hold some form of power, they may rely on it. This power can take various forms. Perpetrators of power may rely on legal settlements that they pressure victims into. They can also put confidential agreements and/or non-disclosure agreements to conceal their operations and ensure continuity.

d. Child Trafficking

Child trafficking is a serious crime we face all over the world and a violation of human rights. Children are recruited, forced, and controlled for the purpose of exploitation, which can also include forced child-labor, sexual assault, forced marriage, illegal adoption, and involvement in armed conflict. The reasons why the criminals target children are poverty, lack of protection, and unstable situations in the families. When the target is vulnerable, it's

³ [Former UN Effort to Tackle Shell Companies](#)

easier for child traffickers to use deception, threats, violence to maintain force and control over the victims.

A vital notion about the legal framework regarding child trafficking is the fact that since minors are incapable of giving consent, any activity, including sexual exploitation of children, is considered trafficking without needing to prove coercion or force. This legal framework is essential because, in some legal cases, evidentiary burdens may occur in which the victim might be obliged to provide evidence for specific actions to be considered as trafficking. This framework makes it easier to convict perpetrators without legal obstacles impeding the process.

Similar to human trafficking in the broader spectrum, child trafficking also has certain mechanisms for certain actions. For instance, in the recruitment phase, perpetrators might focus on children who are somewhat vulnerable in certain ways. To specify, runaway or homeless children, children in institutional care, and most commonly, children who are affected by poverty can be victims of child trafficking relatively more commonly. Perpetrators might present themselves as benefactors or protectors to trick children who are already vulnerable. Some of the most common mechanisms for recruitment include care systems, family and community networks, and online grooming.

Children are rather more prone to being tricked during the recruitment phase of child trafficking because they can be more emotionally dependent and fear authoritative figures. Perpetrators can abduct them by force, or act as a protector or a friend to complete the recruitment stage, so there is no one method. But it is safe to say that, in most cases, this process is achieved not by force but through physiological manipulation. This also links child trafficking as a low-cost operation when compared to the trafficking of a grown person. The victims of child trafficking are also easier to handle once recruited, and they have a lower chance of breaking free and escaping the system. These are some of the reasons why children are being trafficked at alarming rates.

These acts might have several different long-lasting impacts on children. A series of acts in which the mental and physical health of children is endangered during the processes of trafficking. Post-traumatic stress disorder, alongside many more issues, is common among the victims of child trafficking. Dealing with the aftermath of child trafficking should be included in the conversation if a prominent plan is to be achieved.

Needless to say, policies that aim to prevent child trafficking can not be forgotten about.

e. The Epstein Case

The Jeffrey Epstein case was one of the most terrifying and disturbing scandals in the history of the United States. That scandal was in relation to abusing the minor girls by using money and force, white slavery, and creating a house of ill fame.

Jeffrey Epstein, an American billionaire and financier, was born in 1953. He began his career as a teacher at the Dalton School, even though he didn't have a degree to represent as a tutor. After he got discharged because of some abuse allegations against a minor in the school, he sustained his career as a banker and a financier. He worked in various fields before he became a billionaire.

After he became a professional in finance, it didn't take much time for him to become a billionaire. His wealth enabled him to build strong connections with a powerful entourage, including politicians and businessmen such as Donald Trump, Bill Clinton, and Prince Andrew. who saved him several times from the punishments resulting from his trials.

In 2008, he accepted the fact of the snare of prostitution he had for a minor in Florida, and he got a prison sentence of 18 months; however, with the strong connections he created with politicians, he was saved from jail 5 months earlier than the court decided. He was also allowed to work 6 days a week; he would spend a few hours a day in prison and then get out.

After years of journalism research and victims' persistence, the case was reopened in 2019. Epstein was arrested at the federal level. Unfortunately, he is found dead before his case is closed.

Even though the official announcements say that it was a "suicidal" death, there are still some debates because of the death conditions of Epstein's death.

f. Similar Cases

1. R. Kelly Case (Sexual Assault, Human Trafficking)
2. Jean Luc Brunel Case (Prostitution of Minors, Case Scandals)
3. NXIVM Cult (Defraud, Abuse)
4. Harvey Weinstein Case (Defraud, Sexual Assault)

The common thread across these cases is an influential figure, vulnerable victims, years of silence, and justice that arrives too late.

One of the most important things every SOCHUM delegate should keep in mind is that SOCHUM is not convened to address a single case of human trafficking. Although it is important to analyse well-known cases, this committee exists to find solutions to a systemic issue that occurs worldwide.

3. Questions to Ponder

- 1) How can child protection systems be strengthened to prevent trafficking?
- 2) How can the business models that cover up for human trafficking be outed?
- 3) How can international cooperation be ensured, and what role can international cooperation play in preventing trafficking across borders?
- 4) How can member states address cases in which the perpetrators hold significant power of some kind?
- 5) How to decrease the vulnerabilities of children that result in them being relatively more prone to being the victim of trafficking?

4. Further Reading

https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2024/GLOTIP2024_BOO_K.pdf

<https://www.un.org/en/human-trafficking-organized-crime-%E2%80%93-let%E2%80%99s-end-exploitation>