



SEMINAR ON IMIGRATION ISSUES

SHARP as a Society for Human Rights and Prisoners Aid has been keeping a vigilant eye on the ever-increasing cases of internal and cross boarder trafficking in the country, it has launched its campaign against human trafficking on a large scale by developing a human trafficking division. The division is destined to adopt measures, carry out research and make suggestions by devising strategies and programs for the implementation of the laws against Trafficking. All three important aspects of dealing with trafficking i.e. Prevention, Prosecution, and Protection are equally important and SHARP believes that there is a dire need of simultaneous operations to be started on them.

In addition to the areas mentioned above SHARP is currently developing a strategy to form ideal working relationship with the Government of Pakistan in not only improving upon the existing laws on TiP but also help implementing them via officials' training and capacity building. In order to enhance the knowledge and skills of the SHARP staff regarding this diversified and organized crime, " A Lecture on Migration, Smuggling and Trafficking" was arranged, on October 21, 2003 in Conference room SHARP .The forum had a highly informative lecture by Mr. Shafqat Munir, who is a renowned development Journalist/Researcher, and President, Journalists for Democracy and Human Rights, Dr. Grahame Niemann, Australian High Commission, First secretary immigration, was also consulted to appear in the lecture and edify about the steps taken by the Australian Government to prevent Human Trafficking. Mr. Imran Naseem, Director Human Trafficking Division, SHARP also contributed a great deal to the forum by sharing his critical and valued comments regarding this pernicious issue. The proceedings of the event are as follows.



**Dr. Grahame
Niemann**



**Mr. Shafqat
Munir**



**Mr. Imran
Naseem**

Mr. IMRAN NASEEM

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Mr. Naseem, before inviting the guest speakers to enlighten the audience, made his comments based on the organization's concerns for the menace of trafficking and his own readings and observations from different sources including a number of seminars, conferences and meetings on the issue. For the education of the participants Mr. Naseem defined trafficking in detail. According to the general definition trafficking in persons means recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms or 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 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 labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or removal of organs," (Art 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons.)

Criticizing the above mentioned definition Mr. Naseem lamented that this definition agreed upon by many nations miserably fails or avoids to mention the boundaries of the trafficking in persons. It doesn't categorically addresses trafficking in its internal and cross border form. This gives way to confusion at minimum and maximizes the chances of maneuverability by the state parties while drafting their national laws. Referring to the Presidential Ordinance for Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking 2002, which defines human trafficking as " Obtaining, securing, selling, purchasing, recruiting, detaining, harboring or receiving a person, notwithstanding his implicit or explicit consent, by the use of coercion, kidnapping, abduction, or by giving or receiving any payment or benefit, or sharing or receiving a share for such person's subsequent transportation out of or into Pakistan by any means whatsoever for any purpose against his will, intention or reasonable expectation,"

This definition, Mr. Naseem pointed out, very cleverly excludes the obligation on the part of the state to tackle internal trafficking as it clearly says "transportation out of or into Pakistan" and does not mention "within Pakistan", Hence only FIA is

given the responsibility to look after the issue while FIA is mostly concerned with the immigration and passengers coming from or going abroad. Police has no role and no powers while police could prove to be the most effective tool in dealing with internal trafficking. Second point raised by him was about the gender insensitivity of the definition, he said that it must be noted down that law is nothing but a tool to interpret the will of the concerned authority. It can be interpreted differently. Hence its very important to clearly mention any even the minute details though they might be easily assumable, he said that, as a common practice, for something which concerns both gender we mention his/her to include both factions but this definition again fails to include "her" in it. This could be manipulated by the culprits as "Women trafficking" is also given way to take place. Parents are at freedom to force and control the consent of their daughter to be married to someone without their willingness, and thus she might be trafficked across the borders or within the country. This might have been done to safeguard the so-called tradition or cultural value but he categorically stated "we condemn it to maximum as it is against the teachings of Islam and against the set standards of morality."

III in June 2002 US Report due to this ordinance even prior to the promulgation of the ordinance in October 2003, which reveals that negotiations were in progress and it was conveyed to the US Government in advance. He said that it was a good effort, so it is not criticized but what is condemned is that until when our government will keep wailing for international pressure to come so that it might take the necessary steps to tackle heinous practices. He further said that no law could be implemented unless enough resources are provided. Expressing his views about the role of international community he stated that we also have our reservations against the negligence of international community and for taking off its eyes from how would this ordinance be implemented. Pakistan being a third world country cannot allocate enough resources to cover up the wide and porous borders of Pakistan. While it is a recognized fact that human trafficking is not any nations internal affair; it has very adverse effects on the receiving countries as well still in Pakistan we do not have any data base or any comprehensive research study, which provides sound basis for designing successful strategies, he added.

"UN and international community have very cold reactions on our pleadings at the moment even though they apprehend and agree in principle on our arguments" he complained. UN has been carrying various such operations in Sri Lanka, Nepal, India and perhaps in Bangladesh as well notwithstanding its big project in Thailand but Pakistan being a very important country of South Asia is ignored and no study is done here. Furthermore, showing his concerns he said, God forbids, but international community will rush to impose sanctions and come hard on the Government of Pakistan if someday some desperate victim of human trafficking abroad is found guilty of terrorist activity and will make a separate queue for

Pakistani passengers at their airports. This might be very late and not up to the mark.

While concluding his thought provoking comments he stated that we all admit the trafficker controls the human trafficking victim and is responsible for most of his/her actions, still no concrete action has been taken by us today when we have the power to control it, but once the time for action is over then we will have no right to make hue and cry. It has been over a year now to the promulgation of Trafficking Ordinance but unfortunately no rules have been made for the implementation of the said ordinance yet. He left the stage with a few open questions that what is the gauge to judge the implementation of the ordinance? Is it the bulk of FIRs by immigration cell? But then what is the conviction rate? He informed that there have been over 1000 FIRs and no one or at maximum a few of them are convicted to his knowledge. The bulk of FIRs depict the gimmick of the government to show to the international community that the ordinance is being practiced. He said that as far as implementation is concerned, the ordinance is being implemented but not in true spirit. The question arises that who has to be consulted to address the shortcomings of the ordinance and when?

Mr. SHAFQAT MUNIR

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Mr. Shafqat Munir made his presentation on the topic of Socio-Political Impacts of Migration. He established the linkages between the issues of migration and stated that the absence of migration leads to illegal migration and crimes like trafficking. Migration was defined as a human right and a legal activity. It is not at all negative; it has been made difficult with negative impacts that cause institutionalized exploitation of migrants as a negative impact of globalization. There is widespread abuse and exploitation in all forms of global migration system. Living and working conditions of migrant workers, particularly women, becomes highly precarious once they have been migrated. Trafficking could be checked by expanding labor markets and rationalizing the unnecessary restrictions on security of movement of people.

Talking about the basic idea of movement from one place to another he said that, people's right to move and human security of movement is universally accepted. All human rights charters and agreements are derived under the natural law and natural law gives us the right to move. Whenever these human rights covenants are design by United Nations, by European Union or by any other international body, security of people's movement comes as a key word. When we talk about the international law or convention, we know that these conventions are not made by democratically elected people as United Nations is not a hub of democratically elected people, so we have no say in any international agreement, our say is only if they are guarantying the natural law which is the law by birth to move freely, so any country has no right to check or restrict the movements of people. Its the temporary movement of people to deliver these services e.g. tourism, if people do not have the leverage to move around then this activity, which is already

guaranteed by WTO and GAT, will not take place. He stressed that movement of people should be taken as a prime right, only after that we go into legalities or the discussions like what happened after 9/11, what are the security concerns and how far we can go with these arguments to set whether the security really matters or it is just garb of something like Americans are doing now a days.

There are basically 4 sorts of movements. Movements of people across developed, modern societies, movements across developing societies, movements of people from South to North and vice versa. The nationals of developed world are enjoying free flow of movement, which is the real spirit of globalization, whereas in south, most of the developing countries restrict the movement of their own people e.g. Pakistanis can't easily move to India, Bangladesh, Maldives as these countries have strict laws, as compared to North we have a more restricted mechanism. In the same context he said that the movement of people has become very restricted now a days and he stated that he would link it with 9/11 incident. Discussing the border security pre and post 9/11 he narrated the situation back in 1983, when people didn't have to get a visa to visit Britain, but now only two days before, Britain Govt. has announced that for connecting flight from Britain, one has to get a visa, even if one has to take a connecting flight he has to get a transit visa. Such restriction is curbing people's movement, which is the denial of natural right to movement.

Many countries have very strong security concerns and in this garb innocent people have to go through great trouble and insult. He quoted an example of a friend who was detained at Washington airport for 11 hours. The guy was a bonafide journalist with all documents who was visiting America to attend a WHO meeting at Kankun. He was asked point less question for 11 hours and the only one statement which rescued him was that "Does he drink" and he responded in positive and asked for some. Only then he was rescued. Security matters, and every country must adopt a security regime that suits it, he stated, but this security should not discourage people from moving freely or it should not unduly target people. Countries should know how to develop the mechanism to check such threats instead of insulting the people, which has been practiced by almost all countries after 9/11. Border security has become too critical and tiresome. By restricting people's movement, developed countries of West are creating a rift between North and South. He said that when he gets invitations from other countries for meetings, he tells them that he doesn't mind accepting their invitation, if he has to go through different channels like registration, scanning, taking off his shoes and even his clothes but at least they should be concerned about others respect and dignity. He said that he had been invited to attend a meeting of South Asian journalists on peace, but he had his reservations that how could he talk about peace when he himself is treated like criminals.

Migration of people from one place to another can take different forms. It has varied dimensions attached to it. Political dimension of migration results into

movements of people as Refugees/displaced persons and Asylum-seekers. Migration and trafficking are closely interlinked, similarly different customary practices. While describing the socio political impacts of migration he said that migration in new millennium has become highly politicized and is a pivotal issue in both national and international politics. Though immigration is not new, population movements are taking place on increased significance in the context of current global social transformations. Referring to the hue and cry raised about migration crisis, quoting the words of Stephen Castles he stated **"So-called migration crisis arises because of the vast imbalance between North and South with regard to economic conditions, social well being and human rights"** The countries of North over the years have developed a weird perspective about migration, which was explained under the heading of Global politics of migration by Mr. Munir. Northern perspective is based on Concerns of European, Americans and Australians who believe that their countries were being besieged by asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants. While he also mentioned Austria's policy, which was designed to keep out Asians, was supported by political parties up to 1960s.

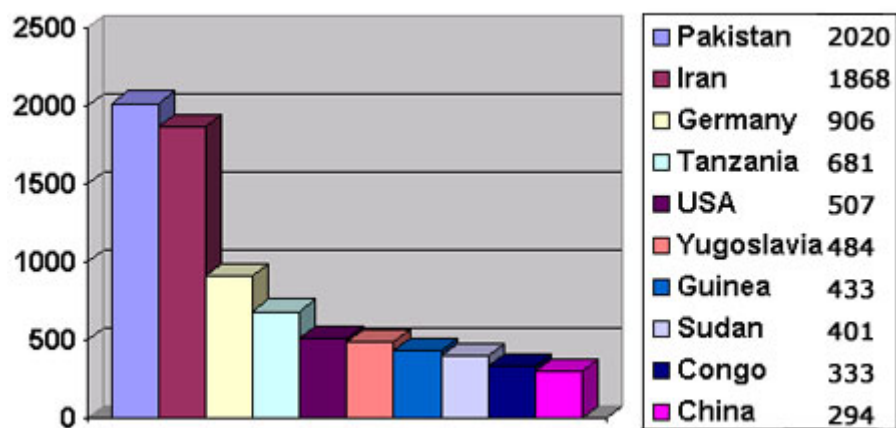
At the same time he provided another approach, which he termed as the Real perspective, which says that the feared mass influxes from South and East to North and West never happened. From East, people returned to their ancestral homelands after break up of Eastern Europe; other migrants usually came only if they could link up with existing social networks of previous migrants who helped them find work and housing. Stephen Castles claims migration stabilized and declined. According to UN Population Report 2002 175 million people live outside their homeland. Which means that only three percent of the world's population is migrant. So he said that it proves that all the fear and hue and cry is artificial and highly exaggerated by West. Such small number of people could hardly cause panic Today's world of globalization cannot function properly in the presence of barriers to migration. Migration and globalization run by the mechanism of free flow of people, technology, information and capital. He quoted that trade in services is growing and is 20% of international trade. In this context WTO's General Agreement on Trade Services-is very crucial to be discussed. WTO divides services with a wide range of economic activities into 12 sectors and 55 sub-sectors, which includes business, communication, construction and engineering, distribution, educational, environmental services, health, tourism and travel, recreational, cultural and sports services, transport and other services. He explained the 4 modes of services transactions. One is cross border movements of service products, second is movement of consumers, thirdly temporary movement of natural persons to provide services and lastly it is the establishment of commercial presence in the country where services are to be provided

While underlining the impacts of migration he said that there are both positive and negative impacts of immigration. Positive impacts of migration are better wages, increase in range of options for migrant workers including women,

relatively more empowerment. Where as negative impacts of migration are physical and sexual exploitation of migrant women, low wages and more work as compared to local workers, hazardous working conditions, prone to traffickers, sex industry, no protection, exposure to violence and sexual harassment. He further talked about some illogical state policies on migration for instance immigration policies of different Gulf countries i.e. kafil system, special U.S. migrant workers, women visa mechanism for domestic work, sweatshop labor, bonded labor. Human Rights Watch report on the plight of these migrant workers (June 14, 2001) says that these workers work in extremely tough working conditions, they can not change their job in case of violation of rights, they are bound and tied to employers thus prone to sexual and physical abuse. The report further says that their nominal wages are as low as \$100 per month with 19-hour work.

Another major area not to be ignored while studying migration issue is Refugee population. Movements of people as Refugees/displaced persons contribute largely to the immigrant community. These people migrate due to war and refugees' crisis, natural disasters, and drought and asylum seekers are not considered most of the times as real victims of persecution. 90 percent of their applications by the Western countries are rejected. In many cases they are not deported as the countries of origin do not take them back or they have no travel documents or identity. Though at times, the right of migration is also abused. The fear is right that the asylum seekers give fake documents just to get resettled. They put burden on the value system of the country. But at the same time these asylum seekers prove to be useful source of cheap labor and help boost Western countries' informal economy. While defining refugees he said that UN Convention of 1951 Relating to the Status of Refugees defines refugee as a person residing outside his or her country of nationality, who is unable or unwilling to return because of a well founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

140 of 190 UN member states undertake to protect refugees and to respect the principle of non-refoulement (that is not to return them to a country where they may be persecuted). This allow refugees the right to enter and get temporary or permanent residence status. According to the UNHCR 1995, 2000 Report, by 2000, refugee population declined to 12.1 m from 18.2 million in 1993. Top Ten refugee hosting countries as explained by Mr. Munir are as follows: **(No of refugees (1000s))**



Talking about the issue of trafficking he said that there is no consensus on any definition of trafficking, however coercion is the key element behind this activity. Trafficking is rated as the fastest emerging profitable trade after guns and drugs. Studies on trafficking (international, regional, national) say that 700,000 persons are sold each year with a turnover of \$ 7-13 billion. Rise in trafficking of women can be attributed to a number of causes, as he explained. One of the most general reasons is of globalization and movements of people, legally or illegally across countries with easy electronic money transactions by organized crime syndicates. Similarly continuous subordination of women in the developing countries, work opportunity disparities between men and women, desperation of families in impoverished communities. Sale of women to brothels and traffickers by family to payoff loans and avoid dowry to marry off daughters is another major reason. Lack of opportunities and eagerness for a better life abroad is also a product of poverty and resourcelessness, which finds refuge in criminal activities like trafficking. False promises of good job, marriage, domestic work, weak law enforcement mechanism and growing demand for women for sex tourism are other reasons.

Pakistan, which is more of a receiving and transit country, is heavily involved with trafficking of women. Annually a large number of Bengali, Burmese and Nepali women are trafficked to Pakistan for slave trade, marriage and sex industry. Women kidnapped at Pak-Afghan border are sold at Rs 600 a kilo. Auction arranged mostly for rich Arabs, traders, and feudal elite. Another important issue is trafficking in children, which uses children to involve them in a heinous sport for fun as camel jockeys. Trafficking in children has also been carried out for sex industry, mostly within borders. Trafficking in children is sometimes attributed to parental attitude and weak protection mechanism, whatever the reason might be it has devastating effects on a child's personality and his entire life gets disturbed. Trafficking in men, results out of the factors like job search, informal Labor markets, recruitments/agents, traffickers' cross border linkages and easy money transactions.

He further explained different routes for trafficking, which includes Taftan border (Job seekers to Europe and women and children to Gulf). He quoted the case study of 104 deportees, who moved through the Gwadar / Karachi (ferries, boats) channel from Sri Lanka, these were poor job seekers who wanted to go to Europe and Australia and other destinations and enter there with fake and forged documents. He further elaborated on institutionalized techniques of trafficking which includes Kidnapping, abduction of women, Job offers/ match-making/ marriages through advertisements or through agents, recruitments as models, dancers, laborers, professionals, domestic workers, false pretenses for better life, collaboration between traffickers and law enforcement agencies, confiscation of travel documents by traffickers to coerce workers (men, women) to do what they want, forced into sex industry, hazardous work, unsafe sex/risk behavior and HIV/AIDS. Temporary marriages is another tactic used by traffickers. Arabs stationed for short time in Pakistan take temporary wives with them, they get three months wife visa for Middle Eastern countries, they purchase these women as wives, later these unfortunate women are resold to brothels, these women have to live a very hectic sex life in these three months as sex worker, even avoiding menstrual cycle to payoff debt bondage.

Once these women are trafficked and even recovered, it doesn't mark an end to their miseries. Exploitation of trafficked women still continues, though through some other channels, i.e. institutionalized manner. Victimization of victims of trafficking by law enforcement agencies that treat them as criminals, women are booked under Zina Ordinance, sometimes trafficked persons are booked under Passport Act, Foreigners Act and most of the time under section 3 and 4 of 'Prevention and Control of the Human Trafficking Ordinance 2002', during crackdowns, already exploited sex workers are arrested and perpetrators and their pimps are set free, pimps in collaboration with prison authorities and police bail out the arrested trafficked victims to put them into sex trade, women victims are hardly repatriated once they are trafficked while most of the men are deported back, but only deportations and no rehabilitation of returnees or deportees. In the end a package of valuable suggestions was presented to be looked into while chalking out further activities regarding trafficking. Migration specific recommendations were as follows:

- Unnecessary restrictions on movement of people should go with relaxed immigration policies
- Flexibility in labor's movement from South to North as the South is labour intensive and the North is capital/investment intensive
- Respect for citizens of all nations
- 9/11 trauma should not be made a tool to discriminate or exploit
- More multilateral and bilateral agreements for import/export of skilled and unskilled labor
- Forced migrants/asylum seekers should not be discriminated

- Refugees be provided safe atmosphere for their repatriation
- Where as trafficking specific recommendations went as :
- Govts, NGOs of sending, receiving and transit countries should unearth traffickers mafia across borders
- Training of law enforcement and border security forces to crackdown against agents and traffickers
- Recognition of trafficked women and children as victims and not criminals. They should be considered as witness to the crime.
- Victims must be protected if they testify against powerful mafia, traffickers and their agents
- Trafficked victims should be protected as migrants under ILO conventions
- Need to end social stigma associated with the trafficking
- Facilitation of safe repatriation and rehabilitation of victims on govts expenses

Suggestions made for general well being and empowerment of women were:

- Need to affirm principles of national sovereignty, sustainable democracy and development, social justice and gender equality and dynamic citizenship
- Globalization has pushed conversions of agricultural lands into industrial zones thus threatening food security and livelihood. This conversion should be stopped and food production should be promoted. Credit should be extended to farmers, especially women
- Right to work across gender should be assured. Practice of casual and contractual labor should be discouraged
- Social wage or non wage benefits of workers such as social security, medical care, pension should be ensured.

As the root cause for every illegal practice is deeply imbedded in the social system, so some GENERAL suggestions were also provided:

- Sexual harassment free work environment
- Basic rights of education, shelter, food and health be protected
- Unsuccessful returnees from overseas be given special rehabilitation facilities
- There is a need to understand that reproductive and sexual self-determination, economic autonomy and political decision-making form triangle of women's political participation. Space in these three areas must be given to women
- Need to appoint more women to top level positions in monetary and fiscal institutions
- Neither gender should occupy lower than 40% and higher than 60% of top positions
- Only through these institutionalized protective mechanisms, we could address the institutionalized exploitation of women in a nicer manner

DR. GRAHAME NIEMANN

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Mr. Niemann, in his readings presented the perspective of Australian Government regarding the issue; he provided a detailed picture of the understanding and consciousness of Australian Government regarding the issue of human trafficking.

The strategies devised and steps taken by the Australian Government, which builds on Australia's effective existing approach to fighting this crime, were very modestly explained by him for the enlightenment of the audience. The Australian Government has shown its commitment to combating the repugnant trade or trafficking in people by allocating more than \$20 million over four years to a major package of measures to combat this growing form of transnational organized crime. He edified very optimistically that these new measures would significantly enhance the detection, investigation and prosecution of traffickers, improving the range of support available to the victims and help prevent trafficking of person. They will complement existing efforts, including Australian Government aid program activities valued at around \$14 million.

The above-mentioned package was termed by him as a strong, well-considered and determined response to people trafficking and sexual exploitation, which builds on Australia's effective approach to fighting this crime. White Australia has a range of practical and legal measures already in place to combat trafficking. These new measures emphasize the Government's commitment to combating trafficking in persons by focusing on prevention/ detection, prosecutions, supporting victims and international efforts. He further informed that a Commonwealth Action Plan to Eradicate Trafficking in Persons will be developed to coordinate these new Initiatives. This Action Plan will complement existing measures by providing additional Initiatives. These are:

A new community awareness campaign to raise awareness of trafficking issue within Australia;

- A new 23-member Australian Federal Police (AFP) mobile strike team (The Transnational Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking Team) to investigate trafficking and sexual servitude.
- A new Senior Migration Officer (Compliance) in Thailand, focused on trafficking in persons;
- Closer links between the AFP and. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) officers in the detection and Investigation of trafficking and enhanced training on trafficking Issues;
- New visa arrangements for potentially trafficked persons;
- Comprehensive victim support measures provided through contracted case managers, including appropriate accommodation and living expenses and access for victims to a wide range of social support, legal, medical and counseling services.
- Enhancement of arrangements, including access to additional support, for the small number of potential victims who may be required to remain in immigration detention.
- Development of a reintegration assistance project for trafficking victims who are returned to key source countries in South East Asia;
- Improvements to legislation to comprehensively criminalize trafficking activity;

- Legislative amendments to make telecommunication interception available for investigating trafficking offences,
- Ratification, once all domestic requirements are in place, of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

The existing networks developed by the Bali Regional Ministerial Conferences on People Smuggling, Trafficking In Persons and Related Transnational Crime, and the Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues, will be used to pursue enhanced region-wide cooperation to combat trafficking in persons. He described trafficking as a heinous crime, which involves people being smuggled into a country like a commodity, sometimes for the purposes of sexual exploitation, whilst people smuggling involves the seeking of a migration outcome where someone is paid to smuggle an individual across the border. Providing a brief background of trafficking in persons he stated that trafficking in persons is a particularly repugnant form of transnational organized crime, involving the deception and degradation of hundreds of thousands of victims around the world. He stated that though a few countries are immune. But the Asia-Pacific region has become a hub for trafficking in persons, particularly for the purposes of sexual servitude. All countries, - whether source, transit countries, or destination countries like Australia - he stressed, have a responsibility to address this issue.

Talking in comparative values he said that in international terms, relatively small numbers of persons are trafficked into Australia, although the exact number is not known, however, trafficking in person is a repugnant crime and the Government takes its restorability to combat this trade seriously. The \$20- million package announced by the Government is a strong, well-considered and determined response to trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation. Appreciating the legislative measures taken by the Government he said that Australia has strong laws criminalizing sexual servitude, slavery, deceptive recruiting and people smuggling for the purpose of exploitation. The offences carry heavy penalties of up to- 25 years imprisonment for slavery, 15 years for sexual servitude and 7 years for deceptive recruiting. Where the victim of sexual servitude or deceptive recruiting is under 18 years, higher penalties apply -19 and 9 years respectively. The people smuggling for the purposes of exploitation offence carries a penalty of 20 years. These offend are all covered by the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 as serious offences for which persons convicted can be required to forfeit all their property.

He further informed that in recent months, the Australian Federal Police have charged eight people with sexual servitude, slavery and deceptive recruiting offences. Commonwealth, State and Territory police services are coordinating the development of a national plan of action to enhance law enforcement efforts to combat trafficking in persons for sexual servitude. The AFP continues to negotiate Memoranda of Understanding, with regional countries on developing police co-

operation to combat transnational crime, these include trafficking in persons as a priority crime type. Talking about the thorough involvement of the Australian Government in activities on national and international level, he apprised the audience that the Government has also supported a number of anti-trafficking projects in the region through AusAID. The Minister for Foreign Affairs recently reaffirmed this commitment by announcing an \$ 8.5 million project called Asia Regional Cooperation to prevent people Trafficking. Further elucidating the project he said that the project is part of a broader package of Australian development assistance aimed at combating trafficking in women and children in the Asia Pacific region worth approximately \$ 14 million. These efforts have continued quietly for several years and made a real impact on the problem.

These measures are complemented by the ongoing work of the Bali Regional Ministerial Conference on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, which is co-chaired by Australia and Indonesia (held in Bali in February 2002 and April 2003). At the second Ministerial Conference, 28 Ministers from 32 countries in the Asia-Pacific regime endorsed the work of the two Ad Hoc Experts' Groups focusing on regional and International cooperation and on legislation, IBA enforcement cooperation and document fraud. About the ongoing and future activities of the Government he stated that Australia would participate in a legislation workshop to be run by Thailand and field in Malaysia this November. This workshop builds on a previous workshop in which China and Australia developed model legislation to develop laws criminalizing people smuggling and trafficking in persons, Australia also sent a high-level delegation to the Republic of Korea's recent and very successful trafficking and public awareness workshop. He strongly stressed that all such efforts need to be well coordinated and effective. The Australian Government recently conducted a detailed review of the approach to preventing these crimes, investigating and prosecuting the perpetrators, and supporting the victims. The Minister for Justice and Customs personally met with some key NGO representatives to hear their ideas and perspective. The review studied overseas practice and drew lessons from Australia's own experiences. The Government adopted critics' best ideas on how to enhance the existing arrangements, and developed further improvements of its own.

The measures announced included:

- Establishment of Australian Federal Police Transnational Sexual Exploitation anti Trafficking Team, a mobile strike force to strengthen the capacity to actively target and investigate trafficking syndicates and make a substantial impact on combating sexual servitude in Australia. The Team will have 23 members and will be located within the Transnational Crime Coordination Center for national coverage and flexibility.
- A new senior Migration Officer (Compliance) in Thailand, focused on trafficking in persons. This position will be responsible for implementation Department of

Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) initiatives to combat trafficking in persons across the Asian region including working closely with local authorities and the Australian Federal Police (AFP) in the identification of possible trafficking organizers and organizations.

- Closer links between AFP and DIMIA officers in the detection and investigation of trafficking and enhanced training on trafficking issues, ensuring that the existing close cooperation is further enhanced.
- New visa arrangements for potentially trafficked persons;
- Comprehensive victim support measures provided through a contracted case manager, including appropriate accommodation and living expenses and access for victims to a wide range of social support; legal, medical and counseling services.
- Enhancement or arrangements, including access to additional support, for the small number of potential victims who may be required to remain in immigration detention,
- Development of a reintegration assistance project for trafficking victims who are returned to key source countries in South East Asia.
- Improvement to legislation to comprehensively criminalize trafficking activity;
- Legislative amendments to make telecommunications interception available for Criminal Code offences of slavery, sexual servitude, deceptive recruiting and people smuggling with exploitation, and
- Ratification, once all domestic requirements are in place, of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.

The new measures address the critical areas of prevention, investigation and prosecution, and victim support and are designed to combat trafficking as well as provide comprehensive assistance to those who have already fallen victim to it. He concluded on a very optimistic and promising note that the Government is confident that this suite of measures put Australia at the forefront of best practice efforts to combat trafficking. The strategy is a further demonstration of Australia's comprehensive, coordinated commitment to fight the trafficking of persons. The lectures proved to be extremely interesting and informative. It helped a lot in broadening the horizon of the legal staff and others at SHARP, to explore new areas and provided a basis for further studies to establish linkages between trafficking and immigration and to analyze the impact of immigration on the economy as a whole and understand the true perspective about immigration.

Regarding the importance of the subject to SHARP and vast knowledge of the speakers on the subject, it was decided to arrange a follow-up session of the lecture in which more informal discussion will be carried out on the subject, and the issue will be dealt more specifically, while the queries of the participants will also be furnished.