

ITP Research Form

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Paper Title: Human Trafficking and its Increased Effect on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women in Brazil

Abstract: Human trafficking for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation, both internally and internationally, has become an epidemic in Brazil. Due to the high levels of inequality and poverty in Brazil, the feminization of poverty and economic globalization, the sex trade is a booming business. The state of Brazil recognizes the prevalence of human trafficking in Brazilian society and has adopted a National Plan to address methods of prevention, increasing prosecution, and rendering protection for victims. These focal points, although universally recognized as the best methods of attaining results, have not come to fruition in Brazil. Through a survey of international and national laws, interviews with judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys and NGOs, the reasoning for the failure of current action becomes apparent. Data is not available for the scope of the problem. Limited resources, the clandestine nature of the criminal act, and the lack of victims willing to come forward curbs data collection. Moreover, Human trafficking poses a unique problem, as many victims do not realize their victimization and some individuals choose to be victimized due to their extreme poverty. The only way to attack the supply side of this criminal enterprise is to address the systemic prejudice and poverty ingrained in Brazilian society. As data is lacking the general population does not understand the depth of the problem. To address these needs the government has executed an awareness campaign. This campaign warns of frauds perpetuated to lure women into sex trafficking as well as raises awareness among the general population about the prevalence of sexual enslavement. The government has also begun to implement new laws to increase prosecution. However, these laws do not address human trafficking as a criminal network. Both redundant and in conflict existing laws allowing prostitution, these laws have had limited remedial effects. Furthermore, the government has focused on the freeing and reintegration of victims, implementing programs providing legal and economic support. Yet, the complicated nature of identification as a victim and the criminal network structure leads many victims to be unreachable. Although the government has made efforts to eradicate this problem it is clear that additional steps need to be taken. Specifically, Brazil needs to minimize the socio-economic disparity within the state to address the amount of women who are willing to travel abroad for work and other opportunities. Furthermore, improvements need to be made to victim support services to allow reintegration. Finally, the criminal procedure

code needs to be revised and be more comprehensive, which should allow for changes that address the criminal network configuration and does not incentivize sex trafficking over other types of criminal activities. Only through implementing changes that prevent trafficking, prosecute traffickers and protect victims, will sex trafficking cease to destroy so many women's lives.