



ماعت للسلام والتنمية وحقوق الإنسان  
Maat For Peace, Development, and Human Rights

## Maat for Peace' submission on Trafficking in persons and protection of refugees, stateless persons and internally displaced persons (IDPs)

### Introduction

Human trafficking in the displaced and refugees represents a grave crime and a serious violation of human rights covenants and all international human rights and legal agreements. It led to many violations, especially those related to vulnerable and marginalized groups. Hence, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights presents this written contribution to shed light on the violations caused by human trafficking practices and the exploitation of the displaced and asylum seekers. Maat highlights the policies of managing camps for the displaced and refugees to prevent human trafficking and concludes the contribution with a set of recommendations aiming to improve the humanitarian conditions of the displaced and refugees.

### First: The Relationship between Human Trafficking and Exploitation of Internally Displaced Persons and Asylum Seekers:

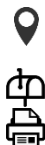
#### A- The relationship between human trafficking and the exploitation of internally displaced persons (IDP):

The rate of human trafficking in the displaced has increased as the people displaced from conflict areas were forced to trade in some family members in order to be able to provide a living for the same families. This can be done through child marriage, forced child labor, or even through sexual exploitation to obtain shelter.

Terrorist and extremist groups around the world and in the conflict zones of the Arab region have revealed a new type of human trafficking known as **jihad marriage**, in which they are trying falsely to link it with bonds related to religion, which have nothing to do with it at all. The term was used to motivate, use and exploit young people in terrorist operations and carry out the purposes of terrorist groups by luring them into jihad marriage or marrying off minors. A new type of



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trafficking has emerged as a result of trafficking in persons in wars and armed conflicts to be used in war against other groups or against the state itself.<sup>1</sup>

There are high levels of impunity for this crime in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where fewer human traffickers are convicted and fewer victims are discovered than in the rest of the world. At the same time, victims from these regions are identified in countries of destination more widely than victims from other regions.<sup>2</sup>

As for trafficking in displaced persons for 2022, female victims are more likely than males to be subjected to severe physical violence at the hands of traffickers at a rate three times higher than that of males, and that the rate is almost the double among children.<sup>3</sup>

### **B- Relationship between human trafficking and refugee exploitation:**

People who are trafficked across international borders, in transit or at a place of final destination may be in need of international protection as refugees. Therefore, ensuring protection against refoulement and access to procedures through which refugee status can be determined is crucial.<sup>4</sup> Although not all victims of trafficking are refugees, the conditions experienced by some trafficking victims qualify them to obtain refugee status. UNHCR Guidelines on International Protection No. 7 specify when the definition of a refugee in the 1951 Convention applies to victims of trafficking and persons at risk of being trafficked.<sup>5</sup>

**A United Nations report indicated that refugee women and girls are still affected more than others by human trafficking to this day.** About five adult women and two girls have fallen victims of trafficking out of every ten victims discovered globally. Nearly one third of the total discovered victims are children,

<sup>1</sup> المرجع السابق.

<sup>2</sup> موقع المصري اليوم. عنوان "زيادة ضحايا الإتجار بالبشر". تاريخ النشر 2023/1/24. <https://tinyurl.com/2o7ruijbc>

<sup>3</sup> المرجع السابق

<sup>4</sup> موقع اليونيسف. عنوان "الإتجار بالبشر". دون تاريخ. <https://tinyurl.com/2mb5pxhz>

<sup>5</sup> المرجع السابق.



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and 20% of the discovered victims are adult men. Most of the victims were trafficked for various purposes, including sexual exploitation (50%) and forced (38%).

With regard to the different types of exploitation, 72% of refugee girls were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, 21% for the purpose of forced labor, and 7% for other forms. As for refugee boys, 23% of them were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, 66% for the purpose of forced labor, and 11% for other forms. With regard to refugee women, 77% of them were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, 14% for the purpose of forced labor, and 9% for other forms of exploitation. Refugee men, 17% of them were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, 67% for the purpose of forced labour, 1% for the purpose of removing organs and 15% for other forms of exploitation.<sup>6</sup>

In the past four years, about 2,634 child migrants and asylum seekers who were victims of human trafficking arrived in the UK, and the real number is likely to be higher than the declared. As their number continues to rise year after year, according to official figures. Statistics show that unaccompanied children arriving in the UK are particularly vulnerable. The European Law Enforcement Organization (Europol) has raised concerns that unaccompanied children are particularly targeted by human traffickers, with hundreds of them went missing last year after entering the asylum system. One in four trafficked children is reported missing, while one in six unaccompanied children trafficked is reported missing in the UK.<sup>7</sup>

## Second: Policies for managing camps for internally displaced persons and refugees to prevent trafficking in persons:

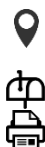
### A- Camp Management Policy to Prevent Human Trafficking in IDPs:

Several international organizations have warned that children are disappearing from IDPs camps, and are being exploited in fighting to plant explosives and carry out

<sup>6</sup> موقع الأمم المتحدة. عنوان " الإتجار بالأشخاص وحقوق الإنسان". دون تاريخ. <https://tinyurl.com/2gb3w9m5>  
<sup>7</sup> مرصد الأورومتوسطي لحقوق الإنسان. عنوان " المملكة المتحدة.. مكافحة الإتجار بالبشر تستدعي حماية طالبي اللجوء بدلاً من محاربتهم". تاريخ النشر 2022/1/22. <https://tinyurl.com/2ptr8vwa>



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armed attacks and suicide bombings, and that terrorist groups are targeting young people and recruiting them via the internet. This alarming problem has aggravated and those in charge of camp management provide specialized medical, psychological and legal assistance to all displaced persons who have been trafficked<sup>8</sup>.

International observers reported that the “**Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)**” is recruiting children in displacement camps in northeastern Syria by force, and there are at least 527 children in camps in northeastern Syria, including al-Hol camp, who were victims of human trafficking, and were used in direct hostilities, or in support roles by armed militias. Thousands of foreign, non-Syrian women remained in camps in northeastern Syria, and some of them had family ties to foreign fighters of the “ISIS” organization. Some of these detained women may be victims of unidentified traffickers<sup>9</sup>. As for the camp administration in northeastern Syria, it could neither do anything legal and nor criminalize the perpetrators of trafficking crimes. They could only provide health, psychological and social services.

Armed militias, community members and criminal gangs exploit Syrian women, girls and boys inside displacement camps, especially disadvantaged groups, such as IDPs and individuals with disabilities, in sex trafficking for food or money.<sup>10</sup>

### **B- Camp management policy to prevent human trafficking in refugees:**

There are different patterns of human trafficking in the Dzaleka refugee camp in Malawi, where children are trafficked inside and outside the camp to work in farms and homes. Sexual exploitation of children, women and girls is not limited to Dzaleka in Malawi, they are transferred for the purpose of sexual exploitation to other countries in South Africa. Male refugees are subjected to forced labor inside

<sup>8</sup> وكالة أنباء المرأة. عنوان " ضحايا الإتجار بالبشر يتعرضون للعقاب بدلاً من توفير الحماية لهم ". تاريخ النشر 2021/10/28.

<https://tinyurl.com/2g5792o3>

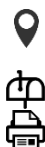
<sup>9</sup> قناة أخبار سوريا. عنوان " قتل وتجنيد وإساءة معاملة سوريا في تقرير الخارجية الأميركية عن الإتجار بالبشر ". تاريخ النشر 2022/7/20.

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<sup>10</sup> المرجع السابق



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camps or on farms in Malawi and other countries in the region. The camp administration provides poor health services and psychological support, and does not take any legal action regarding the issue of trafficking from which camp residents suffer.<sup>11</sup>

**Syrian refugees** in neighboring countries are highly vulnerable to sex trafficking and forced labour, especially in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey. International organizations report that cases of child and early marriage of Syrian girls surge among refugees, which increases their vulnerability to trafficking. Syrian women and girls, in refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraqi Kurdistan, are subjected to forced or temporary marriage, for the purpose of commercial sex and other forms of exploitation and sex trafficking. The camp administration does not interfere to stop such marriages or the slavery of children unless it is asked for advice and guidance and does not file legal cases against the perpetrators of crimes of this kind.<sup>12</sup>

In Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan, **Syrian refugee** children continue to be exploited in begging in the streets or selling goods, some of whom may be forced or coerced to do so, and the money is taken to human traffickers at the end of each day.<sup>13</sup>

## Recommendations

**Many displaced persons and refugees suffer from the phenomenon of trafficking, which is a coercive crime that violates all international human rights conventions and protocols. Therefore, Maat for Peace, Development and**

<sup>11</sup> أخبار الأمم المتحدة. عنوان " لاجئين في خطر الأمم المتحدة تكشف عن حالات إبتجار بالبشر في مخيم بملوي". تاريخ النشر 2022/6/12.

<https://tinyurl.com/2eh5r7fd>

<sup>12</sup> قناة أخبار سوريا. عنوان " قتل وتجنيد وإساءة معاملة سوريا في تقرير الخارجية الأميركية عن الإبتجار بالبشر". تاريخ النشر 2022/7/20.

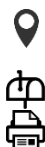
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<sup>13</sup> قناة أخبار سوريا. عنوان " قتل وتجنيد وإساءة معاملة سوريا في تقرير الخارجية الأميركية عن الإبتجار بالبشر". تاريخ النشر 2022/7/20.

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## **Human Rights presents a set of recommendations that would stop the crime of human trafficking in the displaced and refugees:**

1. Maat calls for enhancing the protection and promoting the conditions of the camps for the displaced in conflict zones, and suggests that the camp administration be under international supervision and oversight from the concerned international mechanisms, such as the Human Rights Council and the relevant international organizations.
2. Maat calls for the need to impose penalties issued by the International Criminal Court for those who contributed to and committed human trafficking crimes against the vulnerable among the displaced and refugees, especially in conflict areas.
3. Maat recommends countries that include camps for refugees and displaced persons to provide statistics on cases of victims of human trafficking and put in place strict laws to reduce those crimes that violate international humanitarian law and to draw a line between the statistics of detainees and those exposed to human trafficking, given that it sometimes mix up the perpetrators of crimes and victims who have been subjected to human trafficking and detention in illegal centers.
4. Countries suffering from an exacerbation of the phenomenon of human trafficking should work to establish partnerships with international experts, in order to provide regular training to judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials on the differences between human trafficking and smuggling of migrants and on the collection and interpretation of evidence of trafficking crimes in a cost-effective and focused manner.



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