

Topic: Promotion and protection of human rights in the situation of human trafficking

Country: Japan

Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons, is a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in commercial sex acts. The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological. 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. Over the past 20 years, human trafficking has generated a tremendous amount of public attention throughout the world. It is estimated that approximately 1,000,000 people are trafficked each year globally, which makes it a significant issue that concerns us all.

In the research conducted by UNODC, it's shown that the most detected form of human trafficking is for the purpose of sexual exploitation with the majority of victims being women and girls. "Demand is the bridge between the victim and the trafficker, without the demand, there would not be the supply." said the Head of UNODC's Global Programmes against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants. Diane Martin, a survivor of trafficking who was sexually exploited in her late teens said "We need legislation and policies addressing demand, and not just to exist on paper, but to be robustly implemented where traffickers, third party facilitators and sex buyers are criminally held accountable and stopped in their tracks."

"Human trafficking affects every country of the world, and Japan is clearly affected as a destination country for many of those victims," said the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Joy Ngozi Ezeilo. Ngozi Ezeilo noted that the Japanese Government recognizes the seriousness of the problem and has taken important steps, including the adoption of a National Plan of Action on trafficking. More recently, victims have also been granted the right to a special residence permit if they wish to stay in Japan. The Special Rapporteur also recognized the efforts undertaken by the Government to cooperate with sending countries to support the reintegration of victims in their home countries.

As the Japanese government, we are putting significant efforts on preventing human trafficking internationally and we want to turn our actions into global actions. Some preliminary actions that we think of are establishing a national rapporteur office on trafficking, strengthening labour inspections, strengthening the services provided to victims of trafficking, creating a special fund for compensations and improving partnerships between government agencies and NGO's. With every step we take, we can prevent a human getting trafficked by someone else, and that's what Japan wishes to do.