|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Country:** | Morocco |  |
| **Committee:** | The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) |
| **Agenda Item:** | Promoting and protection of human rights in the situation of human trafficking |

Morocco is a North African country with a population of approximately 37 million and an area of 720,000 km². Its capital is Rabat and its largest city is Casablanca. Morocco has a long coastline that surrounds the Strait of Gibraltar from the Atlantic Ocean and ends in the Mediterranean Sea. It is bordered by Algeria in the east, Spain in the north, and Mauritania in the south. The official and dominant religion is Islam. Its official languages are Arabic and Berber. The form of government is parliamentary monarchy.

With the dramatic increase in illegal immigration flows around the world in the last decade, the problem of human trafficking has become a common problem for many countries, especially European countries. In the face of this problem, European countries made it difficult for refugees to cross possible borders. In migration from Central Africa to Europe, North African countries, especially Morocco, faced the risk of human trafficking (Gillette, 2014). For this reason, the international community attaches importance to the political steps that Morocco, which hosts immigrants, plans to take to provide assistance to immigrants. As migrants are already at a vulnerable position they repeatedly fall victim to violence at the hands of local people, police and criminal gangs. Female immigrants are at much higher risk than a male. Women do not realize how likely they are to be sexually assaulted somewhere during their journey while migrating from their home country. Despite all these risks, returning home is not an option for many immigrants. While the problem of human trafficking has been seen as a problem for destination countries for many years, it has been understood to be a bigger problem for transit countries in recent years (Gillette, 2014). Countries such as Egypt and Algeria, especially Morocco, are the transit locations where the risk of human trafficking in North Africa is the most intense. It was determined that 38000 immigrants crossed from Morocco to Spain in 2020 (U.S. Department of State, 2022).

Under pressure from the United Nations, Morocco passed an anti-trafficking law in 2016 to prevent human trafficking. The U.S. Department of State identifies Morocco as a Tier 2 country. This means the country that has taken steps to eliminate human trafficking but has not yet meet the minimum standards (Prafcke, 2021). Human trafficking in Morocco includes unpaid domestic labor, forced begging and sexual exploitation. Boys often become agricultural laborers or work in trades such as carpentry or mechanics. On the other hand, girls typically work as domestic servants or experience sex trafficking. Despite Morocco’s laws, employers frequently pay these children far below minimum wage and abuse them (Prafcke, 2021). Traffickers may engage in physical and emotional abuse or withhold passports to keep immigrants as slaves.

Morocco recommends establishing systematic procedures for the identification of victims, separating data on human trafficking crimes, providing shelter, psycho-social services, legal aid and repatriation assistance for victims, and introducing harsh laws for smugglers.