
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
OF THE
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD

MAY 2010

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

The General Assembly:

1. Receive the Report.
2. Welcome the recommendations and endorse their adoption by the Church of Scotland.

REPORT

TRAFFICKING TASK GROUP REPORT

1. Theological Reflection

Trafficking is an extreme form of exploitation and an appalling kind of violence committed against people who are vulnerable. In theological language it is a sin of injustice. For the followers of Christ, the call to stand alongside the dispossessed, marginalised and oppressed and to be advocates for those who are robbed of their humanity is not an optional extra.

The fundamental imperative that compels the churches to stand against trafficking is founded in the creation story. Human beings have been created in the image of God and are loved equally by God. Therefore no man, woman or child can ever be treated as a commodity or a possession.

Already in the early biblical tradition we find the seeds of a call for the people of God to pursue justice for those who are vulnerable and to seek their release from bondage (Deuteronomy 10:18, Jeremiah 22:3). The prophetic tradition of the Old Testament makes it clear that worship without justice is meaningless (e.g. Amos 5:21-24; Micah 6-8).

Through His life, witness and teachings Jesus calls his disciples not just to stand against injustice and to help those that are vulnerable but he invites them to offer protection to all in need; at times a costly kind of hospitality that consumes the giver.

2. Preamble

2.1 The Trafficking Task Group was formed to take forward a remit (**Appendix A**) recommended to ACTS' Forum by the Group which had had responsibility for marking in 2007 the Bicentenary of the passing of the Act which abolished the Slave Trade. That Group regarded human trafficking as a new form of human slavery and believed that the Churches should be called upon to lead a campaign against it.

2.2 The Member Churches of ACTS were asked to nominate people to serve on the Task Group and four of them did. Others asked to be kept informed of the progress of the Task Group's work, as did the Free Church of Scotland. The Evangelical Alliance, and through it the Baptist Union of Scotland, expressed interest in the

Group's remit and nominated the Alliance's Public Policy Officer as a member. The membership of the Group is shown in **Appendix B**.

2.3 At its first meeting the Task Group decided that it required both to find out what the Churches were already doing about human trafficking and to learn from the experiences of those who were working in the field, on trafficking and issues related to it.

2.4 Churches were asked to provide information about their current policies and resources and representatives of several organisations were invited to speak to the Group. A Resource List is to be found in **Appendix D**

2.5 The members of the Task Group acknowledge their considerable debt to those (**Appendix C**) who gave up their time to meet with them and who made the fruits of their experience available to them.

2.6 The original remit (**Appendix A**) directed the Task Group's attention towards human trafficking for sexual purposes. It soon became clear to them that trafficking takes place for other purposes. The members resolved, therefore, to seek the agreement of ACTS' Members' Meeting, by which the Forum had been replaced, to broaden its remit to include all forms of trafficking. This was quickly given.

3. Issues

3.1 When the Group set out to try to assess the scale of the problem of human trafficking for sexual purposes in Scotland, it discovered that there are very few reliable statistics. There is clear evidence from many of the charitable and government agencies working in the field that trafficking is taking place but little hard evidence to show how many people are being trafficked.

3.2 There have been very few successful prosecutions of traffickers in the United Kingdom – none in Scotland – despite large Police operations such as Pentameter 1 and 2. The difficulty of providing evidence sufficient to satisfy the courts is partly responsible for this. One

reason for this is that rescued individuals cannot be held in Police custody and melt away – possibly to avoid deportation; or family shame; or threats to themselves or their families.

3.3 The Task Group was told that there is an urgent need for safe environments where individuals rescued from trafficking can be cared for. One of the reasons put forward for this was to allow them to have time to gain sufficient self-confidence to provide the evidence required for successful prosecutions. The "reflection period" given to immigrants identified as victims is not long enough for this process to operate.

3.4 The difficulty of establishing the scale of the problem is increased because trafficking can be defined in a number of ways. The international definition, as agreed in the 2000 Palermo Protocol, requires there to be force, fraud or coercion of an unwilling victim. The definition in the UK's Sexual Offences Act of 2003 is broader and appears to include the movement of all sex workers, even if they are travelling voluntarily in search of a better income. This latter definition causes confusion in that sex workers entering the country illegally, but having paid voluntarily for their journey, can be described in the statistics as being "trafficked" rather than "smuggled".

3.5 It is also worth noting that these statistics can be misused by agencies to further their own agendas – for example agencies which depict large numbers of sex workers as being "trafficked" – and therefore as unwilling victims.

3.6 The same problem of obtaining reliable statistics is encountered when seeking information on the scale of trafficking and smuggling of people into the country to work in various industries. There is clear evidence that there are such people and that they are subject to exploitation by employers but there are no figures to say how many or where.

3.7 Establishing the scale of trafficking in children is equally difficult. The Task Group did not have the opportunity or time to collect information about the international trafficking of children and young people. However, Barnardo's, who operate over 20 specialised sexual exploitation projects across the United Kingdom, report that they have become aware of a growing number of cases in which youngsters are groomed by adults for sexual exploitation.

The trafficking, in this instance, takes place within the country and involves the young people – often those already in care - being taken from their home area to another town or city where they are subjected to exploitation. They are then returned to their homes before any alarm can be raised.

4. Action by the Churches

4.1 The responses to the Group's enquiries about past and current activities by the Churches made it very clear that they were aware of the problem and that they were trying to find ways to tackle it. These ranged from compiling information and study packs and organising conferences to raise the awareness of their members - and of wider society – to what was happening in this country and across the world to practical action such as the setting up, for example, of "safe houses" – so far only in England – by the Salvation Army and some others for individuals rescued from trafficking.

4.2 Churches had also put considerable effort towards successfully persuading the British Government to sign up to the Palermo Protocol and to implement the measures recommended by the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings.

4.3 If each Church labours to produce, for example, its own information pack, which practically duplicates those of its partners, or struggles to identify scarce resources to take on a major project such as establishing a "safe house", the Task Group believes less will actually be achieved.

4.4 The Group noted that in Scotland in 2009 the Justice Secretary and the Solicitor General had met with an ecumenical group to discuss trafficking.

5. What could the Churches do?

5.1 Set out below is a summary of the suggestions made by those who presented evidence to the Task Group. It should be noted that most of the suggestions relate to trafficking for sexual purposes, because this was the field in which most of the guests worked.

- a) Encourage congregations to pray for those who have been trafficked.
- b) Raise awareness of what is involved for those trafficked and set the evil of the practice and the abuse of human rights involved in a theological framework.
- c) Produce and distribute multi-lingual leaflets giving information about where support can be found by someone who has been trafficked.
- d) Share information on trafficking and collaborate with secular organisations.
- e) Campaign and lobby to persuade Government(s) to adopt policies which enshrine human rights for those who have been trafficked and are rescued.
- f) Campaign and lobby to persuade the Government to conduct publicity campaigns to make people from other countries aware of what they need to do to come to the United Kingdom legally to find work.
- g) Campaign and lobby for more effective training for Police personnel in the suffering faced by victims of trafficking.
- h) Campaign and lobby to persuade Governments to address the global problems of economic injustice.
- i) Set up one or more additional "safe houses" for those rescued from trafficking.
- j) Provide practical support for those in the safe houses e.g. clothing; toiletries; Bibles in different languages.
- k) Encourage church members with special skills and talents to come forward to work with those in safe houses e.g. as interpreters; as doctors; as lawyer .
- l) Encourage church members to help support

trafficked women who are at the stage of moving from a safe house to accommodation of their own.

- m) recognise the international dimension to the problem and collaborate and share information with partner churches and ecumenical bodies in other countries.
- n) Organise ecumenical services to draw public attention to the problem and to maintain interest in overcoming it.

5.2 The Task Group presents these suggestions chiefly for information.

6. Recommendations

The Task Group believes that for Church action against trafficking to be most effective it requires to be ecumenical and it requires co-operation, including the sharing of information and resources.

Accordingly the Group wishes to recommend the following strategy to the Churches -

An ecumenical Group, to be facilitated by the structures of ACTS, should be set up as rapidly as possible. Those nominated by the Churches to serve on the Group should include those directly and actively involved in implementing the Churches' current policies against trafficking and in support of its victims.

The Group should be charged to meet regularly to *inter alia*

- i) exchange information concerning each Church's activities against trafficking and on the support of victims of trafficking;
- ii) work towards the formulation of draft common policies against trafficking and in support of its victims;
- iii) commend those policies to the Churches and to encourage them to campaign and lobby for their adoption by Governments;
- iv) identify opportunities where joint action and shared resources would more effectively combat trafficking

or support its victims; to produce detailed proposals for the implementation of such action; and to recommend them for adoption by the Churches.

APPENDIX A

REMIT

TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The 2007 Group believe that churches in Scotland lack a reference point where information, concerted action, and strategic thinking to tackle the issue of trafficking for sexual exploitation can happen. As a result many churches and church groups are not aware of what others are doing in this area.

The 2007 Group welcomed the fact that a number of church denominations had produced material and resource packs which highlighted the problems, particularly through case studies. However the 2007 Group believe that there is a need to share information and to develop effective collaboration which would ensure the most efficient use of limited resources. The 2007 Group, therefore, recommend to the Forum that a small, short life working group should be set up to draw up, within two years, a strategy for co-operation and joint action by the churches of Scotland.

This working group should be composed of men and women with some knowledge and passion about the subject, prepared to be pro-active and preferably with connections to the relevant body/group in their particular church. To help them prepare an effective strategy for common action the working group would seek information from those working in the field, including governmental, voluntary, community and church based groups.

APPENDIX B**TASK GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

Dr Nelu Balaj (Convener)	formerly Scottish Churches' Racial Justice Officer
Rev Francis Alao	Scottish Churches' Racial Justice Officer (from January 2010)
Major John McCaffrey	Salvation Army
David McCann	Roman Catholic Church
Tom Moyes	Network Officer, ACTS
Charmian Paterson	Scottish Episcopal Church & NEWS
Fiona Punton	Church of Scotland Guild
Dr Enid Scobie	Scottish Episcopal Church (Mothers' Union)
Alistair Stevenson	Evangelical Alliance & International Justice Mission
Sr Christine Triay	Conference of Religious for Scotland, Roman Catholic Church
Alison Twaddle	Church of Scotland Guild

APPENDIX C**PROVIDERS OF EVIDENCE**

Det Sgt. Sandra Jamieson	Co-ordinator for Trafficking (Scotland)
Captain Eleanor Haddick	Salvation Army
Ruth Morgan Thomas	SCOT-PEP
Jan Macleod	Women's Support Group (Glasgow)
Ann Hamilton	TARA
Oliver Wright	International Justice Mission
John Deighan	Parliamentary Officer, Roman Catholic Church
Gordon Macdonald	Parliamentary Officer, CARE
Major Anne Read	Salvation Army
Lesley Reid	National Health Service Lothian

APPENDIX D**RESOURCES**

Organisation	Material Produced	Web Link
Church of Scotland	Resource Pack – “To be silent is to be unfaithful” designed to stimulate discussion in congregational groups	www.churchofscotland.org.uk/councils/churchsociety
Roman Catholic Church	Medaille Trust Material	www.medaille.co.uk
Methodist Church	Information Pack	www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=churchlife.content&cmid=1257
Salvation Army	Web site devoted to subject with downloads of resources available	www2.salvationarmy.org.uk/humantrafficking
Religious Society of Friends	Comments on legislation	http://www.quaker.org.uk/parliamentary-liaison-immigration-asylum-march-2002
Evangelical Alliance	Articles and links to other organisations	http://www.eauk.org
Stop the Traffik	Various leaflets and presentations	www.stopthetraffik.org/resources/
CHASTE	Various Leaflets and presentations	www.chaste.org.uk/resources
Anti-Slavery	Links to many reports and publications	www.antislavery.org/english/resources
Women’s Support Project (Glasgow)	Resource Lists and Research Project Reports	http://www.womenssupportproject.co.uk/content/resourcesandpublications/182/
CARE	Briefing Pack	http://www.care.org.uk/Groups/30237/CARE/Campaigns/Human_Trafficking/Human_Trafficking.aspx
Amnesty International	“Scotland’s Slaves” Research report	http://www.amnesty.org.uk/uploads/documents/doc_18605.pdf
Hope for Justice	DVD & Promotional material	http://www.hopeforjustice.org.uk/Shop/
International Justice Mission	Leaflets, videos, books and case studies.	http://www.ijmuk.org/resources