

**The Salvation Army**  
**International Positional Statement**  
**MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

**STATEMENT OF POSITION**

The Salvation Army is deeply committed to fighting modern slavery and human trafficking. Modern slavery is an umbrella term including human trafficking for sex, labour or organs, exploitative labour practices, child labour and early and forced marriage. It involves not just individuals but also social and economic systems.

The Salvation Army believes in the biblical principles of the inherent and equal value of all persons and the duty to care for one's neighbour. The exploitation of human beings commodifies and dehumanises the individuals who are trafficked, rewards the inhumanity of the traffickers, and weakens the moral, social and economic fabric of society. The Salvation Army is opposed to the abuse of power against other human beings that is inherent in modern slavery and human trafficking.

Addressing modern slavery and human trafficking must involve addressing both supply and demand. The Salvation Army is committed to achieving justice by working with all involved. Restoration of persons who have been exploited and traumatised may be a long and complex process. Recognition of their inherent dignity, and restoration of choice and control of their own lives are critical.

Modern slavery and human trafficking needs to be stopped. Everyone has the responsibility, both individuals and institutions, to work for the liberation of those who have been subjected to slavery and trafficking. Legal and social mechanisms to stop slavery and trafficking must be established and those involved held to account.

Transformation and healing of hearts and minds of everyone involved in modern slavery and human trafficking is both necessary and possible.

**BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

Modern slavery and human trafficking includes those who create the demand for trafficked people and those who create the demand for commodities that are made and sold under coercive conditions. It also includes the traffickers and those entrusted with protection of communities (government, judiciary, law enforcement, banks).

Modern slavery and human trafficking take many forms. Sufficiently comprehensive definitions are often missing.

The United Nations statement known as the Palermo Protocol defines human trafficking as:

“Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum,

the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.<sup>1</sup>

The International Labour Organisation, an agency of the United Nations, defines forced labour as ‘all work or service which is exacted from any person under threat of a penalty and for which the person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily’.<sup>2</sup>

The term ‘modern slavery’ is an umbrella term covering many ill-defined practices. Generally included are human trafficking for sex, labour or organs, forced labour, bonded labour, descent-based labour, domestic servitude, child labour, early (child) and forced marriage.<sup>3</sup> This list is not exhaustive and other forms of modern slavery and human trafficking include the taking of babies and children for sale for adoption, the entrapment of people in religious ritual roles as well as those taken for religious rites that involve forms of human sacrifice.

It is difficult to establish reliable data as much of the modern slavery and human trafficking is hidden. However, the best estimates are that millions of people around the world are being exploited in this way.<sup>4</sup> People who are victims of modern slavery and human trafficking are often among the most vulnerable in societies. They include all ages, genders, ethnicities and creeds. The most vulnerable groups include refugees and migrants, minority groups, women, children and people experiencing extreme poverty.

The techniques used by traffickers and the forms in which exploitation are manifest are various, but what is common to them all is the exploitation of some people by other people.

Each form of modern slavery and human trafficking has features specific to that form, which need to be understood if they are to be addressed.

- Human trafficking for sexual exploitation is found throughout the world. The majority of those trafficked for sex are women and girls. However, boys, men and transgendered people should not be forgotten. They often remain hidden, not wishing to speak out about their shame and humiliation but are equally in need of assistance. The exploitation is not confined to prostitution but includes pornography and sex tourism. The growth of the internet and cyber technology has created new opportunities for exploitation. Combatting this requires international cooperation on judicial and law enforcement measures.
- Modern slavery includes the exploitation of people in a work situation. Men, women and children are being forced to work under unacceptable and sometimes dangerous conditions, often with inadequate pay and an inability to leave that employment. Domestic servitude is a particular type of labour exploitation involving people, mostly women, who are domestic servants. Unable to leave their employer, they are often physically and sexually abused and exploited financially. In some places they have no legal protection. Debt bondage and descent-based labour are practices that still occur in some cultures. Both practices are exploitative in nature with the debtor being rendered powerless to seek fair treatment. The support of good

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<sup>1</sup> Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children ([www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ProtocolonTrafficking.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ProtocolonTrafficking.pdf))

<sup>2</sup> ILO Forced Labour Convention 1930 (No. 29), Article 2 ([www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/genericdocument/wcms\\_346435.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/genericdocument/wcms_346435.pdf))

<sup>3</sup> Anti-Slavery International ([www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/modern-slavery](http://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/modern-slavery))

<sup>4</sup> 2017 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery :Forced Labour and Forced Marriage, ([www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_575479.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf))

work practices and prevention of abuse and exploitation in the labour market is a key component in the abolition of modern slavery and human trafficking.

- Child labour, child sexual exploitation, the trafficking of children and child marriage are all forms of child abuse that are included in the term modern slavery. They all impact negatively on the health, education and well-being of the child. Forced marriage at any age involves both labour and sexual exploitation of a spouse unable to leave the situation.
- Trafficking for harvest of body parts for whatever purpose-- transplant, sacrifice or use in religious ritual--is a violation of the person. Even when the person has agreed to sell the organ, informed consent is not given because the implications of the procedure are not explained. Unscrupulous people have been known to take essential organs (for example, both kidneys, leaving the donor to die), or even commit murder to obtain the organs.
- A perpetrator of exploitation may come from a similar background to their victims, and the loss of income if they stop exploiting can lead to severe hardship for their families. Unless alternative economic provision is made, the cycle of exploitation will continue.

## **GROUNDS FOR THE POSITION OF THE SALVATION ARMY**

Humankind is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26). All people are valuable to God, holding a special place in God's creation (Psalm 8:5). Nonetheless, the Bible describes horrifying realities that are as real now as when the Scriptures were written:

Psalm 10 describes the wickedness of the one who entraps others. 'He lies in wait to catch the helpless; he catches the helpless and drags them off in his net. His victims are crushed, they collapse; they fall under his strength. He says to himself, "God will never notice."'

Isaiah 42:22 says, 'But this is a people plundered and looted all of them trapped in pits or hidden away in prisons. They have become plunder, with no one to rescue them; they have been made loot, with no one to say, "Send them back."'

Joel 3:3 says, 'They cast lots for my people and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine that they might drink.'

The Bible is emphatic about the injustice of this. No one should be exploited or damaged. The Christian conviction is that the present broken and sinful state of the world is not the last word. God who made people wants no one to be lost.

Jesus came into the world that everyone might have life in all its fullness (John 10:10). He said, 'The Lord has sent me to announce freedom for prisoners, to give sight to the blind, to free everyone who suffers, and to say, "This is the year the Lord has chosen"' (Luke 4: 18 – 19 *CEV*). When Jesus said this, he was quoting Isaiah 61: 1 – 2. Later in Isaiah 61 are these words, 'I, the Lord, love justice! But I hate robbery and injustice' (v8). Micah 6:8 asks, 'What does the Lord require of you?' and answers: 'to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God'. The neighbour is to be loved as one loves oneself (Matthew 22:39; Lev 19:18).

Consequently, Christians are called upon to work for the elimination of all forms of slavery and human trafficking.

## PRACTICAL RESPONSES

Since its inception, The Salvation Army has sought to reduce the worldwide phenomenon of abuse of individuals or groups of people by others.

As recognition of the issue of modern slavery and human trafficking has grown, The Salvation Army has intensified its efforts to combat this evil throughout the world, even taking the lead role in some places.

The Salvation Army continues the fight through its individual members, corps and centres. It has developed an international strategy to increase the effectiveness of this work. This is built around the suggestion of the responses needed outlined in the Palermo Protocol, but includes two elements that are specific to the church.

The responses include one or more of the following:

- **Prayer** – For The Salvation Army prayer is an essential practice in the fight against modern slavery and human trafficking. Prayer gives people a way to gain God’s perspective and guidance in complex situations. Prayer keeps us in relationship with God and empowers our work.
- **Participation** – The local church is a resource in the battle against modern slavery and human trafficking and serve in some isolated communities that other agencies do not reach. Although appropriate training is needed for working with victims and survivors, every church can raise awareness in their communities of the presence of such abuse and exploitation, and provide a place of loving welcome for those on the journey of restoration. The Salvation Army will continue to build the capacity and provide resources for their members, corps and centres to participate.
- **Prevention** – We cannot combat what we do not recognise. Raising awareness of modern slavery and human trafficking are a vital element of prevention. Prevention also involves addressing both the factors that make people vulnerable and those that create the demand for exploited labour or for sexual exploitation. This can include income generation, child sponsorship, working with offenders, promoting fair trade and many other activities.
- **Protection** – The Salvation Army has a holistic view of health and seeks to assist survivors regain their health, physically, mentally, emotionally, relationally and spiritually. Victims need protection within their places of exploitation and survivors need protection and assistance during their rehabilitation. This could include reporting unsafe labour practices and advocating for change. Provision for survivors may include providing a means of exit for victims, transfer to a safe place, providing safe havens and opportunities for restoration to the survivors, both short and long term.
- **Prosecution** – The Salvation Army often works closely with law enforcement and judicial agencies. For example, by providing training, accepting referrals and receiving victims. There are also places where The Salvation Army works with offenders or their families.
- **Policy** – The Salvation Army calls upon all legislators and policy makers to develop and implement mechanisms to fight modern slavery and human trafficking and bring justice for all involved. The Salvation Army will work with government, businesses and community organisations in this regard.

Human trafficking flourishes because there is a demand for the services trafficked or exploited people are forced to provide. The Salvation Army therefore undertakes education and awareness raising activities so that those who use products or services supplied by trafficked or exploited

people are confronted with the human misery, suffering and injustice created by their continuing use of these services or products. The Salvation Army will continue to monitor our employment and purchasing practices and work to ensure we are exploitation free.

- **Partnership** –The Salvation Army recognises there are a number of reputable organizations working locally and globally on eliminating human trafficking. The extent of the exploitation is such that no single agency can address it alone. Collaborating and networking with these agencies is encouraged to achieve the elimination of modern slavery and human trafficking and to provide a holistic service for those who have been exploited as they journey towards restoration.

**Approved by the General, April 2018.**

**The views expressed in this international positional statement constitute the official position of The Salvation Army on the issue addressed, and they may not be modified or adapted in any way without the express written permission of International Headquarters.**