

Stop Trafficking!

Awareness Advocacy Action

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter • August 2020 • Vol. 18 • No. 8

FOCUS: This issue highlights topics covered by the United States State Department Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report for 2020.



Looking Back on Twenty Years of the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the TIP Report. The United States Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) the first comprehensive federal law designed to protect victims of sex and labor trafficking, prosecute traffickers, and prevent human trafficking in the United States and abroad. It also mandated the TIP Report to signal the U.S. government's resolve to fight human trafficking. Whether used to raise awareness, spark dialogue, spur action, or create a system of accountability, the TIP Report has served to reinforce global anti-trafficking norms and ideals. At a time when many governments denied the existence of human trafficking in all its forms, the TIP Report became a standard-bearer for the principles enshrined in the TVPA and the Palermo Protocol.

The TIP Report has documented the efforts of an increasing number of governments to prosecute traffickers, protect victims, and prevent human trafficking crimes. The report has drawn attention to trends and emerging issues, highlighted promising practices, and tracked the progression of important developments, such as the passage of comprehensive anti-trafficking laws and improvements in victim identification efforts.

The report has served as a tool in bringing governments to the table and encouraging them to prioritize human trafficking. Today, a majority of governments acknowledge the devastating effects of human trafficking, and most governments have taken steps to combat it.

The original three tier ranking system was created to indicate how well other governments complied with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking laid out in the law.

In July 2001, the Department of State published the first TIP Report. While the TVPA only called for a ranking of governments, those involved in the preparation of the first report included a brief explanation for the tier rankings to provide clarity and context to the report.

The first TIP Report included 82 country narratives, ranking them on one of three tiers, and was only 103 pages long. It included brief two-paragraph descriptions of each country's efforts to combat human trafficking. The report pointed to a dearth of reliable information to explain the exclusion of so many countries and called attention to the need for more governments to develop mechanisms to detect and report on human trafficking. Two years later, the



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report included the “3P” paradigm – prosecution, protection, and prevention – to assess and describe government efforts. Countries ranked on Tier 3 faced, for the first time, potential restrictions that included the loss of certain types of U.S. assistance. Also, thirty new countries were included in the report, marking a major increase in the amount of information available on governmental efforts to combat human trafficking. The following year the report featured a new section on TIP Report Heroes to highlight the importance of individual action to combat human trafficking.

The 2008 TIP Report included recommendations for governments to improve their anti-trafficking efforts—a vital component of the report today. Also in 2008, the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act widened the scope of countries in the TIP report and the report grew from analyzing 154 countries in 2008 to 173 countries the following year. The reauthorization also limited the number of consecutive years a country could remain on the Tier 2 Watch List to two consecutive years, after which it would be automatically downgraded to Tier 3 should it fail to make improvements that would warrant an upgrade. It was not until 2010 that the TIP Report included a ranking of the United States for the first time. In 2017 the report more clearly explained the country tier rankings as well as a new language to highlight more explicitly the factors that support a given tier ranking.

The Department of State prepared this report using information from United States embassies, government officials, non-governmental and international organizations, published reports, news articles, academic studies, research trips to every region of the world, and information submitted to tipreport@state.gov. This email address provides a means by which organizations and individuals can share information with the Department of State throughout the year on government progress in addressing trafficking. U.S. missions overseas are dedicated to covering human trafficking issues year-round. The 2020 TIP Report covers government efforts undertaken from April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020. For more information, click [here](#).

TOPICS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

UN Peacekeepers

Accountability for peacekeepers complicit in human trafficking has persisted as a serious challenge for governments and the international community. In some cases, peacekeepers have sexually abused or sexually exploited women and girls, including in sex trafficking, such as by threatening their access to food and other necessities to coerce them into sex. Victims in such cases also face enormous pressure not to report these crimes and abuses or the peacekeepers who committed them, and local authorities rarely have the capacity proactively to identify victims of these crimes. The UN and international community have attempted to address the challenges in holding peacekeepers accountable for sexual exploitation and abuse since reports of abuse emerged in the early 2000s. Staff serving as victim rights advocates are now posted in high-risk peacekeeping operations to provide victims with adequate protection, appropriate assistance, and reliable recourse to justice. The current culture of impunity threatens to tarnish irreparably the important mission of peacekeepers. Read more on page 22 of the [TIP Report](#). See page 549 for a list of actions taken by the United Nations, NATO and the OSCE to prevent exploitation and abuse by international peacekeepers and civilian personnel.

The Intersection of Human Trafficking and Addiction

The relationship between addiction and both labor and sex trafficking is recognized by the United States criminal justice system. Addiction can increase a person’s vulnerability to being trafficked, can be initiated and manipulated by the trafficker as a means of coercion and control, and can be used by the victim/survivor as a means of coping with the physical and psychological traumas of being trafficked both during captivity and after exiting the trafficking situation. People with substance use issues are especially vulnerable to trauma and victimization by human traffickers. Some traffickers recruit directly from detox and addiction treatment facilities.

The negative stereotype persists of the chemically dependent person as morally deficient and lacking in willpower. Societal stigma can prevent health care providers, law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and other professionals from identifying victims of human trafficking when they see only the manifestations of substance use disorder and consequently dismiss red flags. For more information, read page 30 of the [TIP Report](#).



Challenges to the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report

Even as the United States was awarded a Tier 1 ranking once again this year, there are additional actions the government can take to further strengthen its response to human trafficking in the United States. The TIP Report grades on three areas of anti-trafficking work: Prevention, protection, and prosecution. The Alliance to End Slavery and Human Trafficking (ATEST) and Polaris note the following areas of concern in each:

There needs to be more done to investigate labor trafficking and hold businesses accountable for labor trafficking abuses.

The TVPA explicitly recognizes that immigration status can create vulnerability to human trafficking and creates a program of “T” or trafficking visas that allow immigrant victims of trafficking to stay in the country and participate in prosecuting their abusers. In recent years, the pace of processing T visa requests has slowed down considerably, leaving many survivors who lack legal status in frightening limbo, unable to find closure and move forward to rebuild their lives. While as recently as two years ago, adjudication wait times for these visas averaged 6-9 months, today the wait time is between 19.5 and 26.5 months. Additional concerns include a decrease in the number of T visas granted to survivors and their family members.

The single best way to end human trafficking is to prevent human trafficking, in part by ensuring that services and supports are available for vulnerable and at-risk populations. As the global pandemic drags on, the need for these services and supports is only increasing. It is vital that our government help ensure that vulnerable people can find safe places to live, as well as medical and behavioral health treatment, food, transportation, and other supports.

Meanwhile, ATEST offers the following recommendations. Regarding labor trafficking, they urge members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee to inquire specifically about the Tier 1 ranking for the United States and how it complies with provisions of the TIP Report Integrity Act. As prosecutions for forced labor globally remain minimal and incidences continue to rise, upgrading 22 countries in the 2020 TIP Report should raise serious questions. They also question why labor trafficking is prosecuted less often than sex trafficking.

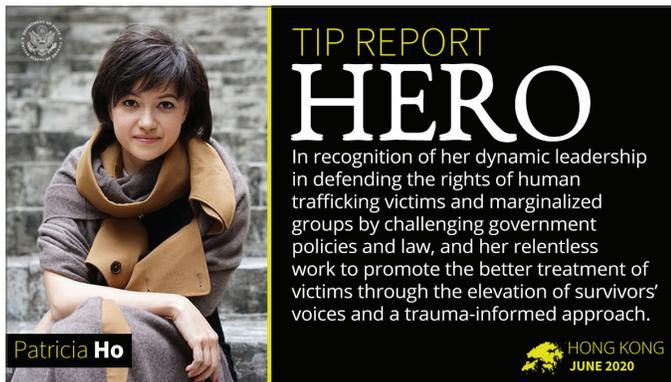
ATEST also calls on the U.S. Departments of Justice and Homeland Security to develop legislatively-mandated protocols for law enforcement agencies to treat trafficked individuals as victims and not as criminals. The deadline to develop the protocols was two years ago. They urge congressional oversight committees to inquire why these protocols are overdue and when they will be completed. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Awareness

2020 TIP Report Heroes

Each year, the Department of State honors individuals around the world who have devoted their lives to the fight against human trafficking. These individuals include NGO workers, lawmakers, government officials, survivors of human trafficking, and concerned citizens. They are recognized for their tireless efforts—despite resistance, opposition, and threats to their lives—to protect victims, punish offenders, and educate stakeholders about human trafficking trends in their countries and abroad. The TIP heroes usually attend the announcement of the TIP Report in person but this year attended virtually due to the pandemic.



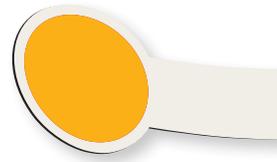
Patricia Ho's

unwavering leadership has been a driving force in increasing awareness of human trafficking in Hong Kong. As the Founder of Hong Kong Dignity Institute, Ho defends and advances the rights of human trafficking victims and minority groups in Hong Kong by challenging government policies and law. In addition to her important litigation work, Ho provides critical legal and strategic advice to several NGOs and works with local and international bodies to advocate for the rights of marginalized groups, including refugees, asylum seekers, and victims of human trafficking in Hong Kong. To read more, go to [TIP Report](#), page 50.



Nina Balabayeva

has dedicated her life and career to combating trafficking in persons and helping trafficking victims, both foreign and Kazakhstani, before there were even laws on the books in Kazakhstan to provide them access to justice. As the founder and director of Rodnik, an NGO, Balabayeva has been instrumental in leading the organization's work to provide psychological and legal support to victims of trafficking in multiple regions of the country. Over the past two decades, her organization has assisted more than 16,000 people. Through Rodnik, Balabayeva opened the first shelter in Kazakhstan for victims of human trafficking in March 2006, providing individualized support to residents and serving as a model for shelters across the country. In 2004, Balabayeva led Rodnik to start up a human trafficking hotline, which it still operates. Go to [TIP Report](#), page 50 to read more.



Ary Varela and Natalino Correia

Ary Varela and Natalino Correia are instrumental figures in holding human traffickers criminally accountable and assisting victims in attaining justice in Cabo Verde. Varela, a public prosecutor, and Correia, a member of the Judiciary Police, have persistently pursued human trafficking cases within the country. In 2018, they initiated an investigation into a forced labor case that involved four victims forced to work in a retail shop. In their official capacities, Varela and Correia handled the case with extreme sensitivity and caution, working closely with an international organization to ensure the victims were protected. Varela and Correia worked despite pressure to drop the case and overt hostility from the traffickers' networks and their peers. Thanks to their efforts, the victims were safely repatriated. This was Cabo Verde's first official case of human trafficking where the government prosecuted defendants for human trafficking crimes, representing a critical milestone in the country's understanding of and response to human trafficking. Throughout the course of the investigation, Varela and Correia showed an impressive level of perseverance in the face of immense difficulties, including foreign interference and threats to their personal safety, to pursue Cabo Verde's first forced labor prosecution. Read more in [TIP Report](#) on page 49.



Tier Placement

Each country is ranked on one of four tiers, as mandated by the TVPA. Such rankings are based not on the size of a country's problem but on the extent of government efforts to meet the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking, which are generally consistent with the Palermo Protocol. While Tier 1 is the highest-ranking, it does not mean that a country has no human trafficking problem or that it is doing enough to address the problem. Rather, a Tier 1 ranking indicates that a government has made efforts to address the problem. To maintain a Tier 1 ranking, governments need to demonstrate appreciable progress each year in combating trafficking.

Tier 2 countries are those whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards. Tier 2 Watch List Countries are those whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards, and for which: a) the estimated number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing and the country is not taking proportional concrete actions; b) there is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year, including increased investigations, prosecution, and convictions of trafficking crimes, increased assistance to victims, and decreasing evidence of complicity in severe forms of trafficking by government officials. Any country that has been ranked Tier 2 Watch List for two consecutive years and that would otherwise be ranked Tier 2 Watch List for the next year will instead be ranked Tier 3 in that third year.

Countries in Tier 3 are those whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

The 2020 report lists 22 countries receiving improved rankings for their work on the issue over the past year. There has been much criticism of the tier system over the years with advocates declaring that the report's rankings have always been politicized. For more information, read page 55 of the [TIP Report](#).

TIER PLACEMENTS

TIER 1

ARGENTINA	CHILE	GEORGIA	NETHERLANDS	SPAIN
AUSTRALIA	COLOMBIA	GUYANA	NEW ZEALAND	SWEDEN
AUSTRIA	CYPRUS	ISRAEL	NORWAY	SWITZERLAND
THE BAHAMAS	CZECH REPUBLIC	KOREA, SOUTH	PHILIPPINES	TAIWAN
BAHRAIN	ESTONIA	LITHUANIA	PORTUGAL	UNITED KINGDOM
BELGIUM	FINLAND	LUXEMBOURG	SINGAPORE	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
CANADA	FRANCE	NAMIBIA	SLOVENIA	

TIER 2

ALBANIA	ECUADOR	JAMAICA	MOROCCO	ST. MAARTEN
ANGOLA	EGYPT	JAPAN	MOZAMBIQUE	SLOVAKIA
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	EL SALVADOR	KENYA	NEPAL	SOLOMON ISLANDS
BANGLADESH	ESWATINI	KOSOVO	NIGER	SOUTH AFRICA
BENIN	ETHIOPIA	KUWAIT	NORTH MACEDONIA	SURINAME
BOLIVIA	GABON	LAOS	OMAN	TAJIKISTAN
BOTSWANA	GERMANY	LATVIA	PALAU	THAILAND
BRAZIL	GHANA	LEBANON	PANAMA	TOGO
BULGARIA	GREECE	LIBERIA	PARAGUAY	TONGA
BURKINA FASO	GUATEMALA	MADAGASCAR	PERU	TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
CABO VERDE	HAITI	MALAWI	POLAND	TUNISIA
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	HONDURAS	MALTA	QATAR	TURKEY
CONGO, REPUBLIC OF THE	HUNGARY	MAURITIUS	RWANDA	UKRAINE
COSTA RICA	ICELAND	MEXICO	SAINT LUCIA	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
COTE D'IVOIRE	INDIA	MICRONESIA	ST. VINCENT	URUGUAY
CROATIA	INDONESIA	MOLDOVA	AND THE GRENADINES	VANUATU
DENMARK	IRAQ	MONGOLIA	SERBIA	ZIMBABWE
DJIBOUTI	ITALY	MONTENEGRO	SIERRA LEONE	

TIER 2 WATCH LIST

ARMENIA	CAMEROON	GUINEA	MALDIVES	SEYHELLES
ARUBA	CHAD	GUINEA-BISSAU	MALI	SRI LANKA
AZERBAIJAN	CONGO, DEMOCRATIC	HONG KONG	MARSHALL ISLANDS	SUDAN
BARBADOS	REPUBLIC OF THE	IRELAND	MAURITANIA	TANZANIA
BELIZE	CURAÇAO	JORDAN	NIGERIA	TIMOR-LESTE
BHUTAN	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	KAZAKHSTAN	PAKISTAN	UGANDA
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	EQUATORIAL GUINEA	KYRGYZ REPUBLIC	ROMANIA	UZBEKISTAN
BRUNEI	FIJI	MACAU	SAUDI ARABIA	VIETNAM
CAMBODIA	THE GAMBIA	MALAYSIA	SENEGAL	ZAMBIA

TIER 3

AFGHANISTAN	BURUNDI	ERITREA	NICARAGUA	SYRIA
ALGERIA	CHINA	IRAN	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	TURKMENISTAN
BELARUS	COMOROS	KOREA, NORTH	RUSSIA	VENEZUELA
BURMA	CUBA	LESOTHO	SOUTH SUDAN	

SPECIAL CASE

LIBYA	SOMALIA	YEMEN
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Lāsma Stabiņa

has served as the Latvian government's National Trafficking in Persons Coordinator since 2014, advocating for human trafficking reforms inside the government and building critical relationships with NGOs. She expanded partnerships and networks that have raised human trafficking awareness among Latvian and international audiences. More at [TIP Report](#), page 51.

Maxwell Matewere

Over the past two decades, Maxwell Matewere has advanced Malawi's anti-trafficking movement and is recognized nationally as a leading proponent of trafficking survivors and their families, personally engaging with many of them to understand their needs and ensuring each survivor he encounters is able to connect to and receive the necessary services. Read more at [TIP Report](#), page 52.



Oxana Alistratova

As a young teacher, Oxana Alistratova nearly became a victim of a human trafficking ring in 1992. Since 2003 she has devoted her life's work to helping women realize their own power and develop as leaders. While overcoming government threats and innumerable other obstacles, she has demonstrated resilience and further committed to women's empowerment and anti-trafficking efforts.



Through her NGO, Interaction, Alistratova played a key role in convincing local authorities of the need to adopt laws to prevent human trafficking. Alistratova later adapted Interaction to serve not only victims of trafficking but also victims of domestic violence. She manages a hotline for trafficking victims, established in 2006, and another for victims of domestic violence since 2009. These hotlines have fielded more than 20,000 calls since their inception. Alistratova has also dedicated herself to establishing an informal referral framework for local authorities, teachers, social service providers, and NGOs to provide legal, psychological, and other critical support to vulnerable women and their children. Read more at [TIP Report](#), page 52.

Advocacy

Forced Labor

Maria felt very lucky when she was recruited from her northern island in the Philippines to an eldercare position in Southern California. After she arrived, a trafficker confiscated her passport and insisted she pay off a previously undisclosed fee of more than \$10,000. The trafficker ordered Maria to work off the debt by laboring 18-hour days for only a few dollars an hour. An observant neighbor of the eldercare facility reported the situation to law enforcement after seeing that Maria worked long hours, never had a day off, and was constantly tired and disheveled. While she was initially fearful of speaking with law enforcement, officers were able to investigate the crime with Maria's help. Maria received the medical and psychological support she needed from a nonprofit organization. She is now a survivor leader in her community.

[TIP Report](#) page 36.

Action



Lieutenant Colonel Karma Rigzin,

a former UN peacekeeper, serves as Additional Superintendent of the Royal Bhutan Police (RBP) Woman and Child Protection Division. Colonel Karma Rigzin has been a leading advocate for increasing efforts to combat trafficking in Bhutan. She has trained immigration officials, senior police officers, and non-commissioned officers on identification of trafficking victims and investigation techniques and has successfully advocated for increased funding for trafficking victim services.

[TIP Report](#), page 48.



Reda Shoukr

has dedicated her career to improving the lives of human trafficking survivors. Since founding the Al-Shehab Institute for Promotion and Comprehensive Development (Al-Shehab) in 2002, Shoukr has assisted more than 15,000 women and girls vulnerable to domestic servitude due to previous experiences with sexual exploitation, violence, or HIV/AIDS. Read more at [TIP Report](#), page 48.



Sophie Otiende

is a champion for victims of human trafficking, advocating for their rights and elevating human trafficking as a priority. For the last ten years, she has worked with grassroots organizations in Kenya to provide services to trafficking victims and survivors, building Kenya’s victim assistance infrastructure and capacity. Otiende was responsible for setting up the structures and systems for the first shelter exclusively for victims of trafficking in Kenya and led the development of regional principles of practice for assisting victims of trafficking. Read more at [TIP Report](#), page 51.

TOPICS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Faith-Based Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking

In 2014, Pope Francis joined with religious leaders representing the Muslim, Jewish, Orthodox, Anglican, Buddhist, and Hindu faiths to commit to work together and within their respective communities to inspire spiritual and practical action to help eradicate human trafficking worldwide. These religious leaders of the world’s major religions gathered and proclaimed in unison that their sacred texts do not support human trafficking.

Faith-based efforts to combat human trafficking take many forms and operate in different ways, adapting to a particular context or sector, or to the culture of the communities and countries in which they serve. The following are but a few examples of faith-based anti-trafficking work:

Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), a coalition of more than 300 global institutional investors with more than \$500 billion in managed assets, uses the power of shareholder advocacy to engage companies to address social and environmental risks associated with corporate operations, including human trafficking. ICCR members call on companies they hold to adopt policies banning human trafficking as a key part of their business policies, and to train their personnel and suppliers to safeguard against these risks throughout their supply chains.

Forced child begging is one of the main forms of trafficking found in Senegal, where children, commonly known as talibés have been forced to beg in the streets as part of their studies in Quranic schools. Over the past few years, the government has increased its engagement with religious leaders from all of Senegal’s five dominant religious brotherhoods and the national federation of Quranic teachers to raise concerns regarding forced begging and secure their commitments to end this practice in its current form. Forced child begging is child trafficking and is against Islamic principles. Several Quranic schools have committed to no longer send their children to beg.

Talitha Kum (or the International Network of Consecrated Life Against Trafficking in Persons), is a project based in Rome, Italy. It functions as a network of networks to connect women religious in more than 92 countries to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of experiences and to help strengthen efforts to combat human trafficking. Network members work with local communities to raise awareness and recognize the indicators of human trafficking, advocate for the effective implementation of existing laws, and work closely with victims to provide them with guidance and support, including access to shelters, safe houses, counseling and legal assistance, and vocational training. United States Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking are the United States’ Representative to Talitha Kum.

T’ruah is a nonprofit organization bringing together more than 2,000 rabbis and cantors, together with all members of the Jewish community, to act on the Jewish imperative to respect and protect the human rights of all people. A leader in the Jewish community’s fight against modern slavery, T’ruah has partnered since 2011 with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) to expand the Fair Food Program, bringing human rights and higher wages to farmworkers in Florida and up the East Coast and eliminating the root causes of human trafficking in the tomato industry.

Given their unique reach, faith based communities are well positioned to inspire spiritual and practical action to help respond to and prevent human trafficking.

Reengineering Health Care for Survivors of Human Trafficking

The Palermo Protocol encourages states to provide medical and psychological assistance to survivors of human trafficking. Medical and behavioral health professionals already caring for populations at high risk for human trafficking are incorporating training on human trafficking to enhance prevention and quality of care. Health care providers are also learning to use trauma-informed, survivor-informed, and culturally and linguistically appropriate services to build trust, strengthen screening, provide improved quality medical care, and reduce the risk of retraumatization. In addition, hospital networks have integrated responses to human trafficking into other health care violence prevention efforts. For more information, read page 30 of the [TIP Report](#).

Child Soldiers Prevention Act (CSPA) List

Each year the TIP Report lists governments identified during the previous year as having governmental armed forces, police, or other security forces, or government-supported armed groups that recruit or use child soldiers, as defined in the CSPA. These determinations cover the reporting period beginning April 1, 2019 and ending March 31, 2020. Governments identified on the list are subject to restrictions, in the following fiscal year, on certain security assistance and commercial licensing of military equipment. Beginning October 1, 2020, and effective throughout FY 2021, these restrictions will apply to the listed countries, absent a presidential waiver, applicable exception, or reinstatement of assistance pursuant to the terms of the CSPA. The 2020 CSPA list includes governments in the following countries: Afghanistan, Burma, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

Websites to Check Out

United Nations - www.un.org
Click [here](#).

UNODC - www.unodc.org
Click [here](#).

Human Trafficking Knowledge Portal
Click [here](#).

UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons
Click [here](#).

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner
on Human Rights - www.ohchr.org
Click [here](#).

ILO - www.ilo.org Click [here](#).



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- [Sisters of St. Dominic - Racine, WI](#)
- [Sisters of St. Francis of Clinton](#)
- [Sisters of St. Francis of Colorado Springs](#)
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- [Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God](#)
- [Sisters of St. Francis Rochester, MN](#)
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