

# ACADEMIC GUIDE



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Committee:

United Nations Office on Drug and Crime

# UNODC

Junior

English

**Topic A:** Legalizing MDMA and other psychedelic substances for use in mental health treatments.

**Topic B:** Human trafficking with the purpose of labor exploitation and modern slavery in Asian Countries.



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## Welcoming Letter

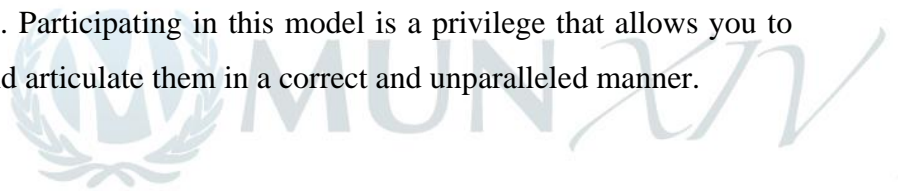
Dear Delegates,

We warmly welcome you to the UNODC committee. It's an honor for us to be your chair in MMUN XIV. Leading this committee is a pleasure, and we're dedicated to providing a safe space where each of you will have unforgettable and truly enriching experiences for your personal and academic growth.

As your chair, we aim to create a committee where everyone feels comfortable making their contributions. We are here to support your development before, during, and even after the event. We hope that this committee will not only offer learning opportunities and academic advancement, but also opportunities for personal growth.

In this traditional committee, we will discuss important topics that help us understand different contexts and stories happening in other parts of the world. Our goal is to find solutions to various issues, always emphasizing dialogue and respect. We particularly want to address topics crucial for understanding the history and future of the Asian continent, ensuring that we participate in preventing the non-repetition of certain events.

We expect well-informed, prepared delegates who can contribute to a committee worthy of the United Nations. Participating in this model is a privilege that allows you to learn different perspectives and articulate them in a correct and unparalleled manner.



We look forward to witnessing and supporting you in the process of conflict resolution. As your chair, we are always available to assist you, aiming to meet your expectations and those of the Model.

Thank you very much and may the UNODC committee contribute to your knowledge and the creation of new and memorable moments.

Sincerely,

*Daniela Fúquene & Manuela Hamann.*

### **Introduction to the commission**

The *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime* (UNODC) was established in 1997 by the Secretary-General by merging the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention and the United Nations International Drug Control Program, to ensure its capacity and quality in crime prevention. (UNODC, n.d.). The **Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)** is the governing body of UNODC, which functions as the operational segment of such institutions. (UNITED NATIONS, n.d.) UNODC offers practical assistance and encourages transnational approaches to action, through field offices and global programs in all regions of the world.

UNODC's mission is to counter terrorism, organized crime, drugs, and corruption, among other crimes of this nature, to ensure health, security, justice, well-being, and peace for all (UNODC BRAZIL, n.d.). The organization's approach is multifaceted, encompassing diverse aspects of the subject and developing different strategies to contribute to projects for the prevention of crime and drug usage programs combating money laundering related to the supply and illicit crops of illegal substances. Strengthening the government's capacity to intercept and restrain illegal trafficking is crucial for the efficient eradication of these issues. Studies and analyses regarding production, traffic, and consumption; allow adequate interventions for each national context and a better understanding of the issue.

*UNODC's five normative areas of activity:*



MUN XV

- Tackling *corruption* and its *catastrophic impact* on societies
- Strengthening *crime prevention* and building *effective criminal justice systems*
- *Supporting* member states in implementing a *balanced, comprehensive, and evidence-based approach* to the world drug problem that addresses both *supply and demand*
- *Countering terrorism*
- Strengthening member states ' capacities to confront threats from transnational organized crime.

(UNITED NATIONS, n.d.)

The legalization of MDMA and other psychedelic substances for use in mental health treatments (Topic A) and Human trafficking with the purpose of labor exploitation and modern slavery in Asian Countries (Topic B); will be approached through lenses that encourage the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Taking into account the UNODC's course of action based on strengthening technical and forensic capacities through the advocacy of practices and tools to address the crimes mentioned previously. (UNODC, n.d.)

### **Topic Summary**

**Topic A:** Contrary to popular belief, Synthetic drugs like MDMA have shown great results in medical procedures, especially those involving psychiatric conditions. The international community has debated about the uses of these types of substances throughout the years. Nonetheless, with drug regulations from several entities like the FDA (US Food and Drug Administration), EMA (The European Medicines Agency), and the PMDA (Japanese Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Agency), these types of substances in medical procedures have become widely available and legal in multiple countries like Australia. (Nature Portfolio, n.d.) The use of synthetic drugs in the medical field is imminent as it foresees more effective results in comparison to traditional medicine, especially in PTSD treatments where MDMA is used for breakthrough therapy, enabling traumatic events in a

more relaxed matter. Like any substance, MDMA has adverse effects like mild addictiveness, toxicity, and damage in the serotonin center of the brain when used in the long term and in large amounts. For this reason, clinically used MDMA differs from the recreational drug because of its pharmaceutical standard where the purity and strength of the dose are known, and it is given in a controlled and safe setting by a trained health professional during a therapeutical session. (Alcohol and Drug Foundation, 2023).

**Topic B:** Numerous sources illustrate the presence and effects of contemporary slavery and human trafficking for labor exploitation in Asian nations. With more than 55% of all modern slaves worldwide, Asia has the biggest number of slaves, according to the Global Slavery Index 2023. Human trafficking is a problem in several nations, including India, Thailand, Cambodia, and Malaysia (*Global Slavery Index | Walk Free*, n.d.). Vulnerable populations, economic inequality, and lax enforcement all contribute to the problem. According to the International Labour Organization, the Asia-Pacific area is home to 15.1 million victims of forced labor (*Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking (Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking)*, n.d.-b). Labor exploitation is particularly prevalent in sectors including domestic service, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture. Governmental programs, non-governmental organizations, and international collaboration are all used to fight this issue. To effectively combat human trafficking and modern slavery in Asian nations and safeguard the rights of the victims, additional funding, comprehensive laws, and focused interventions are required (Global Slavery Index, International Labour Organization).

**TOPIC A: Legalizing MDMA and other psychedelic substances for use in mental health treatments.**

### **Introduction to the topic**

Among the diverse types of psychedelic drugs, MDMA is popular within the medical industry because of its long-time research and use, attributed to its popularity during the 70s. Currently, MDMA is going through several processes for its legalization in diverse medical

procedures. Nonetheless, studies on how Ecstasy can serve as a gateway for hard drugs and addiction, have created divided opinions within the public. (National Library of Medicine, n.d.)

MDMA or *4-methylenedioxy-methamphetamine* is a synthetic substance commonly known as ecstasy or Molly. MDMA is a type of Amphetamine that has pronounced stimulatory actions on the central nervous system. Amphetamines, in particular, reverse the depressant effects of anesthetics, narcotics, hypnotics, and alcohol, along with profound psyche effects like alertness, euphoria, lessened sense of fatigue, increased initiative and confidence, talkativeness and increased ability to concentrate, among other consequences (Britannica, 2023).



Retrieved from: Zamorano,E., (2023). Así es como el MDMA y la psilocibina pueden revolucionar la psiquiatría. *El Confidencial*  
[https://www.elconfidencial.com/alma-corazon-vida/2021-05-13/mdma-psilocibina-drogas-psiquiatria-salud\\_3076760/](https://www.elconfidencial.com/alma-corazon-vida/2021-05-13/mdma-psilocibina-drogas-psiquiatria-salud_3076760/)

MDMA was developed in 1912 by Merck, a German pharmaceutical company. (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2017) MDMA, originally named Methysafrylaminc, was intended as a parent compound to synthesize medications that control bleeding. Even though it was not marketed as such, many psychiatrists in the medical field believed in MDMA for medical use alongside Nutritionists who used it for weight control as the drug helped dull appetite. (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2017). Despite the fact that scientific research

was made at the time, the drug had not undergone formal procedures leading to its later prohibition in the United States after the DEA declared an emergency ban in 1985. The prohibition on the use and research of MDMA discouraged multiple scientists who could only resume their research in the late 2000s. (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2017)

## Key Concepts

- **MDMA:** Is a synthetic drug that alters mood and perception (awareness of surrounding objects and conditions). It is chemically similar to both stimulants and hallucinogens, producing feelings of increased energy, pleasure, emotional warmth, and distorted sensory and time perception. (NIH, n.d.)
- **Amphetamine:** Prototype of a series of synthetic drugs, all called amphetamines that have pronounced stimulatory actions on the nervous system. (Britannica, 2023)
- **Psychedelic substances:** Psychedelic drugs are a group of substances that change or enhance sensory perceptions, thought processes, and energy levels. These type of substances are also known as hallucinogens. (Hartney, 2023)
- **Hallucinogens:** Drugs that alter the user's thinking process and perception, leading to significant distortions of reality. (Hatfield, 2023)
- **Stimulants:** Are a class of substances that increase certain types of cell signaling and amplify various psychological processes through the brain and body. (Hatfield, 2023)
- **PTSD:** Post-traumatic stress disorder
- **ED:** Eating disorder
- **SUD:** Substance use disorder





- MAPS: Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies

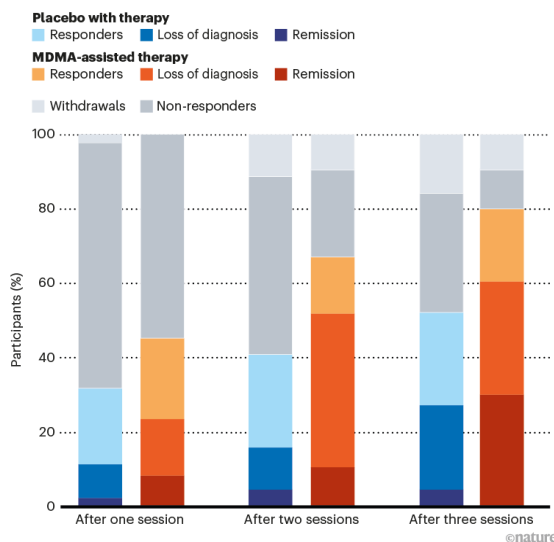
MAPS is an American association founded in 1986, to counter the criminalization of compounds like LSD and psilocybin (among others) in medical procedures, by continuing research within the medical field. Over the course of the past 35 years, MAPS has raised over \$130 million for psychedelic research and education. (MAPS, n.d.)

## Historical Context

The emergence of MDMA is a promising alternative derived from the concept of psychedelics in traditional cultures for healing purposes. Nonetheless, scientific research breakthrough was during the 50s and 60s. In Jennifer Jones' research for *Perspectives on the Therapeutic Potential of MDMA: A Nation-wide Exploratory Survey among substance users*, when reviewing early studies, she noticed records of improvements in other mental health disorders beyond PTSD, like Depression and SUD.

### RESPONSE TO MDMA THERAPY

Results from a phase III clinical trial for MDMA therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder in 90 adults found that approximately twice the number of participants who received the drug with therapy experienced a loss of clinical diagnosis or remission, compared with those who received a placebo with therapy.



Retrieved from: Reardon, S. (2023). US could soon approve MDMA therapy — opening an era of psychedelic medicine. *Nature*  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-023-01296-3>



Negative views of psychedelics and increasing regulatory control halted early promising research on psychedelics in Western medicine in the 1970s when reported by the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (McGhee, 2023). The recreational use in night scenes during the 70s and other representations have stigmatized the use of these substances in the medical field. On the one hand, because of the Schedule I classification made by the DEA in 1985, MDMA was considered solely for recreational use despite the administrative judge's recommendations on classifying it as Schedule 3 due to its promising applications.

In the 1990s, sanctioned psychedelic research resumed on a small scale, only accelerating in the 2010s. Since the early 2000s up until this date, more than 90 clinical studies have been registered in [clinicaltrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov) regarding MDMA usage in multiple procedures.

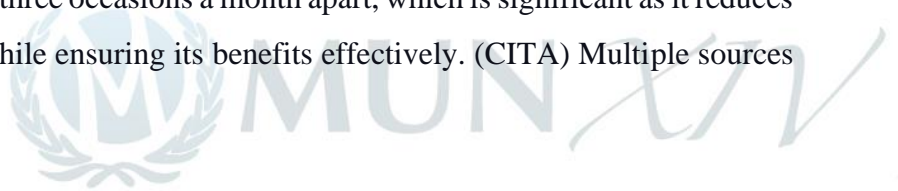
**Guiding question:**

Which studies have been done, and which were the results regarding MDMA's effects and effectiveness in patients?

**Current Situation**

Drug abuse is a complex multifactorial problem that affects society. Demographic studies have shown that the scope of usage of MDMA as a recreational drug varies from 12 to 25 years on average, in young adults events like EDM festivals, concerts, parties, and raves. Some undesirable effects of MDMA overdose are Hyperthermia, high blood pressure, Fainting spells, and loss of consciousness. These effects from MDMA consumption are concerning, primarily because physical tolerance to the drug develops effortlessly, increasing the risk of high-dose consumption.

MDMA-assisted psychotherapy employs single doses, administered under continuous medical supervision on two to three occasions a month apart, which is significant as it reduces the dependence on the drug while ensuring its benefits effectively. (CITA) Multiple sources



have shown how MDMA-assisted psychotherapy may be the first legalized medical procedure with psychoactive substances.

On June 23, 2023, the FDA issued the first draft guidance on Clinical Trials with Psychedelic Drugs, incentivizing research investigations with fundamental considerations. For years, the FDA has evaluated the use of these drugs in the potential treatment of conditions such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and substance use disorders, among others. However, the design of clinical studies to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of these compounds presents unique challenges that require careful consideration. The intent is to help researchers design studies that will yield interpretable results capable of supporting future drug applications while pondering their uncertain nature.

The approval of these procedures consists of seizing the uncertain factors of these types of drugs to control the risks and prevent further issues with the misuse of the substances.



Retrieved from : Brown,K.(2023). Legalizing MDMA for PTSD Treatment: Phase 3 Clinical Trial Results: <https://www.psychiatrist.com/news/legalizing-mdma-for-ptsd-treatment-phase-3-clinical-trial-results/>

### **Relevant approaches:**

Delegations should take into account how the legalization of psychedelic drugs in the medical field face multiple challenges. For example, how the integration of these drugs in the medical

field can contribute to drug abuse, the reform of international and national policies for regulating the clinical production of these substances to reduce imminent risks, and links with drug trafficking, among others.

We encourage delegates to research how the integration of these medical procedures may affect society in every field and sociopolitical context. Going beyond the initial allegations of how these drugs may or may not contribute to the medical field is crucial for a global understanding of the issue.

**Block Positions:**

The legalization of psychedelic substances in mental health treatments is a topic that delegates should approach according to each country's actual policies and previously established international regulations regarding the differentiation of drugs in the medical field.

Australia is the first country to legalize the use of MDMA for medicinal purposes, nonetheless, multiple countries like the USA, Canada, and Israel have undergone second-phase trials with MDMA that concluded positively. With this, MAPS will have conducted two successful Phase 3 studies and is planning to submit a new drug application (NDA) to the FDA in the 3rd quarter of 2023, it is very likely they will receive regulatory approval within the next year, and a half (NIH, 2023). “In Europe and England, MAPS has trained therapists in seven countries (Netherlands, Czech Republic, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Norway, and England) in preparation for launching a Phase 3 trial in 2024. Regulatory approval by EMA might be possible thereafter as early as 2026”. (NIH, 2023)

Other Countries differing from the ones mentioned previously may not be against the usage of psychedelics in the medical field but do not have concrete investigation centers or infrastructure that allow a proper implementation.

**QARMAS**



- What is the position of your delegation on the legalization of psychedelic substances for medical use?
- What regulations are being implemented in the country you are representing?
- What other delegations have the same policies or regulations as your delegation?
- Does the country you represent, count with a specialized agency for clinical drug regulations?
- Are there any international regulations regarding clinical drug regulations?
- Is your country in favor of the recreational use of psychedelic substances?

### Useful links:

#### *Research*

- Multidisciplinary Association For Psychedelic Studies - MAPS (n.d.). Explore Our Research: <https://maps.org/our-research/>
- Jones, J.(2023).Perspectives on the therapeutic potential of MDMA: A nation-wide exploratory survey among substance users: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2023.1096298/full>
- American Addiction Center: Drugabuse.com.(2023).MDMA/Ecstasy Dangers of Use, Addictive Potential, and Treatment Options: <https://drugabuse.com/drugs/ecstasy/>

#### *News*

- United Nations: UN NEWS.(2010). UN study finds ecstasy and related drugs the stimulants most abused in Asia: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2010/11/360122>
- Brown, K.(2023).Legalizing MDMA for PTSD Treatment: Phase 3 Clinical Trial Results: <https://www.psychiatrist.com/news/legalizing-mdma-for-ptsd-treatment-phase-3-clinical-trial-results/>

#### *Documentaries*

- Sferios, E.(2016). MDMA THE MOVIE:[MDMA THE MOVIE](#)
- Pollan,M (2022).How to change your mind: [HOW TO CHANGE YOUR MIND](#)



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- MAPS. (n.d.). *About MAPS - Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies*. MAPS.org. Retrieved August 19, 2023, from <https://maps.org/about-maps/>
- McGhee, K. (2023, July 12). *Psychedelic Breakthrough: MDMA Revolutionizes PTSD Treatment*. Neuroscience News. Retrieved August 17, 2023, from <https://neurosciencenews.com/ptsd-psychedelics-23614/>
- National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2017, September 26). *What is the history of MDMA?* National Institute on Drug Abuse. Retrieved August 13, 2023, from <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/research-reports/mdma-ecstasy-abuse/what-is-the-history-of-mdma>
- National Library of Medicine. (n.d.). *Ecstasy and Gateway Drugs: Initiating the Use of Ecstasy and Other Drugs*. NCBI. Retrieved August 13, 2023, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1851690/>
- Nature Portfolio. (n.d.). *Drug regulation articles from across Nature Portfolio*. Nature Portfolio. Retrieved July 30, 2023, from [https://www.nature.com/subjects/drug-regulation#:~:text=Drug%20regulation%20is%20the%20control,Medical%20Devices%20Agency%20\(PMDA\).](https://www.nature.com/subjects/drug-regulation#:~:text=Drug%20regulation%20is%20the%20control,Medical%20Devices%20Agency%20(PMDA).)
- NIH. (n.d.). *MDMA (Ecstasy/Molly)*. National Institute on Drug Abuse. Retrieved August 13, 2023, from <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/mdma-ecstasy-molly>
- NIH. (2023, February 15). *Premise, promise and challenges of MDMA assisted therapy for PTSD*. NCBI. Retrieved August 19, 2023, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9930690/>
- UNITED NATIONS. (n.d.). *About UNODC*. unodc. Retrieved July 11, 2023, from <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/about-unodc/index.html>
- UNITED NATIONS. (n.d.). *The Commission on Narcotic Drugs*. unodc. Retrieved July 11, 2023, from <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/index.html>

UNODC. (n.d.). *About Us*. unodc. Retrieved July 10, 2023, from <https://www.unodc.org/southernafrica/en/sa/about.html>

UNODC. (n.d.). *Untitled*. UNODC. Retrieved July 29, 2023, from [https://www.unodc.org/res/strategy/full-strategy\\_html/full-strategy-ES.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/res/strategy/full-strategy_html/full-strategy-ES.pdf)

UNODC BRAZIL. (n.d.). *About UNODC*. unodc. Retrieved July 10, 2023, from <https://www.unodc.org/lpo-brazil/en/sobre-unodc/index.html>

Washington, N. (2022, September 30). *MDMA therapy: Uses, process, and research*. Medical News Today. Retrieved August 3, 2023, from <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/mdma-therapy#outlook>

## **TOPIC B: Human trafficking with the purpose of labor exploitation and modern slavery in Asian Countries.**

### **Introduction to the topic**

Human trafficking is a grave and pervasive global issue that continues to afflict vulnerable populations, particularly in Asian countries. It involves the illegal trade of human beings for various exploitative purposes, including forced labor, sexual exploitation, organ harvesting, and other forms of modern slavery. Within the Asian region, human trafficking for labor exploitation is a particularly concerning and prevalent problem (It is advised that the delegate look into the significance of labor exploitation and modern-day slavery in the Asian continent's economy).

Labor exploitation occurs when individuals, often from impoverished backgrounds, are deceived, coerced, or abducted and forced into exploitative work conditions. This can include forced labor in industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, construction, domestic work, fishing, and other labor-intensive sectors (WalkFree Foundation, 2017). Victims of labor exploitation are subject to grueling work hours, physical and psychological abuse, inadequate living conditions, and meager or nonexistent wages. According to the 2020 Global Trafficking in Persons Report released by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, 23% of victims of human trafficking with the purpose of Labor Exploitation who are found worldwide are girls and 49% of victims are adult women. As seen in Image 1, women and girls make up 72% of all human trafficking victims. In comparison to men that represent 28% of human trafficking victims (Claywel, 2023). (It is suggested that the delegate examine which countries/continents have the highest

rate of female trafficking and which countries/continents have the highest rate of male trafficking).

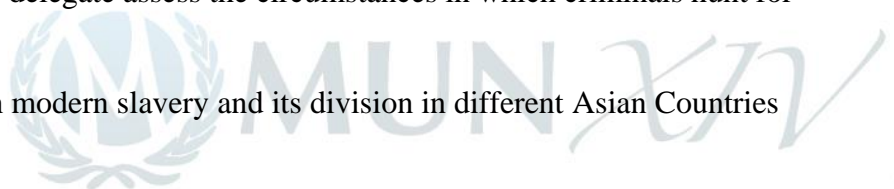
Image 1: Amount of women and children victims of modern slavery



Source: Claywel, H., C. (2023). Human trafficking awareness reaches campus, community. *Northwest Missourian*. [https://www.nwmissourinews.com/news/article\\_962cb430-9c5e-11ed-bd4b-53d0fe9804af.html](https://www.nwmissourinews.com/news/article_962cb430-9c5e-11ed-bd4b-53d0fe9804af.html)

The drivers of human trafficking for labor exploitation in Asian countries are complex and multifaceted. Speaking of modern slavery, countries such as Pakistan, India and China are of great attraction for criminal networks. As can be seen in Image 2 where more human trafficking for modern slavery occurs. Factors such as poverty, lack of education and awareness, political instability, corruption, porous borders, and demand for cheap labor contribute to the perpetuation of this heinous crime. Criminal networks and human traffickers prey on the vulnerability of individuals, often promising better job opportunities and improved living conditions in urban centers or foreign countries (WalkFree Foundation, 2017). (It is suggested that the delegate assess the circumstances in which criminals hunt for recruits).

Image 2: Amount of People in modern slavery and its division in different Asian Countries





**49.6M**

people in modern  
slavery

Photo credit: Marcos  
Moreno / AFP via Getty  
Images



**2.3M**

people in Pakistan

**11M**

people in India

**5.8M**

people in China

**2.6M**

people in North Korea

*Strait of Gibraltar, Atlantic Ocean, September 2018. A boat carrying migrants is stranded at sea. Many migrants are driven to leave their homes due to conflict, or displacement caused by climate change.*

Source: Global Slavery Index | Walk free. (n.d.). Walk Free. <https://www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/>

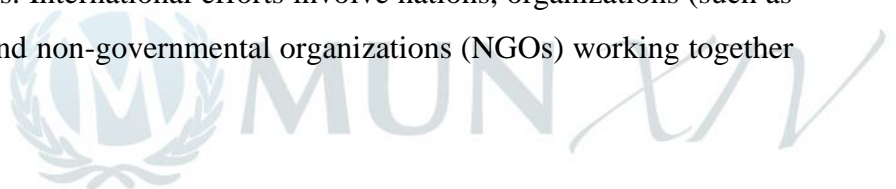
Efforts to combat human trafficking in Asian countries have been made on multiple fronts, including legislative reforms, law enforcement actions, international cooperation, and awareness campaigns (*Global Slavery Index | Walk Free, n.d.*). However, the complexity and scale of the issue pose significant challenges to effectively eradicating modern slavery in the region (*A Deep Dive Into the Labor Exploitation Behind Everyday Products, 2022*).



Understanding the gravity of human trafficking for labor exploitation and modern slavery in Asian countries is crucial in fostering awareness, support, and collective action. By working together at the national, regional, and international levels, stakeholders can strengthen prevention efforts, enhance victim protection, and hold perpetrators accountable. Ultimately, a comprehensive and coordinated approach is essential to combat human trafficking and safeguard the rights and dignity of those vulnerable to labor exploitation in Asian countries (*Global Slavery Index | Walk Free, n.d.*).

### **Key Concepts**

- **Human Trafficking:** Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, housing, or receiving of persons for the purpose of exploitation by force, fraud, or coercion. Forced labor, sexual exploitation, and other forms of abuse may be included.
- **Labor Exploitation:** Labor exploitation is the unfair or abusive treatment of workers, which frequently includes low salaries, bad working conditions, and a lack of legal rights. When people are pressured or forced into such situations, it might be considered human trafficking.
- **Modern Slavery:** This phrase refers to situations in which persons are exploited in ways similar to historical slavery, but the particular form of exploitation varies. Forced labor, debt bondage, and human trafficking are examples of such behaviors.
- **Asian Countries:** These are the countries located on the Asian continent, which is the largest and most populous continent, and include a varied range of cultures, economy, and social circumstances.
- **Traffickers and Facilitators:** Traffickers are persons or groups who engage in human trafficking and are in charge of recruiting, transporting, and exploiting victims. Facilitators help traffickers by offering logistical assistance or other services.
- **Legal Frameworks and Countermeasures (international efforts):** Legal frameworks are the laws and regulations put in place by countries to prevent human trafficking and other related issues. International efforts involve nations, organizations (such as the United Nations), and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working together



to establish policies and initiatives to prevent and eradicate human trafficking on a worldwide scale.

- **Gulf Cooperation Council:** The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a political and economic alliance of six Arab countries in the Persian Gulf region: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait.

Source: International Baccalaureate Organization. (2017). Geography guide (2nd ed.) [PDF].

## **Historical Context**

Human trafficking with the purpose of labor exploitation and modern slavery has long been practiced in Asian countries. While the situation varies by country and location, here's a broad review of the historical context with a focus on facts that are essential to understand the past's circumstances:

- **Indentured Labor and the Colonial Era:** During the colonial period, European nations built colonies in various parts of Asia. Local labor was exploited for plantations, construction, and other sectors. Indentured labor was common, in which persons were tied by contracts to work for a set amount of time, frequently under severe conditions (It is suggested that the delegate research which countries had the most colonial influence in Asia). Additionally, Asia's fast industrialization and urbanization led to a rise in the need for workers in the manufacturing, construction, and other sectors of the economy. Due to this need, there were more options for both legal and illicit labor migration, which exposed some people to human trafficking (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017).
- **Economic Differences:** Economic differences within countries such as Nepal and Bangladesh, as well as between these countries and more developed regions such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations, act as a driving force behind labor migration. Individuals, particularly young males, seek better chances in economically vibrant regions such as the GCC countries due to a lack of work possibilities, low earnings, and restricted access to essential amenities in rural areas of less developed countries (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2009). Higher salaries, especially for low-skilled professions, and the ability to send remittances home are important pull factors that fuel the migration trend (Whitney, 2022).

- **Informal Labor Sectors:** There are sizable unregulated informal labor sectors in many Asian nations. Traffickers take advantage of this circumstance, particularly in sectors like agriculture, household labor, and small-scale industry where monitoring is difficult. On the other hand, traffickers have occasionally found it simpler to take advantage of helpless victims who lack legal status or protection due to lax enforcement of labor laws, insufficient regulatory frameworks, and lax labor protections (It is advised that the delegate look into Asia's migration patterns) .
- **Vulnerability and Migration Routes:** Some Asian countries serve as both source and destination countries for labor trafficking. As seen in Image 3 geographic proximity, permeable borders, and well-established migratory routes promote movement but expose people to trafficking hazards (The delegate is urged to consider the Asian continent's geographical positions).

**Image 3:** Main International human trafficking routes for labor exploitation during the last 10 years.



Source: International Baccalaureate Organization. (2017). Geography guide (2nd ed.) [PDF].

- **Trafficker Tactics:** To entice victims, traffickers frequently employ false recruitment methods such as promising good jobs, salaries, and working conditions. Recruiters, who may work in conjunction with traffickers, play an important role in this process (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017).
- **Gender Dynamics:** Gender dynamics can be important in particular situations. Women may be especially vulnerable to domestic labor trafficking, forced labor in the textile industry, and other forms of exploitation. (Whitney, 2022). Also, in certain Asian civilizations, traditional gender roles and inequalities can disproportionately

affect women and children, thus they become more likely to be trafficked for modern slavery.

- **Population Pressure:** Some Asian countries have high population densities, leading to increased competition for resources and employment opportunities. This pressure can drive individuals to seek employment elsewhere, making them susceptible to trafficking for modern slavery. Especially in India, as seen in Image 4, India in 2015 had the highest number worldwide of people living in modern slavery (The delegate is advised to investigate how the Indian government operates) (*The Relevance of Historical Slavery Today - FreedomUnited.org, 2023*).
- **Image 4:** Most worldwide countries with Modern Slavery in 2015.



Source: International Baccalaureate Organization. (2017). Geography guide (2nd ed.) [PDF].

- **Armed Conflicts and Instability:** Regions with ongoing armed conflicts or political instability can create conditions where trafficking thrives. Displacement, breakdown of social structures, and weak governance contribute to vulnerability (It is suggested that the delegate study which conflicts occurred on the Asian continent in the last ten years and which are still occurring) (*The Relevance of Historical Slavery Today - FreedomUnited.org, 2023*).
- **Globalization of the last 10 years:** Globalization has linked economies and society, resulting in the growth of supply networks and markets. This has both positive and negative consequences, as it can produce jobs while also allowing traffickers to

exploit labor. (*The Relevance of Historical Slavery Today* - FreedomUnited.org, 2023).

### **Current Situation**

According to the Global Slavery Index of 2023 Asian countries with large populations, socio-economic disparities, and weak law enforcement systems are particularly susceptible to human trafficking for labor exploitation and modern slavery. Migrants, both internal and cross-border, are among the most vulnerable groups, as they often lack legal protections and are unfamiliar with their rights in the host country. Additionally, gender-based vulnerabilities can further exacerbate the risks, with women and children being disproportionately affected (A Deep Dive Into the Labor Exploitation Behind Everyday Products, 2022).

Based on the most recent UNODC report on human trafficking, several Asian nations have been designated as human trafficking sources, transit, or destination countries (United Nations on Drugs and Crime, 2023). These are some examples:

- **India**: A major source and destination country for labor trafficking, with people being trafficked for a variety of jobs such as domestic work, construction, and agriculture.
- **China**: There have been reports of labor trafficking, notably in the context of forced labor in several industries.
- **Thailand**: A source, destination, and transit country for trafficking, particularly in the fishing and agriculture industries, as well as in the sex trade.
- **Cambodia**: A country where labor trafficking has been a problem, particularly in the construction and agriculture sectors.
- **Pakistan**: Labor trafficking is a problem, with workers exploited in a variety of industries such as brick kilns and agriculture.

Source: United Nations on Drugs and Crime. (2023). World Drug Report 2023. UNODC, 44–60.

It is critical to recognize that both governments and international organizations have made efforts to combat human trafficking in the region. These efforts include legislation reforms, awareness campaigns, capacity building, and international cooperation to combat cross-border trafficking (Anti-Slavery International, 2022). China, for example, has enacted a legislation known as the "Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law," which criminalizes different

forms of human trafficking such as forced prostitution, labor exploitation, modern slavery, and the sale of persons. Over the last two years, China has also worked with other countries and international organizations to combat human trafficking. To combat human trafficking, it has signed bilateral and regional agreements as well as international accords. The Chinese government has also engaged in public awareness initiatives to educate people about the dangers of human trafficking and how to identify and report cases of human trafficking. Finally, steps have been taken to address socioeconomic factors that may make persons vulnerable to human trafficking (United Nations on Drugs and Crime, 2023). In comparison, India, which has 11 million people in modern slavery, has not imposed any measures or legislation to stop it (the delegate is advised to explore why India has not acted on this).

On the other hand, when it comes to the health and survival of victims of human trafficking, reporting a situation as critical as a case of human trafficking is extremely delicate and critical for preventing future cases and ensuring the protection of those who have already been victims of this crime. However, according to one worrying statistic, "there are more victims escaping and reporting to authorities on their own initiative (41%), than cases where victims were located by law enforcement (28%), members of the community and civil society (11%)." (United Nations on Drugs and Crime, 2023). These figures are particularly concerning since they show that the procedures utilized to detect these situations were insufficiently effective. This is precisely why finding answers, taking into account previous methods and why they have not been as successful as expected in previous years, is of utmost necessity (It is recommended that the delegate examine what measures have been implemented in various nations around the world and compare them to those implemented in Asia in order to determine the strengths and limitations of these measures).

**Relevant approaches:**

The delegates are expected to engage in vigorous discussion and search for ways to safeguard the population affected by human trafficking with the purpose of labor exploitation and modern slavery, as well as develop new regulations or modify existing ones from other nations in an effort to stop these crimes from happening during the debate. This takes into account not only the actual victims but also their families, communities, and the impact that

these events have on them. In addition, the solutions we anticipate being put forth should be made with an eye toward preventing and combating not only human trafficking but also the crimes that surround it, taking into account why human trafficking occurs and what is done with the victims of this.

Delegates must also fully comprehend the issue at hand and be aware that imposing solutions can have an effect on the state of the world economy. Delegates are asked to use reliable sources when building their arguments for talking on such challenging subjects. Delegates must be willing to listen to and evaluate other people's perspectives, even if they differ from their own. It is crucial to be adaptable and flexible to new ideas and proposals in order to reach agreements and resolve the issues raised. Finally, when addressing these issues, it is important to exercise prudence and keep in mind that any solutions you propose must be justified and completely articulated in light of the implications they may have for everyone on the planet, not only Asians.

**Block Positions:**

By discussing the blocks surrounding this subject, Asian nations may decide to organize a regional coalition to fight human trafficking. Such a partnership might encourage information sharing, law enforcement cooperation, and best practices. However, the Gulf Cooperation Council should be considered in this alliance. In order to create a Business and Industry Alliance, these nations should also consider any disputes they may have with the United States and work to settle them as quickly as feasible. Businesses and sectors that are frequently at risk of worker exploitation ought to contribute to the solution. To promote fair labor practices and prevent exploitation in supply chains, business associations, multinational corporations, and civil society organizations can collaborate.

It is also advised to create a block that ensures an alliance of human rights organizations. In this block, European nations like Germany, France, and Spain will be crucial because they are recognized for their unwavering dedication to ensuring the rights of all people. The same alliance might come together to form an association that would create socioeconomic development. Greater cooperation is needed to promote sustainable development, education,



and job training in order to address the root causes of human trafficking, such as poverty and a lack of opportunity.

These components must come together to create partnerships that are all-inclusive, take victims' viewpoints into account, and are supported by sensible laws and practical measures. To effectively combat human trafficking with the purpose of labor exploitation and modern slavery in Asia, regional and international cooperation is required. It's crucial to remember that this is only a general outline and may change depending on how the discussion develops.

### **QARMAS**

- What other crimes might be committed in the presence of human trafficking?
- What happens to victims of human trafficking/modern slavery/labor exploitation in your country?
- What policies and punishments does your delegation have in place for people traffickers?
- What efforts has your delegation taken to combat human trafficking and support victims?
- Is the financial capacity of your delegation sufficient to fund the recommendations that may emerge during the debate?
- In this context, what measures might your delegation recommend to protect human rights?
- What other delegations hold the same beliefs and/or policies as yours?
- What is the position of your delegation on human trafficking?
- What is the position of your delegation on contemporary slavery?
- What is the attitude of your delegation on labor exploitation?

### **Useful links:**

- *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*. (n.d.). United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/>
- UNODC, [World Drug Report](#) (United Nations publication, 2023).
- WHO, [Approaches towards human trafficking \(guide for proposing solutions\)](#) (World Health Organization, 2023)

- *Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons - United States Department of State.* (2023, July 3). United States Department of State. <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/office-to-monitor-and-combat-trafficking-in-persons/>
- UNODC, [Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020 - UNODC](#) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.20.IV.3)
- United Nations. (n.d.). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations.* <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
- VICE Asia. (2022, August 20). *Modern Day Slaves of Thailand | Open Secrets* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFXOvHizbd8>
- Home Office. (2014, August 28). *Modern Slavery is closer than you think: Understanding Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jv1H\\_fAoOG4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jv1H_fAoOG4)
- OpenLearn from The Open University. (2015, March 24). *Modern slavery - Trafficking in Human Beings (THB)* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAv1q4BO4qo>
- UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2019, July 24). *Human rights in the context of human trafficking and migrant smuggling* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCEmM3m3dvM>
- Karla, M. [Mini - Podcast: Human Trafficking.](#) (2021, May 11) *Human Trafficking* [Podcast]. Apple Music & Spotify.

**Content Warning for Viewers Aged 16 and Older:** The material may include mature topics, strong language, moderate violence, or graphic depictions that are inappropriate for viewers under the age of 16. Adult supervision and parental discretion are recommended. This video may contain but is not limited to, violence, severe situations, distressing visuals, or inappropriate content for younger people. Before seeing this content, viewers should be mature and sensitive.

- *Watch 7 Prisoners* | Netflix Official site. (n.d.). <https://www.netflix.com/title/81173970>
- Exodus Cry. (2020, March 28). *How human traffickers “Break” their victims* / *Nefarious documentary clip* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noyTHOSxM-Q>
- VICE Asia. (2022b, September 30). *Uncovering Eight-Year-Old children working in factories* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ak4GR9qGi-Y>
- wocomODOCS. (2018, August 16). *“Modern Slavery” | Documentary about trafficking, child labour and racism, 2009*[Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTAzkX8i9KM>

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<http://www.endslaverynow.org/learn/slavery-today>

*The relevance of historical slavery today - FreedomUnited.org.* (2023, August 4).  
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*UNODC*, 9–23.

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