

- ♦ mendicancy and recruitment of beggars: noting the lure, for poor children, of stories about the easy money to be earned in big cities or tourist resorts and the fact that the recruiters and leaders of the begging rackets can earn a small fortune from their syndicate of beggars; children with disabilities are particular targets for the recruiters of beggars who believe that the disability will induce sympathy in the giver; that belief puts these children at serious risk of being deliberately maimed in order to increase their earning potential;
- ♦ armed conflict: the abduction and forcible conscription of children who are used, for example, as cooks, messengers and porters and for mine clearance, spying and suicide bombing;
- ♦ sports: referring to the situation of young boys in the Gulf States or trafficked to the Gulf States, who are used as camel jockeys for the entertainment of spectators at camel races;
- ♦ marriage: referring to the trafficking of "mail-order brides" which may involve girls as young as 13, often for men who are looking for women as servants and sex partners; some men use their "wives" as prostitutes or for pornography, and there are reports of such women being tortured and killed; and
- ♦ trafficking in organs: noting reports that, in a number of countries, street children are being killed so that their organs can be used in transplant operations; also noting that at the present time, available information does not substantiate the claims that are made.

Commentary on the causes of sale and trafficking notes, *inter alia*: poverty, lack of employment opportunities, low social status of girls, a general lack of education and awareness, inadequate legislation in the countries concerned, and weak law enforcement machinery. The effects of prostitution on children are noted as including: injury, disease and trauma associated with multiple sexual encounters; forcible separation from families; isolation by a foreign language and culture; dependency on and a dangerous attachment to pimps and brothel operators; risk of arrest and prosecution for prostitution, for illegal immigration and for having false identity documents; possible detention or deportation and, if returned home, the risk of being rejected by families and communities, re-sold, or forced to return to prostitution.

The SR recommended, *inter alia*, that:

- ♦ the sale and trafficking of persons be unequivocally condemned as an affront to human dignity, since it reduces people to the level of objects of trade and commerce;
- ♦ international standards with regard to sale and trafficking be set, together with international mechanisms to ensure reporting and monitoring of state activities;
- ♦ hospitals, clinics, and care institutions be strictly monitored, in order to reduce the risk of abduction, sale and trafficking of children from such places;
- ♦ the possibility of establishing international and regional registers for children adopted internationally be considered;
- ♦ international and regional registers for missing children, containing all the pertinent information for identification, be established;
- ♦ programmes and initiatives be established to address the issue of stigmatization of single mothers and to empower them to keep their children, should they so desire;
- ♦ all law enforcement agents, border police, customs and immigration officials, relevant governmental ministers, and members of the judiciary in the countries affected be trained on, and sensitized to, issues of trafficking and the rights and needs of the victims; immigration and deportation policies of the receiving countries be revised to prevent further marginalization and traumatization of trafficked children;
- ♦ victims of trafficking be guaranteed freedom from persecution or harassment by those in positions of authority and access to free legal assistance and qualified interpreters during all proceedings;
- ♦ the state where the trafficking took place or where the trafficked child is found take all necessary steps to prosecute all the perpetrators;
- ♦ priority be given to the ratification and the effective and accelerated enforcement of existing conventions and instruments on human rights, on trafficking of persons and on slavery and slavery-like practices; and
- ♦ procedures be elaborated to distinguish between victims of trafficking and illegal immigrants, to enable the victims to take action against the traffickers, and to enable them to return safely to their countries of origin with the assistance of reintegration programmes.

Special Representative on the protection of children affected by armed conflicts

Following the 1993 session of the General Assembly, an independent expert was appointed to study the impact of armed conflict on children. The Machel Report (A/51/306 and Add.1), which was submitted to the General Assembly in 1996, provided the first comprehensive assessment of the many ways in which children are abused and brutalized in the context of war. It set out findings and recommendations for action in several areas, including child soldiers, refugee and internally displaced children, sexual exploitation and gender-based violence, landmines and unexploded ordnance, the impact of sanctions on children, health and nutrition, psychological recovery and social reintegration, educa-