

indicates that Thailand is among the countries in the Mekong region where child trafficking is rife.

The Special Rapporteur's interim report to the General Assembly (A/52/482, paras. 25, 122) notes that the National Commission on Women's Affairs has estimated that there are 150,000 to 200,000 prostitutes in Thailand, of which some 20 per cent are children. The report notes the government's commitment actively to combat the problem, in cooperation with national and international NGOs. Initiatives in this area are noted as including: the Daughters of Education project, which provides funding for girls who might otherwise be sold into the sex trade, enabling them to remain in school; a Children's Forum that was created by Parliament and through which children are involved in decisions related to or affecting them; and, the fact that a "media page" in newspapers and magazines channels the experiences of children to the adult world.

Toxic wastes and products, Special Rapporteur on:
(E/CN.4/1997/19, para. 58)

The report refers to an explosion in Bangkok in 1991 in an area where imported and abandoned hazardous chemicals and wastes had been stored for years. The report states that after the fire, a toxic waste burial site was established in a military region of Kanchanaburi. Residents in the area suffered health complications as a result of toxic chemicals leaking into ground water. In response, the authorities announced that the site would be upgraded.

Violence against women, Special Rapporteur on:
(E/CN.4/1997/47, Sections IV & V)

In the section on trafficking in women and forced prostitution, the report cites information received indicating that officials of Thailand are involved in trafficking women from Burma to Thailand with women being transported into Thailand, often in police vehicles, with armed policemen in uniform. The report states that: brothels are under protection and have the patronage of the police; police often know the owners well and are around dressed in uniform, with guns and walkie-talkies; officers often take the girls to the rooms or out for the whole night; and, in some cases police have special arrangements with owners and can take the girls for free.

The report refers to national laws on trafficking in women and cites a trial in Germany related to the recruitment and coercion of Thai women into prostitution. The report notes that the Thai Government was not interested in the case: successive calls for evidence were ignored and Thai authorities refused to allow a Thai police officer to be questioned. (For further details, see entry for Germany.)

In the section dealing with violence against women migrant workers, the report refers to conditions in a sweatshop in El Monte, California, in 1995 where inhumane measures were used to confine the workers, mostly Thai women, and states that passport seizure and armed guards were employed to hold the women and force them to work in slavery-like conditions.

Mechanisms and Reports of the Sub-Commission
Contemporary forms of slavery, Working Group on:
(E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/13, 38)

In the section on suppression of the traffic in persons and of the exploitation of the prostitution of others, the report noted that, with regard to sex tourism, the fear of being infected with HIV was leading clients from industrialized countries to choose ever younger girls and boys as their victims. The report notes that the government has taken steps to counteract this practice, and revised its law on prostitution in 1996.

Other Reports

World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights, Report of the S-G to the CHR: (E/CN.4/1997/36, para. 85)

The report of the Secretary-General notes that the UN Information Centres and Services organized a lecture for 150 students in Bangkok on "Promotion, protection, prevention: Creating a culture of human rights".

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TONGA

Date of admission to UN: Tonga is not a member of the UN.

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

Land and People: Tonga has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 16 February 1972.

Tonga's 11th through 13th periodic reports have been submitted as one document (CERD/C/319/Add.3) which has not yet been scheduled for consideration by the Committee; the 14th periodic report is due 17 March 1999.

Reservations and Declarations: Paragraph (d) (v) of article 5 and articles 4, 6, and 15.

Rights of the Child

Acceded: 6 November 1995.

Tonga's initial report was due 6 December 1997.

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TURKMENISTAN

Date of admission to UN: 2 March 1992.

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

Land and People: Turkmenistan has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 1 May 1997.

Turkmenistan's initial report is due 30 June 1999.

Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 1 May 1997.

Turkmenistan's initial report is due 31 July 1998.

Optional Protocol: Acceded: 1 May 1997.

Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 29 September 1994.

Turkmenistan's initial report was due 29 October 1995.