

**Slavery of the 21st Century: Human Trafficking Conference at Northern
Virginia Community College**

***Remarks by Jennifer Litvak
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First, I'd like to thank Linda Rodriguez and the rest of the Organizing Staff for inviting me to speak about the work of The Protection Project to at this important event, "Slavery of the 21st Century: Human Trafficking Conference at Northern Virginia Community College."

The Protection Project is a human rights research organization based at the Foreign Policy Institute at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington DC. We have been addressing human trafficking in our 6 areas of work for 15 years, using a comprehensive scholarly and practical approach to combat this serious human rights violation.

As mentioned, The Protection Projects addresses trafficking in persons through 6 key ways: Legal Reform; Corporate Social Responsibility; Promoting Religious Dialogue; Clinical Legal Education; Human Rights Education; and Enhancing the Capacity of Civil Society.

As a part of the foreign policy institute, we largely consider human trafficking from an international perspective and work to promote the harmonization of national and regional efforts with international standards.

Under the aegis of our Executive Director, Dr. Mohamed Y. Mattar, TPP has provided consultation to over 75 governments regarding their anti-trafficking efforts and offered 14 US Congressional Testimonies and briefings. We also work closely with the US State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, and publish a Review of the Trafficking in Persons Report every summer following its release and our Review is presented at an Ambassadors luncheon hosted at SAIS.

We have developed a comprehensive expertise in the Middle East and North Africa and at present, our work is largely concentrated in this region. It is here

that we are able to bolster the role of religion, namely Islam, in addressing human trafficking.

For example, from 2010-2012, The Protection Project implemented a program in Jordan and Lebanon aimed at raising public awareness on trafficking in persons by working with religious leaders in the countries. Engaging with Muslim Sunni and Shia sects and with Christian Maronites, TPP encouraged the identification and dissemination of sacred texts that condemn the exploitation of the vulnerable and that encourage the respect of the rights of women and children.

Now, as you know, in 2000, an international consensus was reached when the global community recognized the seriousness of human trafficking and passed the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children. The Protection Project has been on the forefront of combating trafficking in persons by promoting the adoption of new legislation and effecting policy changes in order to enhance the protection of trafficking victims, pursuant to the UN Protocol.

Since the passage of the UN Protocol, the work of The Protection Project reflects the shifts that are present within the movement itself. If the first decade may be considered as Phase 1 in the anti-trafficking movement, best characterized by new legislation and raising awareness, The Protection Project now considers the effort as moving into a Phase 2. In this new step, we witness an expansion of the concept of exploitation beyond sexual exploitation. With the passage of the most recent international convention, ILO No. 189 *On Decent Work for Domestic Workers*, we've witnessed a refocused attention on domestic work.

To better understand – and elucidate for others – the implications of this seminal legislation, The Protection Project held its 8th Annual Conference this past November, this time with the theme of “Domestic Work as a Form of Trafficking.”

In Phase 2, we have also witnessed a movement towards embracing partnerships with the private sector and recognizing the role of business in the promotion and maintenance of human rights standards. The Protection Project encourages business compliance with international standards by advancing education in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility in the MENA region.

On June 19-20, 2013, The Protection Project held the First Regional Conference on “Corporate Social Responsibility in the Middle East” in Istanbul, Turkey. As TPP

has a keen appreciation for establishing networks within civil society, The Conference resulted in the establishment of an Expert Working Group on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with representatives from each MENA country. We also established the first business clinic on corporate social responsibility in partnership with Beirut Arab University's Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration in Beirut, Lebanon.

In fact, Clinical Legal Education is a large part of our work; The Protection Project has become the leading organization in the clinical legal movement in the Middle East, having worked with every law clinic in the region; With 7 in Egypt alone, TPP encourages the pursuit of scholarship on human trafficking's most serious challenges and the provision of services and programs for victims of human trafficking.

Under the "Legal Reform" arm of our work, The Protection Project often engages with governments and multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations and the International Labor Organization, to assist in the codification of frameworks and laws – and one of the ways we do this is by drafting model laws, of which we have several.

We have drafted a Model Law on the Establishment and Operations of NGOs. We have a Model Law on the Rights of Domestic Workers. And we also have a Model Law on Child Protection, which was presented to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva on January 28, 2013.

Phase 2 has also seen an expansion of the multi-disciplinary approach in which policy-makers, scholars, and service-providers design anti-trafficking efforts. As you all know, the TVPA, when authorized in 2000, was passed as part of the Violence Against Women Act. But now, we also talk about human trafficking as a violation of immigration policy. Now we see a shift from deportation to residency status (under the T Visa), and as such, The Protection Project participated in a UN Global Consultation this past January on the Right to Remedies for Victims of Trafficking.

And that's really just a very broad, limited snapshot of what The Protection Project does.

But, as the Human Rights Education Specialist at The Protection Project, I would now like to take a few moments to expand upon the role of education in a comprehensive anti-trafficking agenda. As an academic institution, our anti-

trafficking efforts reflect the belief in participation through scholarship and the serious responsibility of the academic community in combating human trafficking.

Human Rights Education is a cornerstone of The Protection Project's mission. Human Rights Education considers human rights educational curricula, methods of incorporating human rights into various spheres of civil society activity, and the promotion of education itself as a human right.

The Protection Project established the first International Human Rights Clinic at Johns Hopkins SAIS. Now in its fourth year, the Clinic offers students both classroom and clinical components and explores such topics as the Rights of the Elderly, Corporate Social Responsibility and Domestic Work as a Form of Trafficking.

The Protection Project also drafted a manual on "Incorporating Human Trafficking into Educational Curricula", a Guide which promotes the inclusion of human trafficking and human rights related content into the curricula of various disciplines.

For instance, when studying Economics, one might explore the concept of supply and demand by examining illicit markets and the international standards which prohibit activities of transnational organized crime, as per the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Or, as our previous panelists so brilliantly outlined, if studying history or anthropology, one might consider the evolution of the concept/practice of slavery and how human trafficking may be analyzed within that broader framework.

Educational resources on the human rights of vulnerable populations are also available in The Protection Project's series of 100 Best Practices. In our Series, we have published Volume I: *100 Best Practices in Combating Trafficking in Persons: The Role of Civil Society*, Volume II: *100 Best Practices in the Protection of Migrant Workers*, and Volume III: *100 Best Practices in Child Protection* are available on our website at www.theprotectionproject.org. Volume IV: *100 Best Practices in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)* is forthcoming.

And finally – one initiative of which I am particularly proud – The Protection Project launched the Association of Scholars of Trafficking in Persons, which seeks to create a forum for professors and scholars in the field of trafficking in persons. In several national and international laws there is a mandate to study and

raise awareness on trafficking in persons. One in particular, the Brussels Declaration on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings states: “Closer links should be developed with educators and Ministries of Education with a view to elaborating and including relevant and realistic teaching modules in school and college curricula and to informing pupils and students of human rights and gender issues.”

To this end, the Association engages the members of the network in joint initiatives, such as conferences – like this one - and publishes syllabi and other resources to help study, teach, and ultimately end trafficking in persons. I encourage anyone interested to please visit our website, or send me an email and I will be sure you receive a membership form.

I think I will stop there. Thank you so much for your time – I look forward to any questions you may have on the work of The Protection Project.