February 7, 2014

Human Rights Committee Secretariat
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
8-14 Avenue de la Paix
CH 1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Attention: Kate Fox/Sindu Thodiyil

Dear Members of the Committee:

Thank you in advance for your review and consideration of the recommendations provided in this update to the Committee’s List of Issues of violations of Article 8 and 24 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). We support and concur with all of the responses and recommendation provided to the Committee by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as it relates to questions 21(a) and 21(b) in the List of Issues.

This update is in specific response to the failure of the U.S. government to combat and address human trafficking in a way that closes the gap between implementation and governmental agency systems. We refer to as the 5P’s (processes, policies, protocols, procedures and partnerships). This systematic failure ultimately creates continuous and sometimes on-going victimization of human trafficking victims.

Reporting Organization

Sunny Slaughter Consulting, LLC respectfully submits this update in response to the Committee’s List of Issues. Sunny Slaughter Consulting, LLC is a criminal, advocacy and policy consulting firm based in Birmingham, AL providing training, consulting and expertise in the area of crimes against persons. The Principal consultant is a federally certified law enforcement instructor and consultant for the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and a member of the International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association. The Principal is a nationally recognized human trafficking expert, one of the drafters of Alabama’s first Anti-Human Trafficking law and serves on all three of the federally led human trafficking taskforce in the State of Alabama. Her expertise provides the critique and forms the basis for this update.
**Issue Summary**

It is clear that the United States recognizes modern day slavery and more specifically the criminal activity and victimization of “human trafficking” is a clear and present danger within the United States and globally with the formation of the White House Advisory Council on Human Trafficking. While we applaud the U.S. government for the formation of the council, the language included within this and other documents and the purposeful intent for which they were drafted, there continues to be significant pitfalls to implementation of 1) recognizing that human trafficking victims largely come from communities of color and 2) are often already engaged or have the propensity to become engaged in existing governmental systems via judicial, social services or child protective services.

**Human Trafficking and Child Protective Services – A Failure to Protect and Serve**

As previously indicated, The Department of Justice (DOJ) estimates that nearly 300,000 children are at risk of becoming victims of domestic sex trafficking each year, with foster youth being especially susceptible to coercion, manipulation and exploitation by traffickers. Unfortunately, the agency and representatives charged with the protection of our children operate under a shield of protection through professional immunity and most often fail to protect the children currently within their system from systematic and external victimization.

Child Protective Services (CPS) throughout the U.S have varying 5P’s (processes, policies, protocols, procedures and partnerships) and when the agencies fail to immediately initiate strategic remedies which keep them in compliance with their mandate, as well as, new and existing State laws it further exacerbates the experience of victims and especially those of human trafficking.

Training provided to law enforcement agencies and lawyers who specifically work child welfare cases in the Birmingham region has yielded information regarding the large number of children currently in the custody of child protective services who run away from foster homes and/or group homes who report engaging in survival sex and other indicators of human trafficking solicitation.

**Recommended Questions**

We respectfully request that the Committee consider addressing the concerns outlined in this update by raising the following questions during the U.S. government’s hearing:

1. What remedies does the U.S. have in place to address the victimization of children who become human trafficking victims while in the custody of CPS? Who’s monitoring the monitor?
2. What has the government done to ensure that victim service providers, including faith-based providers are properly vetted by local, state and federal agencies to ensure they have adequate services to meet the needs of the human trafficking victims?

**Recommendations**

We respectfully submit to the Committee the following recommendations for consideration in addressing the concerns by within this update:

1. The U.S. government should establish a national CPS Compliance Advisory Board which would establish review teams to operate within every state to ensure that the 5P’s (processes, policies, protocols, procedures and partnerships) are consistent with new and existing State and Federal laws as it relates to human trafficking.
2. The U.S. government should establish a process by which families who have previously or currently been engaged with CPS can provide information to a third party regarding their experience with the system.

3. The U.S. government should develop a specialized court within the juvenile justice system to handle all of human trafficking cases keeping them separate from the rest of the juvenile docket inclusive of a special judge, representatives of CPS, law enforcement, victim service providers who have all been specifically trained to handle and monitor these cases. This will limit the vulnerability of victims, ensure a measure of confidentiality and accountability and provide greater access to information for national reporting purposes.

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i Building Partnerships to Eradicate Modern Day Slavery, President’s Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships April 2013 report.