

Statement for the Record  
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Congressional-Executive Commission on China  
*Combating Human Trafficking in China: Domestic and International Efforts*  
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Mr. Chairman, I commend you for calling this hearing and am pleased that the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) is taking a hard look at human trafficking in China.

China is certainly not the only country dealing with the scourge of human trafficking, in fact, the State Department's 2005 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report details the trafficking situation in 150 countries. But what makes the tragedy of human trafficking in China all the more unjustifiable is that a good portion of the human trafficking in China is internal only to China, and is fueled by its own social policies.

I am talking about China's one-child policy.

This is an Orwellian policy that over the past 25 years has created a lost generation of daughters and wives-some say as many as 40-60 million by the end of this decade. The International Labor Organization states that the trends in trafficking in China are distinctive because most of it occurs for marriage or adoption. This gender imbalance means that women have become a commodity in China-a commodity that can be bought and sold. The TIP report notes that "significant numbers of Chinese women are trafficked internally for forced marriage." We don't know the exact number of women who are sentenced to a life of degradation and servitude-but even one is one too many.

Boys are vulnerable as well under this system. UNICEF estimates the going price for a baby boy in China is about US\$3,000. Again, this is based on a Chinese Government policy that dictates the number of children a couple can have. The result is families that are deprived of daughters, infant girls that are killed before they are born (girls account for 70 percent of abortions in China), and baby girls that are routinely abandoned. And if a girl is lucky enough to survive a few years, she is then vulnerable as a commodity on the marriage or labor market.

The TIP report states that despite some increased law enforcement activity, China's enforcement of laws and prosecution of traffickers is "inadequate." I would also add to that assessment that one of the real problems that feeds trafficking in China is rampant corruption within the Chinese Government-including law enforcement-and the lack of a rule of law in which an independent judiciary would hear trafficking and forced labor cases. I suspect that if China had such a system, many of the cases those courts would hear today would involve Chinese officials abusing their position of power to traffic women and children.

Sadly, those are not the cases that we see in China today.

I am also deeply concerned about the plight of North Korean women in China. The ongoing food and economic crisis in North Korea has driven an estimated 200,000 North Koreans to northeast China, fleeing for their lives from prison camps or political persecution. Once in China, North Koreans seek work and shelter with relatives, acquaintances or strangers, moving from time to time to avoid being detected by the Chinese authorities. Traffickers seek out North Korean women to exploit at river crossings, train stations or markets. Women who cross the border alone are often picked up as soon as they reach the other side by traffickers who lie in wait for them. Many arrive hungry and desperate and become easy targets for the traffickers.

Because of discriminatory social status, women without trusted family members in China have little choice but to rely on strangers for assistance and information. In such situations, North Korean women and children, who are cheaper in price than Chinese women and who have no legal protection in China, easily fall prey to sexual exploitation. These women are abducted and sold, either to men as informal wives or concubines or to the sex industry. Because of the growing gender disparity, many men have difficulty finding a wife, particularly in rural

areas. In this context, North Korean women are mostly sold to Chinese farmers who are considered undesirable to Chinese women because of their poverty, age, or disability.

The repressive government of North Korea does not comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making efforts to do so. China does not even meet minimal standards under the Refugee Convention to reduce the kidnapping, deportation and sexual exploitation of North Korean women living under these inhumane circumstances. The UN High Commission on Human Rights ought to take an active approach for North Korean women who live under suppressed feelings of shame, anger and agony in an isolated state of desperation. China must be held accountable by allowing the UN High Commissioner for Refugees unimpeded access to North Koreans in China.

Provisions of the North Korean Human Rights Act calling for the admission of North Korean refugees into the United States have been ignored. As a result, the recent State Department report on implementation of the Act's refugee provisions was required to make the admission that not a single North Korean refugee has been admitted to the United States since the Act's passage. Special Envoy Lefkowitz has publicly voiced his determination to ensure the rapid admission of some refugees into the United States, but we need to ensure that the numbers of North Koreans admitted will be sufficient to provide real relief to North Korean refugees.

While I commend the tremendous work done in the TIP report and the progress made in working with NGO's and other governments on trafficking, in my view, the Report glosses over the very human aspect of internal trafficking in China. I want to encourage the State Department to focus more attention on the human rights violations inherent in internal trafficking in China.

While we can commend China for taking steps in the right direction, there are some real fundamental structural and policy issues within China that have to be resolved before we will see real progress in fighting trafficking.

We need to see much more progress from the Chinese Government in rescuing these victims and prosecuting those responsible. This means engaging China more forcefully on building a society based on the rule of law. We also need to engage China on the very human and social evils of the one-child policy and encourage them to end this policy now.