

# The Relationship of Drug and Human Trafficking: A Global Perspective

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The relationship of the drug trade and human trafficking is one of enormous complexity. Focusing only on the overlap of drug and human trafficking routes is not sufficient to examine the many facets of the human trafficking-illicit drug trade relationship. Moreover, the diverse forms of drugs intersect in different ways with the many forms of human trafficking. Diverse drugs have an important role in the recruitment, retention and exploitation of human trafficking victims for all forms of sexual exploitation. They are used to compel individuals to perform sexual acts or engage in pornography.

Drug trafficking is not related just to the business of sex trafficking. Drug trafficking is linked to many forms of trafficking including diverse forms of labor trafficking in agriculture, begging and diverse forms of hard physical labor. Smuggled individuals often pay for their movement to their destination by being drug couriers, either by ingesting or transporting drugs.

Drugs are used to recruit new victims, to retain them in an exploited state and to maximize their exploitation. These different results are achieved by means of different drugs—both naturally grown commodities such as poppy based drugs and by using synthetic drugs. Addictive drugs, such as heroin or synthetics, are often used to compel individuals into sex exploitation and to keep them indebted to their traffickers (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011); U.S. of America vs. Charles Floyd Pipkins 2004). Hashish is a drug that keeps bricklayers in bondage in the kilns of Pakistan (Bales 2004:161). Stimulants are used to make individuals high and thereby capable of working longer hours or more intensively (Sex workers forced to take harmful drug 2011).

Despite the many points of intersection, the diverse relationships between human trafficking and drugs have rarely been discussed in the literature. There is a tendency to examine these forms of illicit trade separately or to group them together with other forms of

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transnational crime. Thereby, these analyses lose the distinct linkages of these two phenomena. Yet examination of many prosecuted criminal cases and other analyses provide insights into the complex relationship of the two phenomena in different regions of the world.

### **The Growing Relationship of Drug and Human Traffickers**

For many years the profits of the drug trade were so significant and the market demand was so great for drugs, that many transnational criminal organizations restricted their activities to the drug trade. But as certain markets have become saturated and many more criminal and terrorist organizations have entered the drug trade, there has become a need to diversify into other areas of illicit activity. Human smuggling and trafficking with its high demand from both individuals in source and recipient countries has become a logical area for the diversification of drug trafficking organizations (Aronowitz 2009).

Therefore, the growing convergence of the drug and human trade results from drug organizations entering into the businesses of smuggling and trafficking, rather than smuggling organizations entering into the drug trade. There are several reasons for this transition. The entry costs of entering into the human smuggling and trafficking business are low. One business can be hidden within the other. Lastly, the risks of involvement in the human trade are less because few countries in the world have prioritized the prosecution of human smuggling or trafficking or the confiscation of assets (Danziger, Martens and Guajardo 2009:37).

Drug trafficking organizations based in Mexico, Turkey, North Africa and the Balkans have significant financial resources as a result of their years of involvement in the highly profitable drug trade (UNODC 2010). Moving people even though it requires transport and communications links as well as safe houses, is a business that they can easily enter (Kara 2009). Analysts increasingly reveal that Mexican drug organizations and gangs such as MS-13 are moving both Central Americans and Mexicans migrants to the United States (Statement of Chris Swecker). Turkish and Balkan groups are smuggling both drugs and people into Western Europe and are trafficking in women within Western Europe (Cengiz 2011; Leman and Janssens 2008). North African crime groups, especially in the conflict environment and the chaos of the Arab Spring are increasingly moving people as well as drugs. There is a compelling logic for the criminals of the drug trade to diversify into this lucrative, highly profitable and low risk crime. When caught, the penalties are less and there is little risk of losing one's profits. Moreover, drugs and women can be moved along the same routes and sometimes simultaneously providing an economy of scale (Bosco et al. 2009:53)

Whereas a significant share of those incarcerated in the United States are imprisoned on drug related charges, there are no more than several hundred cases in all the United States of individuals convicted for engaging in human smuggling and trafficking (U.S. Attorney General 2009). The same can be said for Western Europe, its prisons are filled with individuals from all over the world prosecuted for drug trafficking. But there are no more than several hundred cases annually in all of Europe for human trafficking outside of Italy (Williams 2009:401; Savona et al. 2003:134–37).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Data is based on the European Commission working document on monitoring and evaluating the EU Plan on combating and preventing trafficking in human beings. The figure cited here by the IOM for trafficking seems high unless it includes smuggled individuals who are vulnerable to be trafficked. According to Savona et al. (2003), the Albanians and Italians were those most often convicted of human trafficking.

Drugs can help realize the exploitation of human beings. Drugs can force victims to comply with the demands of different kinds of traffickers. Beggars, placed on drugs, will work long hours under difficult conditions to bring back their earnings to those who control them. Agricultural workers can be forced to engage in backbreaking work if supplied drugs. Drugged children will commit horrific acts as child soldiers (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers 2008). Moreover, drugged children can be compelled to perform sexual acts or to perform the acts necessary for the production of child pornography.

### **The Costs of the Intersection of Drugs and Human Trafficking**

Many policy makers focus on the enormous harm caused by the drug trade both to the individual user and the larger society in allocating state resources to efforts to combat the drug trade. But these similar calculations are made much less frequently in reference to human trafficking. Consequently, human trafficking is not the law enforcement priority to the same extent as the drug trade.

One of the major costs of the drug trade is the increase in corruption and the corrosion of the state. To facilitate the illicit narcotics trade, many officials are bribed and the integrity of government is compromised. Human trafficking requires the corruption of border guards, law enforcement and often consular and other diplomatic personnel to obtain needed travel documents (Holmes 2009, 2010). Therefore, there are even more sectors of government that are undermined when the drug traffickers move into the trade in people.

There are also significant human and societal costs beyond the institutional costs. The combination of drug and human trafficking compounds the compulsion applied to the individual as many trafficking victims become addicted to drugs during the process of exploitation. This is not a random process but often the deliberate result of coercion strategies of the traffickers.

Human trafficking has great costs to the victim as they are harmed both psychologically and physically. To maintain control over the victim, traffickers often use extreme violence. Humiliation, isolation and disorientation of the victim is key to exploitation. By moving him or her frequently, the victim is unable to form any human relationships and can be more easily dominated by the trafficker. When drugs are added to these forms of abuse, the damage is compounded. Individuals become completely dependent on their traffickers and will work under the most extreme conditions in order to feed their habits. To obtain drugs from their traffickers, women prostitutes will work on the streets in the cold and in dangerous conditions. Those forced to take stimulants will take many customers thereby doing extreme harm to their bodies. The intravenous drug use and the larger number of customers both increase the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

The close association of human trafficking victimization with drug abuse means that victims contribute to the spread of disease and die prematurely. Human trafficking victims contract HIV/AIDS through drug abuse and then spread the disease primarily through sexual contacts. Addiction to alcohol and drugs, sometimes imposed on the victim by the trafficker, impairs and shortens their lives. In the United States where it is estimated that between 100,000 and 300,000 teenagers are trafficked, drugs are a widely used to keep these girls submissive (Estes and Weiner 2002).<sup>2</sup> These conditions contribute to the untimely demise of youthful U.S. trafficking victims who often survive only seven years after they have been trafficked into prostitution (FBI powerpoint 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Tina Frundt, a former trafficking victim, contradicted this popular wisdom stating that pimps are so greedy for money that they do not allow their trafficked girls and women to use drugs, "Human Trafficking in Our Region," August 10, 2009, <http://wamu.org/programs/09/08/10.php> (accessed August 18, 2009).

The close correlation between trafficking for sexual exploitation and drug abuse is also seen among victims in Eastern Europe, the former USSR and Asia. Trafficked girls and women are often “rescued” and returned to their home communities without being treated for their addiction. In Asia, girls and women return to their rural villages addicted to alcohol and drugs after a fast-paced urban life. Without treatment programs at home for their addictions, the victims in Asia and Eurasia often spread the problem of drug abuse to neighbors and family members.<sup>3</sup> In other cases, the absence of treatment for drug problems in their home communities means the addicted girls and women cannot be reintegrated into their home communities (Gorceag 2004; Zimmerman et al. 2003). This has been seen with victims from Albania, Czech Republic Moldova, Ukraine and elsewhere in the former USSR (Surtees 2005).

The inability of women subjected to sexual exploitation to rid themselves of their addiction is not a problem confined to less developed countries. Research in Great Britain that has more accessible drug treatment programs than in Eurasia reveals that women who have been involved in prostitution often cannot overcome their addictions. Research there revealed that women who had stopped working as prostitutes had the same levels of mental health problems (40 percent) and drug addiction (73 percent) as those who remained in the sex industry. This is consistent with post-traumatic stress disorder (Ward and Day 2006:413–17).

### **The Business of the Drug Trade and Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking can be differentiated in many respects from the narcotics trade. In the narcotics trade, drug traffickers must constantly restock their product as their commodity may be sold only once. Furthermore, those in the drug trade are seeking to develop new drugs for their customers to buy.

In contrast, most human traffickers have a commodity that they can exploit repeatedly whether it is a human being sold for labor exploitation, a woman sold into sex slavery, or a child’s exploitation that results in pornography that can be sold to multiple buyers. The exceptions are organs and children trafficked for adoptions that can be bought and resold for a profit only once. Therefore, human traffickers, in contrast to those in the drug trade, only need to find sources of supply but do not need to worry about new commodities.

There are important differences in the structure of the two types of criminal organizations and their leaderships. There are many large named organizations such as the Cali and Medellin Cartels that have been primarily focused on drug trafficking (Lee 1989; UNODC 2010). Although the Yakuza and triads traffic people, it is not possible to identify a large named multinational crime group that engages solely in human trafficking (Kaplan and Dubro 2003; Chin 1999). The human trafficking business often consists of more smaller to medium sized networks rather than very large criminal organizations.

Large drug trafficking organizations are run exclusively by men. Women, if they have a role in the drug trade, usually serve at the lowest and most vulnerable level, as drug couriers or as money launderers removed from operations. In contrast, in human trafficking, women assume a larger role as recruiters and even directors of significant smuggling organizations such as Sister Ping who was behind a multi-million dollar smuggling operation from Southern China to the United States and Europe (Keefe 2009).

The modes of operation of the two types of traffickers also differ. Large-scale drug traffickers can be extraordinarily violent to gain market entry, punish informants, or murder

<sup>3</sup> The author has interviewed NGOs that have worked with returning victims in Thailand, Russia, Moldova and other parts of Eurasia

investigative journalists. The violence of human traffickers is usually more restricted to reprisals against the victims and their immediate families rather than their criminal rivals. Drug traffickers, have traditionally been violent against their competitors. This is true in Colombia, Mexico, many locales in Europe, in Central Asia and elsewhere

Human traffickers rarely employ such violence against rivals. Balkan human trafficking groups are exceptional (Arsovska and Janssens 2009; Leman and Janssens 2008). They have broken into European markets by using extraordinary violence but this is the exception rather than the rule. The market for trafficked people is growing so rapidly and the business is so globalized that trafficking groups can co-exist rather than kill each other off as occurs regularly in the drug trade. Human traffickers instead turn on their victims, disfiguring them, knocking out their teeth, burning them or contributing to their premature death.

There may be a change in the targets of violence as the traditionally violent drug organizations increasingly diversify into this new criminal commodity. But as of now the transition seems to be in the increasing number of fatalities of those being moved, either from North Africa to Europe or through Mexico to the United States, rather than from internecine conflicts among the increasingly hybrid drug-human trafficking organizations.

There are other targets of the violence of drug and human traffickers. In recent years, many journalists writing on crime and corruption have been killed. Journalists writing on human trafficking are much less frequently attacked than their colleagues investigating drug trafficking or official corruption. There have, however, been cases in Mexico and in the Russian Far East where journalists writing on human trafficking have been attacked and severely injured or killed.

Despite these differences between human smugglers and traffickers, there are certain important similarities. Both human trafficking and the drug trade are businesses that require a wide variety of criminal actors and facilitators. Even though there are significant regional variations in the way crime groups operate in different parts of the world, both categories of criminal actors are dependent on the logistics skills of their participants as both people and drugs must be moved significant distances from the source country to their ultimate destination. In both businesses, criminal organizations are dependent on a wide range of facilitators who provide false documents, safe houses and ultimately dispose of the profits (Kara 2009). Many of these facilitators are working in the legitimate world in the transport industry, as lawyers, accountants, and real estate agents.

Before the movement of drug organizations into human trafficking, significant differences could be seen in the type of personnel engaged in these different trades. Many drug traffickers belong to minority communities in their countries and often originate from poor families or criminal environments such as triad or mafia families. Their involvement in the drug trade allows them opportunities to enrich themselves. Drug organizations are aided by corrupt facilitators in government bureaucracies. But only in the most extreme cases such as in Mexico and Central Asia are high level law enforcement officials key actors in drug trafficking organizations rather than just its facilitators.

In contrast, the high social status and education of some human traffickers contrasts sharply with that of drug traffickers. Former and current members of security apparatus and law enforcement as well as military personnel assume key roles in many trafficking rings of current and former communist states and current police are involved in many other societies as well. Former security personnel were present in approximately one-quarter of identified Balkan trafficking rings (Leman and Janssens 2008). A major trafficking ring broken in Russia in March 2007 was run by law enforcement and security personnel.<sup>4</sup> On the Tajik-

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<sup>4</sup> The nature of the personnel was discussed with the author during her visit to Russia in mid-March 2007. The case had been investigated by the Federal Security Service of Russia.

Afghan border, low-ranking military personnel who once supplemented their low salaries by trafficking in drugs now also facilitate the illicit movement of people (IOM 2003). In Cambodia in 2006, two military officers and a member of the military police were arrested for running brothels and trafficking (Trafficking in Persons Report 2007).

### Regional Variations of Human Trafficking and Drugs

The following analysis will focus on the regional variations of human trafficking and the drug trade. Revealing that culture, history and political and economic forces are important determinants of the observed relationship of these two trades. This analysis will show that there are distinct regional variations in the relationship of drugs and human trafficking in different parts of the world. The relationship between the drug trade and human trafficking differs according to the crime groups involved, the risks that exist for the traffickers and the demand that exists for the commodities. Therefore, it is not appropriate to make many generalizations about the drugs-human trafficking relationship. In Asia where human trafficking exists on such a large scale, large criminal organizations such as in Japan are multi-faceted trading in both human beings and drugs (Kaplan and Dubro 2003). In Latin America, drug organizations have recently moved into the human trafficking business because of the reduced risk and the existing demand (Llana 2010).

In Europe, since the end of the Cold War, cooperation increased between organized crime groups operating in Western Europe and their counterparts from Eastern Europe. The crime groups are multi-faceted criminal organizations and reflect the globalization of transnational crime and the increasing linkage among regions (Bruinsma and Meershoek 1997).

Human trafficking organizations are more prominent in Asia, particularly China, Japan, India, and Thailand and the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The greatest number of human trafficking victims, particularly those associated with labor trafficking, have been found in Asia, particularly India in South East Asia (ILO 2005:10–12). Drug traffickers have been particularly prominent in Latin America, Nigeria, the Golden Triangle (Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar), and the Golden Crescent (Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan). Yet the areas where drug crime networks are well established are increasingly important growth areas for human trafficking (UNODC 2010). Therefore, South Asia and Southeast Asia as well as Central and South America are particularly associated with the growth of the two illicit trades.

The links between drug traffickers and insurgents, guerillas, and terrorists have been identified in many parts of the world. These relationships have been analyzed in Colombia, Myanmar, and Afghanistan as well as other countries (Thoumi 1995; Lee 1989; Lintner 1994; Osmanaliev 2005). Less is known about the relationships between these non-state political groups and human traffickers than is the case with drug traffickers. Yet non-state actors have been linked to human trafficking in diverse locales. Pakistani terrorists buy children to serve as suicide bombers and Marxist guerillas in Nepal traffic girls to India to fund their political cause (Human Rights Report, Rape for Profit 1995; Anthony 2009). Rebels in Africa trade in children to perpetuate their conflicts and obtain child soldiers (Child Soldier Global Report 2008).

#### Asia

As previously mentioned, Asia is the only region in the world where major criminal organizations have been involved for decades in both human and drug trafficking. This is especially the case with the Japanese *Yakuza* and the Chinese *triads*. Drug and gambling debts to the *Yakuza* can be repaid by family members selling individuals into sexual slavery.

The internationalization of the *Yakuza* has permitted them to exploit their drug trafficking ties to provide more trafficked women for the sex markets they control at home. Consequently, their links with Colombian drug traffickers has resulted in the importation of Colombian women into Japan for sexual exploitation. This shows how business operations in the drug arena can be used to facilitate human trafficking.

The introduction of counter-drug policies can have negative consequences for human trafficking. The government of Thailand several decades ago initiated a strong counter-narcotics policy in the North of the country. The policy, sponsored by the king, was highly successful in stemming the growth of drugs in the north of the country. But the poor tribal areas in the north that had grown the drugs were used to the proceeds of illicit trade and had limited legitimate opportunities. As a consequence, the trade in young women from these regions increased. Drug substitution policies can have unforeseen consequences for human trafficking, particularly in a country in which trade in women and girls is so institutionalized (Shelley 2010:163).

A classic study of illicit markets in Thailand entitled *Guns, girls, gambling and Ganja* reveals that the proceeds of human trafficking just as the illicit trade in arms and drugs is not only an integral part of the illicit economy, but the bribes and corruption money from this trade is so significant that it has an impact on the political process (Phongpaichit et al. 1998).

In another part of Asia, a different relationship is seen between the drug trade and human trafficking. Tajikistan, is a corridor for the enormous drug trade leaving from Afghanistan (Paoli et al. 2009: 181–198). This trade has limited trickle down effects and most of the large youthful population is without employment. Consequently, approximately one-third of Tajik households have a member working abroad to send home remittances (IOM Tajikistan 2003). The movement of some Tajiks to Russia is organized by groups. Some Tajiks as well as other labor migrants from other countries in Central Asia are forced to carry drugs as a way of paying for transport to Russia and other work locales. Kyrgyz are also involved in the drug trade, less as leaders but more as facilitators as Kyrgyzstan is the next stop after Tajikistan for trafficked Afghan drugs. Kyrgyz criminals specialize in passport fraud enabling traffickers to move women and drugs through intermediaries to Turkey and along the more northerly drug route into Russia.<sup>5</sup>

## Africa

In Africa, the nexus of drug and human trafficking is seen in diverse regions where different crime groups operate. North African criminals move both drugs and people to Europe. Sometimes, the humans are forced to be drug mules to pay for their passage as was just described in reference to Central Asia. Those moved by the human smugglers and traffickers originate either from North Africa or transit through from sub-Saharan Africa. In West Africa, the most prominent group of organized criminals are based in Nigeria.<sup>6</sup> They are known as major players in the drug trade but have also acquired notoriety for their human trafficking to Italy, Scandinavia and other locales in Europe. Many of the human trafficking networks are operating out of the Edo state, a key locale for the drug trade but also the source of 80 percent of Nigeria's trafficking victims (Carling 2005 and 2006).

<sup>5</sup> This is based on interviews with Turkish and Kyrgyz law enforcement.

<sup>6</sup> Information on this model is based on European analyses in government reports and interviews with law enforcement personnel from France, Italy, and the Netherlands, which receive a disproportionate share of the trafficking victims from Africa, as well as the limited academic research available on the topic. For further reading see Ebbe 1999; Carling 2005 and 2006; Aghatise 2004.

In East Africa, for example, khat is transported from Kenya to Somalia and the unloaded trucks return from Somalia with 50 small children who will be either victims of labor or sexual trafficking.<sup>7</sup> This human trafficking recalls an earlier international trade in which slaves were part of a triangle trade involving rum. Presently, as in the past human trafficking is a logical utilization of the transport resources of the transnational criminals.

Africa is distinctive in the numbers of child soldiers deployed in its numerous conflicts. To force child soldiers to kill, child soldiers in many conflict regions are provided with drugs to force them to fight or to commit horrible acts such as the murder of family members (Child Soldiers Global Report 2008).

### Western Europe

Diaspora communities in Western Europe are key facilitators of both drug and human trafficking. The human trafficking is primarily for sexual and labor exploitation. With its social welfare protections, there are a limited number of girls and women from within Western Europe willingly engaging in prostitution. Therefore, many of the women engaging in prostitution are trafficked from outside Western Europe. Members of diaspora communities help facilitate this movement. As previously mentioned, Nigerians who are actively involved in trading both drugs and people. But this dual trade is not confined to them. Both Turkish and Balkan groups are also involved in human trafficking and smuggling (Cengiz 2011; Lemans and Janssens 2008).

Both Turkish and Balkan groups are involved in trafficking drugs, women for sexual exploitation as well as men, often from the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent. Both Turkish and Balkan groups are also deeply involved in the control of prostitution markets in countries such as Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands where the same groups are also involved in the drug trade. Drugs are often supplied to the prostitutes to ensure their subservience (Cengiz 2011).

Turkish and Balkan groups serve as logistics experts. Both groups move drugs and people along the Balkan route that connects Asia with Western Europe.

Drugs and human trafficking also intersect in distribution points in Western Europe. For example, “night shops” that are open lengthy hours in Belgium are centers of the drug trade. These night shops are also linked to human smuggling network whose clients have even included smuggled Chinese (Centre pour l’égalité 2008).

The personnel employed by the Balkan crime groups may run brothels and move drugs. For example, in Belgium, the Albanians use the madams, usually women with EU passports who control their trafficked women, also as drug couriers (Arsovska and Janssens 2009: 184).

A similar overlap is seen in Eastern organized crime. The Russian organized crime group named Solnstevo crime group had an important role in Hungary linking the drug and human trade from the former Soviet Union to Eastern Europe (Varese 2011). One of its key figures, Semyon Mogilevich, figured significantly in the Bank of New York case in which large illicit flows were located in this American bank tied to his criminal activities.

### Latin America

Latin America, as previously mentioned, is where drug trafficking organizations are diversifying into human trafficking. This has occurred as a result of the tightening of border

<sup>7</sup> This is based on research presently being conducted by Peter Gastrow of the International Peace Academy (IPA) in New York. For more on this research see Gastrow 2011.

controls on the US-Mexican border and the demand for more sophisticated traffickers to move individuals across the border. Furthermore, the corruption of border personnel by the drug trafficking organizations allows them to move people across the border.

The drug traffickers moving into human trafficking consist of both Central American gangs such as MS-13 and established Mexican drug trafficking organizations (Statement of Swecker 2006, Wuebbel 2004). Those subject to particular exploitation are those who are transiting Mexico on the way to the United States from Central America. In August 2010, 72 humans being smuggled through Mexico on the way to the United States were killed by a drug trafficking organization when they refused to join it. Drug trafficking organizations hold these transiting migrants for ransom and try to extract money from family members in the United States (Wola and Center Prodh 2010). The presence of members of drug trafficking organizations in 200 communities in the United States makes this coercion more feasible.<sup>8</sup>

Linkages in other areas of trafficking can be seen between the drug and human trades. Infant trafficking exists in areas where organized crime is centered—Mexico City and Tijuana. Midwives often persuade poor mothers to sell their children, or deceive them by telling them that their babies have an illness or have died. Sometimes they even drug mothers and steal their babies in order to sell them (Bosco et al. 2009:57).

The links between the drug and human trade become very evident in the analysis of the United States where the diverse forms of convergence of the drug and human trade becomes evident.

## North America

Drugs and human trafficking are linked in the United States and Canada although the problems are most acute in the United States. Because of the proliferation of Latin American drug trafficking organizations and gangs throughout the US. Other drug groups than the Latin Americans have been observed engaging in both forms of illicit activity including but not limited to Post-Soviet crime groups, American pimps, and US motorcycle groups.

One of the first cases in which a defendant was prosecuted for human trafficking linked post-Soviet organized crime with Latin American drug traffickers. Ludwig Fainberg also known as “Tarzan” used trafficked women as bait for Colombian drug traffickers who frequented his strip joint near the Miami airport. Fainberg and his Colombian associate even ventured to Russia to buy submarines and missile launchers from a Russian military base in the North that could be used to ensure the delivery of drugs (Friedman 2000).<sup>9</sup>

Violent and multi-member gangs such as MS-13 have entered the human smuggling business since 2001 and the tightening of border controls because large profits can be made by moving hundreds of thousands of men and women annually (Swecker 2006). These human smugglers can force people they transport across the border to carry drugs to “pay”

<sup>8</sup> See the report on the website of the National Drug Intelligence Center, [http://wn.com/National\\_Drug\\_Intelligence](http://wn.com/National_Drug_Intelligence) (accessed July 13, 2011).

<sup>9</sup> Friedman is one of the few authors to write on this case that first linked drugs and human trafficking in a federal indictment. In the late 1990s when this investigation occurred, the Trafficking in Persons Act was not yet law. Therefore, there was no one who asked the Russian speaking undercover agent to find the human trafficking. But the extensive bruises on the strippers' bodies as well as his conversations with the women who worked in the club revealed that the women were not voluntarily working in the club but were victims of human trafficking. This fact was mentioned in the charges but did not figure in the prosecutor's case presented in court. The author conducted interviews with the undercover agent, the prosecutor and examined the court record.

for their transport. Gangs not only facilitate labor smuggling and trafficking; presently, 55 percent of identified Latin American gangs are now involved in prostitution (Statement of Swecker 2005). Deported members of these gangs now operate on the Mexican-Guatemalan border in the state of Chiapas, where they have established a smuggling operation for persons, drugs, and weapons. They also prey on Latin America brothels in the United States. For example, in a case in the Washington, DC suburb of Montgomery County, gang members used force against the prostitutes to extract their daily earnings before they were collected by their traffickers.<sup>10</sup>

The drug trade can be linked to both sexual and labor trafficking. For example, In a case prosecuted in Oregon in 2006 a woman was trafficked from Mexico to cultivate marijuana. This forced labor in the drug industry was combined with beatings, stabbings, and sexual assault as well as being coerced to witness acts of violence committed upon other children and women.<sup>11</sup>

Those profiting from the drug trade may also become active customers in the sex markets. Truckers who move money and drugs along the main artery from the United State to Mexico have more disposable income and are using trafficked minors. An example of this is the Stormy Nights case from Oklahoma where federal investigators discovered a loose network of 48 pimps who recruited more than 100 girls from Oklahoma City and moved them along trucking routes to Denver, Miami, Houston, and Dallas, thousands of miles from their homes (Statement of Chris Swecker 2005).

Drugs are used by American pimps to compel young girls into prostitution and to force them to turn over all their wages. An indictment of a group of pimps in Atlanta, Georgia revealed that they functioned as a network controlling the group of young girls to whom they provided drugs to be totally subservient and relinquish all of their earnings.<sup>12</sup>

## Conclusion

The links between the drug trade and human trafficking are numerous and complex. These links are different dependent on the type of human exploitation involved and the region of the world in which the exploitation occurs. Different linkages exist in Africa where children are trafficked as child soldiers and provided drugs to perform violent acts from those found in Europe where criminal organizations traffick both drugs and people for sexual and labor exploitation. In North America, powerful drug trafficking organizations, facing increasing competition and stiff penalties if caught have moved into human trafficking to diversity and reduce risk.

There is no universal relationship between drugs and human trafficking. The only general principle applicable to this relationship is that the drugs increase the submission and passivity of the human trafficking and ensures that they are less likely to free themselves from this abusive relationship. Different drugs are used by traffickers for different purposes to increase dependence and enhance productivity.

The diversification of drug trafficking organizations into the business of human trafficking has added larger and more violent actors to the phenomenon of human trafficking. With

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Stack, Montgomery County Police Department, Maryland, presentation on investigating human trafficking crimes in Washington Metropolitan area, American University, Washington, D.C., November 6, 2006, subsequently excerpted in Shared Hope International (2007), *Demand*, 88–89.

<sup>11</sup> <http://wamu.org/programs/09/08/10.php> (accessed June 20, 2008).

<sup>12</sup> See U.S. of America vs. Charles Floyd Pipkins a.k.a. Sir Charles, Andrew Moore, Jr. a.k.a. Batman, August 2, 2004, [www.ca11.uscourts.gov/opinions/ops/200214306.pdf](http://www.ca11.uscourts.gov/opinions/ops/200214306.pdf), accessed Feb. 29, 2012.

groups working in more than two commodities, routes, facilitators and transport links can be exploited more effectively. Corruption remains key to human trafficking as it is to the drug trade.

The expansion of drug traffickers into the human smuggling and trafficking business is explained by the limited sanctions, high profits and the reduced risk of confiscation of assets. This suggests that the present law enforcement policies that target human and drug traffickers separately are not based on an existing and developing reality in many regions of the world. Therefore, anti-trafficking efforts can be made much more effective by using some of the resources that are presently deployed against drug traffickers—intelligence, task forces and coordinated operations to combat the networks and organizations that traffick in both human beings and drugs.

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