

PROTECTING STREET CHILDREN: VIGILANTES OR THE RULE OF LAW?

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN
RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

OF THE

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PROTECTING STREET CHILDREN: VIGILANTES OR THE RULE OF LAW?

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS
AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. The Subcommittee will come to order. Good afternoon to everyone.

Today's hearing of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations will study the terrible situation facing millions of children across the world who are forced to live on the streets and what the United States and other countries are doing, can do, or should do, to address the problem. The hearing will focus particular attention on the situation in Brazil, the Philippines, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Street children are, tragically, found in almost every country in the world. They are part of a vast population of children worldwide who live in abject poverty and are particularly vulnerable to abuse. They are murdered by vigilantes who are, in many cases, policemen charged with enforcing the law and protecting human life. Instead, police and other vigilantes violate the law in the worst way imaginable, out of a perverted impulse to eliminate petty crime. Street children are used by criminal gangs and then are often disposed of when they have outlived their usefulness. They are trafficked and exploited, sexually and for forced labor. Many end up as child soldiers. Many others are incarcerated in adult prisons, where they are victimized even further.

Worldwide, street children number in the many millions, but no one really knows how many there are. An estimate reportedly made by the UN Children's Fund in the 1990s of 100 million street children worldwide is often cited. But the true number is unknown. It could be far worse now.

Civil wars and the HIV/AIDS epidemic continually swell the numbers of street children, particularly in Africa. In the past, the typical street children were boys 10–14 years old. Now the age ranges are drifting downward, and more and more girls are being found on the streets. Female street children face particular problems. They are more likely to be domestically and sexually abused,

and they are more likely to become prostitutes, increasing their health risks, including that of HIV/AIDS.

Unlike many of the pressing human rights problems we confront, the problem of street children is rarely the result of the intentional malevolence of dictators or tyrannical regimes, although this does occur. Rather, some of the very worst situations exist in democratic nations, which are close friends. Like the worldwide plague of trafficking in women, men and children, the problems of street children have reached epidemic proportions because good people will not confront this evil or do enough to deal with it.

Faced with so many other intractable problems of poverty, unemployment, and weak or nonexistent institutions of civil society, many struggling countries and their citizens throw up their hands in despair and try to pay little attention to the plight of street children. In the meantime, not only are the lives of their most precious resource, their children, being destroyed, their futures as prosperous and democratic rule of law societies are also put in jeopardy. No nation can afford to allow its police to become murderers or its children to become outlaws and hope to become or remain a stable, prosperous, democratic society. Ultimately, this is a security issue for all.

Many street children are orphans, or abandoned, or come from desperately poor families. I recently was in Timisoara and saw firsthand a number of street children in that city in Romania. But I also saw some of the good things that Peter Dugulescu and others were doing to try to reach out and provide a safe haven for those children.

Some children are estranged from their families. Many, perhaps the large majority, do not attend school regularly. In order to survive on the streets, they must beg, steal or find some other means of earning money by scavenging or other menial work, helping street traders, shining shoes, washing car windshields. Many are lured by false promises of security and financial gain by older individuals into illicit prostitution, dangerous forced labor or drug trafficking and violent crime.

What can we do?

The first rule must be to do no harm. Police and public authorities must be trained to deal with children on the street and to protect them, and those who mistreat or murder them must be punished. Experience has shown that if governments make it clear that crimes by policemen will be punished, the incidence of those crimes radically diminishes. Ending impunity is therefore a fundamental prerequisite for all other progress, and the U.S. Government and international organizations must never neglect to press this issue. We shall hear today how the State Department monitors the plight of street children, and what it is doing to convince our partners to stop crimes against street children.

The next task must be to ameliorate the situation of the children who find themselves on the streets. Society, through governmental and private institutions, must strive to meet the current needs of these children, so they can receive educations and live productive, useful and happy lives. Local governments often have limited programs and resources to address the special needs of street children. Developed democracies can assist, certainly with direct material as-

sistance, but perhaps, most of all, through institution building. USAID and our NGO communities will discuss what they are doing and what more can be done.

Our Administration witnesses today will be Mr. David Denehy, Director of Strategic Planning and External Affairs for the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, which has, for many years, kept the attention of the world focused on the human rights violations against street children; and Mr. Lloyd Feinberg, Manager of the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund of the U.S. Agency for International Development, which works directly with foreign governments and NGOs to save street children.

On our second panel will be the distinguished Lord David Alton of the House of Lords of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, who has heroically defended the fundamental human rights of all without exception for many years: The unborn, the elderly, the sick, the handicapped, children, prisoners, and people of faith everywhere.

Our third panel will include Father Shay Cullen, Founder of the PREDA Foundation in the Philippines; Ms. Teresa Santos, Network Coordinator for Rede Viva-RJ, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Mr. Andy Sexton, International Coordinator, Children at Risk, OASIS International.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

The Subcommittee will come to order, and good morning to everyone.

Today's hearing of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations will study the terrible situation facing millions of children across the world who are forced to live on the streets, and what the U.S. and other countries are doing, can do, or should do, to address the problem. The hearing will focus particular attention the situation in Brazil, the Philippines and Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Street children are, tragically, found in almost every country in the world. They are part of a vast population of children worldwide who live in abject poverty and are particularly vulnerable to abuse. They are murdered by vigilantes, who are in many cases policeman charged with enforcing the law and protecting human life. Instead, police and other vigilantes violate the law in the worst way imaginable, out of a perverted impulse to eliminate petty crime. Street children are used by criminal gangs and then often disposed of when they have outlived their usefulness. They are trafficked and exploited, sexually and for forced labor. Many end up as child soldiers. Many others are incarcerated in adult prisons, where they are victimized even further.

Worldwide street children number in the many millions, but no one really knows how many there are. An estimate reportedly made by the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the 1990s of 100 million street children worldwide is often cited, but the true number is unknown. It could be far worse now. Civil wars and the HIV/AIDS epidemic continually swell the numbers of street children, particularly in Africa. In the past the typical street children were boys 10-14 years old. Now the age ranges are drifting downward, and more and more girls are being found on the streets. Female street children face particular problems. They are more likely to be domestically and sexually abused, and they are more likely to become prostitutes increasing their health risks including that of HIV/AIDS.

Unlike many of the pressing human rights problems we confront, the problem of street children is rarely the result of the intentional malevolence of dictators or tyrannical regimes, although this does occur. Rather, some of the very worst situations exist in democratic nations, which are close friends. Like the worldwide plague of trafficking in women, men and children, the problems of street children have

reached epidemic proportions because good people will not confront this evil or do enough to deal with it.

Faced with so many other intractable problems of poverty, unemployment and weak or nonexistent institutions of civil society, many struggling countries and their citizens throw up their hands in despair and try to pay little attention to the plight of street children. In the meantime, not only are the lives of their most precious resource, their children, being destroyed, their futures as prosperous and democratic rule of law societies are also put in jeopardy. No nation can afford to allow its police to become murderers, or its children to become outlaws, and hope to become or remain a stable, prosperous, democratic society. Ultimately, this is a security issue for all.

Many street children are orphans, or abandoned, or come from desperately poor families. Some are estranged from their families. Many, perhaps the large majority, do not attend school regularly. In order to survive on the streets, they must beg, steal or find some other means of earning money by scavenging, or other menial work helping street traders, shining shoes, washing car windshields. Many are lured by false promises of security and financial gain by older individuals into illicit prostitution, dangerous forced labor, or drug trafficking and violent crime.

What can we do?

The first rule must be to do no harm. Police and public authorities must be trained to deal with children on the street and to protect them, and those who mistreat or murder them must be punished. Experience has shown that if governments make it clear that crimes by policemen will be punished, the incidence of those crimes radically diminishes. Ending impunity is therefore a fundamental prerequisite for all other progress, and the U.S. government and International Organizations must never neglect to press this issue. We shall hear today how the State Department monitors the plight of Street Children, and what it is doing to convince our partners to stop crimes against street children.

The next task must be to ameliorate the situation of the children who find themselves on the streets. Society, through governmental and private institutions, must strive to meet the current needs of these children, so they can receive educations and live productive, useful and happy lives. Local governments often have limited programs and resources to address the special needs of street children. Developed democracies can assist, certainly with direct material assistance, but perhaps most of all through institution building. USAID and our NGO communities will discuss what they are doing and what more can be done.

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Mr. SMITH. I would like to turn to Ms. McCollum if she has any opening remarks.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chair. In light of the fact I will not be able to stay quite as long as I wanted, I would like to get right to the testimony so I can hear. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Pitts.

Mr. PITTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will submit a longer statement for the record, but first let me thank you for holding today's hearing entitled "Protecting Street Children: Vigilantes Or the Rule of Law?"

With the many issues facing our world today, there is not nearly enough attention paid to the issue of street children. Yet, as we

will hear from today's witnesses, it is vital that we address the needs and problems of street children as the issues with which they deal touch on many issues of concern to the general public and governments and the international community; issues like trafficking in persons, drug use, sexual abuse, gangs, violence, breakdown of communities and societies, forcible conscription of child soldiers, the spread of HIV/AIDS, and national security issues. They are all part of the many issues facing street children.

UN statistics reflect that there are approximately 100 million street children in the world today, including the United States.

So thank you to today's witnesses for your testimony, and for the insight that you will share regarding this important issue. I would like to extend a special welcome to my good friend, Lord David Alton, and to Father Shay Cullen, Ms. Teresa Santos, and Mr. Andy Saxton, who have traveled great distances to be here today. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Pitts.

We are joined by our first two witnesses, experts in the field, including David Denehy, who was appointed Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Human Rights and Labor in July 2005. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Denehy served as Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor since November 2004. In this capacity he has also acted as Director of the Bureau's Office of Strategic and External Affairs.

Previously, Mr. Denehy served in a variety of positions within the State Department. In 2003, for example, Mr. Denehy was an advisor to Ambassador Paul Bremer on political transition in Iraq, and Deputy Director of the Office of Democracy and Governance in the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad.

Lloyd Feinberg is the manager of USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, Leahy War Victims Fund, and the Victims of Torture Fund. He is also the agency's Disabilities Coordinator.

His primary responsibility is the oversight and management of a portfolio of the three special funds which provide over \$35 million annually in development assistance. Overall, the program currently supports over 85 programs in more than 45 countries in Asia and the Near East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Central and Latin American regions.

Mr. Feinberg began his international career as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Philippines in the mid-1960s, and has over 40 years experience managing social sector programs in developing countries.

After the Peace Corps, and before joining USAID in 1984, he lived in and managed NGO development programs in Indonesia, Ethiopia, Nepal and Ecuador. From 1980 to 1983, he served as project manager on the World Bank Transmigration II in Indonesia. He is also an expert adviser on the board of the ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled.

Mr. Denehy, if you could begin.

STATEMENT OF MR. DAVID DENEHY, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. DENEHY. Thank you. Chairman Smith and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for holding this hearing on the plight of street children. Your concern is appreciated. The Department shares this concern and commends you for your efforts on this issue.

Each year the Department submits the *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* to this Committee. Section 5 of each country's chapter includes our reporting on children. While we submit these documents each February, our Embassies and posts monitor and report on acts of discrimination and persecution against children throughout the year. The Department instructs posts covering countries with large populations of displaced children, including refugees or street children, to follow these issues closely.

As our officers prepare these reports, they draw on many sources of information, including firsthand experiences and reports provided by human rights groups. I am sure you will learn much from members of the second panel as we benefit regularly from the work of these NGOs.

Lord Alton has also asked to meet with us later this week and we look forward to his visit.

My message to all these groups is to work with us and communicate with us so we can all improve our reporting and activities on behalf of children.

I am also pleased to be joined today by Lloyd Feinberg, who heads the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund at the United States Agency for International Development. In my testimony, I will describe several of the most pressing issues facing children living in the streets. Mr. Feinberg will then describe aids program designed to benefit children as well as some of the lessons he has learned in this endeavor.

A survey of the *Country Reports* suggests that children end up on the streets for a variety of reasons, including conflict, poverty, and HIV/AIDS. Some are exploited in prostitution or subjected to other forms of human trafficking and others face abuse by security forces and citizens. Too many children's stories are never told and too many continue to face the streets alone.

Today I would like to draw your attention to the stories of three children who are forced to face the harsh realities of their countries' streets at a young age.

In May, DRL officers visited several refugee camps along the Chad-Sudan border to assess violence in Darfur. During this trip, they were struck at the number of children occupying each camp. On average, over 95 percent of the population in these camps are women and children under the age of 10. Some of these children are accompanied by parents. Some have no idea where their families may be or even if they are still alive.

During one such visit, officers encountered a group of children who were given paper and crayons by a local NGO. The officers received disturbing drawings by children as young as 5 that conveyed terrific acts of violence. They included acts of torture and savage

killings that took place in their homes, drawings of men being beaten and beheaded and women, sometimes their mothers and sisters, being gang-raped.

Keep in mind that these children were reached by NGO programming. The larger picture for isolated street children in Sudan and those detained by government for committing crimes is often much bleaker. The Sudanese Government funds reformation camps for children detained by police. The living conditions are primitive and the camps offer poor health care and education. It is typical for us to find that racial, ethnic or religious identification of street children place a significant role in their treatment.

In Sudan, all of the children in camps, including non-Muslims, must study the Koran, and there is pressure on non-Muslims to convert to Islam.

The detention situation in the Philippines is also grim. Approximately 1,500 Filipino children, most incarcerated for crimes such as common theft or substance abuse, are currently incarcerated among the adult inmate population where they are vulnerable to sexual abuse, recruitment into gangs and forced labor.

In Brazil, credible locally-based human rights groups report the existence of organized death squads linked to police forces that target suspected criminals and persons considered undesirable, such as street children in almost every state.

Male teenagers in the Sudanese camps are often conscripted into the People's Defense Forces. Conscripts face significant hardship and abuse in military service, often serving on the front line. There are also reports that abducted, homeless and displaced children are discouraged from speaking languages other than Arabic or practicing religions other than Islam.

Timothy's story was provided by a NGO that collects and shares invaluable human rights information with my office. Timothy, a 14-year-old boy in Uganda, was one of the many child soldiers in his country. He remembers his first time on the front line. Timothy recalls the other side started firing and the commander "ordered us to run through the bullets. I panicked. I saw others falling down dead around me. The commanders were beating us for not running or trying to crouch down. They said if we fall down, we would be shot and killed by the soldiers."

Between 32,000 and 52,000 children known as "night commuters" travel from conflict areas across Uganda or IDP camps to urban centers each night to avoid abduction by the Lord's Resistance Army. Last year, the government cooperated with NGOs to establish shelters for such children. However, children also sleep under balconies or on the grounds of schools, churches and hospitals. Conditions range from harsh to adequate. Many credible reports also confirmed that displaced girls are involved in prostitution.

Sadly, our *Country Reports* describe similar situations elsewhere in the world. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, between 25,000 and 50,000 child refugees, war orphans, and other children widely perceived to be street thugs are accused of witchcraft or sorcery. They live on the streets throughout the country and engage in petty crime, begging or prostitution. These circumstances are not rare and are closer to those described in our reports of children in

Angola, where approximately 1,500 street children in Rwanda shine shoes, wash cars, carry water, beg, prostitute and often resort to petty crime just to survive.

My third story comes from a new member of my office who is here with me today. He traveled to Peru in 2003 to specifically work with street children, some as young as age 4. In addition to encountering stark police and public brutality toward street children, he was struck by the contrast he observed between Peruvian perceptions of these children and his experiences of working with them. Street children in Peru are commonly referred to as “piranhas” and, if detained by police, are often labeled as such with a small fish tattooed on their hand just above the thumb. Contrary to fears that street children are dangerous and inhumane, as their tattoos might suggest, Jacob found the only striking difference between the street children and the others was the lack of familial support. Instead, these children turned to each other or to others on the street for this support.

Parentless and surrounded by oppressors, poverty and crime, these children need tools and support to lead productive lives.

In Peru, largely because of widespread poverty, approximately one-third of all school-age children and adolescents work rather than attend school. Children living in poverty average only 7.8 years of education and about half of those who go to primary school complete high school. Approximately 25 percent of children under the age of 5 are malnourished, and violence against children, trafficking of children, and informal child labor remain serious problems.

The Government of Peru, however, has shown a commitment to children’s well-being. The government provides free compulsory education through secondary school, new laws more closely define trafficking in persons, criminalize Internet pornography and sexual tourism involving children, and provide punishments for those who derive financial benefit from these activities. Penalties for pimps and clients of underage prostitutes range from 4 to 8 years.

In March, the government formed a permanent, ministerial-level Multi-Sectoral Committee (MSC) to work on the issue of trafficking in persons. The committee is chaired by the Ministry of Interior and includes representatives from 10 government ministries and agencies, three international organizations, and five national organizations.

The situation is only bleaker in countries where governments do not put time and energy into programs for children or even worse, where governments contribute to lifestyles that deny these children dignity and their basic right to live a healthy life. While it saddens me to report that this is the state of the world, we would like to thank the Committee for holding this hearing today to call attention to the plight of street children across the globe. I am sure Mr. Feinberg will provide a clear picture of what assistance our Government is providing to help address these problems through the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund at USAID.

Once again, we look forward to working with the Committee to elevate this important issue. Thank you for your time. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Denehy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. DAVID DENEHY, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING
AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR, U.S.
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Chairman Smith, Mr. Payne, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for holding this hearing on the plight of street children across the globe. Your concern is appreciated. The State Department shares this concern and commends you for your efforts on this issue.

Each year the Department submits the *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* to this Committee. Section 5 of each country's chapter includes our reporting on children. While we submit these documents each February, our embassies and posts monitor and report on acts of discrimination and persecution against children throughout the year. The Department instructs posts covering countries with large populations of displaced children—including refugees or street children—to follow these issues.

As our officers prepare these reports they draw on many sources of information, including first-hand experiences and reports provided by human rights groups. I am sure you will learn much from members of the second panel, as we benefit regularly from the work of NGOs. Lord Alton has also asked to meet us later this week, and we look forward to his visit. My message to all these groups is to work with us and communicate with us, so we all can improve our reporting and activities on behalf of the children.

I am also pleased to be joined today by Lloyd Feinberg who heads the Displaced Children and Orphan's Fund at the United States Agency for International Development. In my testimony I will describe several of the most pressing issues facing children living in the streets. Mr. Feinberg will then describe USAID's program designed to benefit children, as well as some of the lessons he has learned in this endeavor.

A survey of the *Country Reports* suggests that children end up on the streets for a variety of reasons, including conflict, poverty, and HIV/AIDS. Some are exploited in prostitution or are subjected to other forms of human trafficking, and others face abuse by security forces and citizens. Too many children's stories are never told, and too many continue to face the streets alone. Today, I would like to draw your attention to the stories of three children who were forced to face the harsh realities of their countries' streets at a very young age.

In May, DRL officers visited several refugee camps along the Chad/Sudan border to assess the violence in Darfur. During this trip they were struck at the number of children occupying each camp. On average, over 95 percent of the population in these camps are women, and children under the age of 10. Some of these children are accompanied by a parent, and some have no idea where their families may be, or even if they are still alive. During one such visit, officers encountered a group of children who were given paper and crayons by a local NGO. The officers received disturbing drawings by children as young as 5 years of age that conveyed acts of violence. They included acts of torture and savage killings that took place in their homes by the Jinjaweed, drawings of men being beaten and beheaded, and women, sometimes their mothers and sisters, being gang-raped.

Keep in mind that these were children reached by NGO programming, whereas the larger picture for isolated street children in Sudan, and those detained by the government for committing crimes, is often much bleaker.

The Sudanese government funds "reformation camps" for children detained by police. The living conditions are primitive, and the camps offer poor health care and education. It is typical for us to find that racial, ethnic, or religious identification of street children plays a significant role in their treatment. In Sudan, all of the children in camps, including non-Muslims, must study the Koran, and there is pressure on non-Muslims to convert to Islam.

The detention situation in the Philippines is also grim. Approximately 1,500 Filipino children, most incarcerated for crimes such as common theft or substance abuse, are currently incarcerated among the adult inmate population where they are vulnerable to sexual abuse, recruitment into gangs, and forced labor.

And in Brazil, credible, locally-based human rights groups report the existence of organized death squads linked to police forces that target suspected criminals and persons considered "undesirable"—such as street children—in almost every state.

Male teenagers in the Sudanese camps (and, in the south, some girls) are often conscripted into the People's Defense Forces. Conscripts face significant hardship and abuse in military service, often serving on the frontline. There are also reports that abducted, homeless, and displaced children are discouraged from speaking languages other than Arabic or practicing religions other than Islam.

Timothy's story was provided by an NGO that collects and shares invaluable human rights information with my office. Timothy—a fourteen year old boy in Uganda—was one of the many child soldiers in his country. He remembers his first time on the front line. Timothy recalls, "The other side started firing, and the commander ordered us to run through the bullets. I panicked. I saw others falling down dead around me. The commanders were beating us for not running, for trying to crouch down. They said if we fall down, we would be shot and killed by the soldiers."

Between 32,000 and 52,000 children known as "night commuters" travel from conflict areas in Uganda, or from internally displaced persons camps each night to urban centers to avoid abduction by the Lord's Resistance Army. In March 2004, the U.N. estimated that nearly 18,800 children commute nightly into Gulu town, 11,000 into Kitgum, and 11,000 into a Kalongo Hospital in Pader District. Last year, the government cooperated with NGOs to establish shelters for such children in tented dormitories and other semi-permanent structures. However, children also sleep under balconies or on the grounds of schools, churches, and hospitals. Conditions range from harsh to adequate. Many credible reports also confirm that many displaced girls are involved in prostitution.

Sadly, our *Country Reports* describe similar situations elsewhere in the world. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, between 25,000 and 50,000 child refugees, war orphans, and other children, widely perceived to be street thugs, are accused of witchcraft or sorcery. They live on the streets throughout the country, and engage in petty crime, begging, and/or prostitution. These circumstances are not rare, and are closer to those described in our country reports of children in Luanda, Angola where approximately 1,500 street children shine shoes, wash cars, carry water, beg, prostitute, and often resort to petty crime to survive.

Our third story, comes from a new member of my office with me today. He traveled to Peru in 2003 specifically to work with street children as young as four. In addition to encountering stark police and public brutality towards street children, he was struck by the contrast he observed between some Peruvian perceptions of these children and his direct experiences working with them. Street children are commonly referred to as "piranhas" and, if they are detained by the police, are often labeled as such with a small fish tattooed on their hand, just above their thumb. Contrary to fears that street children are dangerous and inhuman, as the tattoos might suggest, Jacob found the only striking difference between the street children and others was the lack of family support for them. Instead, these children turned to each other or to others on the streets for this support. Parentless, and surrounded by oppressors, poverty, and crime, these children need tools and support to lead a productive life.

In Peru, largely because of widespread poverty, approximately one-third of all school-age children and adolescents work rather than attend school. Children living in poverty average only 7.8 years of education, and about half of those who go to primary school complete high school. Approximately 25 percent of children under age 5 are malnourished, and violence against children, trafficking of children, and informal child labor also remain serious problems.

The government of Peru, however, has shown commitment to children's well-being. The government provides free, compulsory education through secondary school, new laws more closely define trafficking in persons, criminalize Internet child pornography and sexual tourism involving children, and provide punishments for those who derive financial benefit from these activities. Penalties for pimps and clients of underage prostitutes range from 4 to 8 years in prison. In March, the Government formed a permanent, ministerial-level Multi-Sectoral Committee (MSC) to work on the issue of trafficking in persons. The Committee is chaired by the Ministry of the Interior and includes representatives from 10 government ministries and agencies, 3 international organizations, and 5 national organizations.

The situation is only bleaker in countries where governments do not put time or energy into programs for street children, or even worse, where governments contribute to the lifestyles that deny these children of dignity, and their basic right to live a healthy life. The situations are worse in the Democratic Republic of the Congo where police and street children collude, where street children pay police officers for the right to sleep in abandoned buildings, and sometimes pay a percentage of goods stolen in large markets, as violence against street children is on the rise.

While it saddens me to report that this is the state of the world, we would like to thank the committee for holding this hearing today to call attention to the plight of street children across the globe. I am sure Mr. Fienberg will provide a clear picture of what assistance our government is providing to help address these problems through the Displaced Children and Orphan's Fund at USAID. Once again, we look forward to working with the Committee to elevate these important issues.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Denehy, thank you very much for your statement and for the fine work you do on behalf of the street children. It is very much appreciated.

Mr. Feinberg.

STATEMENT OF MR. LLOYD FEINBERG, MANAGER, DISPLACED CHILDREN AND ORPHANS FUND, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. FEINBERG. Thank you, Mr. Denehy.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, I am honored to be able to sit before you again. You may recall that on June 23, Dr. Danuta Lockett and I had the privilege to exchange views with the Subcommittee on the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) programs for victims of torture.

In this instance, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to share with you information on what USAID is doing to prevent the exploitation as well as to protect vulnerable children, and specifically those children who do not enjoy the care and protection of a family or family-like environment. I look forward to also hearing from the presentations of our very distinguished experts and guests on the other two panels.

I would like to suggest at the start, however, that while many of our activities are USAID activities addressing the issues of so-called "street children," I believe it is important to ensure that we not allow ourselves to pigeonhole or stovepipe any children into categories which might unintentionally serve to undermine the development or funding of appropriate and effective programs that are designed to address the needs of vulnerable children.

For example, most of the activities that the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund supports involve children who could be included under a number of descriptors: Children who are separated from their families as a result of conflict, such as in northern Uganda; others who have served as child soldiers or as slaves to combatants; others are orphaned or otherwise affected by HIV/AIDS; and an unconscionable number of children worldwide suffer labor, sexual or other forms of inhumane exploitation, including trafficking.

I would just like to say that one of the most heinous and objectionable phenomena that I have encountered and which USAID is trying to address is the widening practice in Angola and in the two Congos of the practice whereby children are accused of being witches and then are subject to cruel exorcisms that are tantamount to torture.

At the present time, the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, which I manage, provides financial as well as technical support in over 19 countries. We have programmed more than \$160 million since the Fund's inception in 1989, and in fiscal year 2005, we have obligated approximately \$14 million to a variety of programs around the world, many of which do address the issue of street children. In 15 of these countries, we do support street children's programs.

Besides the significant programs that support street children, accused witches, and other vulnerable children that I alluded to earlier in the two Congos and in Angola, we also support significant NGO activities that help street children in such countries as Af-

ghanistan, Azerbaijan, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Georgia, Liberia, Indonesia, Northern Uganda, Ukraine, Sri Lanka and Zambia.

With respect to the activities of some of the other presenters today, I would like to mention that in Brazil, for example, we have recently completed a 10-year Displaced Children and Orphans Fund investment in a major street children's program in the northeast under a program that was called POMMAR in the impoverished northeast area. That program is now being followed up with a highly innovative program that seeks to strengthen youth employability, which is called the Youth Employability Strengthening Program, again, in the northeast of Brazil.

The program in northern Uganda that I alluded to is primarily focused on children who had been abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army and those children who are now living in severe condition in camps, which Mr. Denehy had described, and especially the children who are the night commuters who are having to seek shelter every night from additional abduction.

In the mid- to late-1990s, the Displaced Children's Fund also supported two excellent and innovative street children's programs, one in the Philippines and the other in Thailand. In each of those countries where we have programs, USAID tries to ensure that our support and activities have the greatest potential impact on the greatest number of children. We believe that from the perspective of an international public donor agency, we need to strike a healthy balance in order to avoid supporting programs that may have a great impact for a relatively small number of children as opposed to programs that may have little or no impact, but might purport to reach tens of thousands of children. We have to reach that healthy balance and identify an appropriate role for an agency such as the U.S. Government's Agency for International Development.

In directing our funds, therefore, we try to support activities that do the following: First, we try to ensure that every child has access to a caring and responsible adult who ideally can provide that child with unconditional love and understanding. We try to prioritize our interventions that we fund in terms of the age of the children, the length of time children might be on the street and, most of all, how do we prevent family dissolution that results in street children. We try to strengthen human and institutional capacity of indigenous child care and protection organizations, both government agencies as well as non-government agencies. We support responsible monitoring and evaluation of activities to ensure that our funded grantees employ meaningful outcomes and, wherever possible, measurable impact indicators on the well-being of children.

We try not to get too hung up on quantitative indicators, which, of course, are important. In determining the well-being of children we have to look at quality.

We support collection and sharing of information of successful as well as unsuccessful interventions with a view toward strengthening the state-of-the-art and the identification of good and replicable approaches and models. And we support the strengthening of national standards and the appropriate roles of government which encourage the involvement of civil society, including NGOs, faith-based organizations, and professional and business

communities to incorporate and engage them in child care and protection. Finally, we support and advocate for appropriate host country legal reform in this area.

I am pleased to be able to provide you with an excerpt of the 2004–2005 Displaced Children and Orphans Fund, which I think each of you have been provided. There are additional copies of the overview and the introduction on the press table over there. I would also like to bring to your attention the USAID March 2005 report on our activities of trafficking in persons which is also on the table.

[The information referred to follows:]



DISPLACED CHILDREN & ORPHANS FUND Selected Vulnerable Children Programs

The Displaced Children & Orphans Fund dedicates resources to the needs of children living and working on the streets, the diverse factors that lead them to a life on the streets, and ways to foster their educational, social, and civic re-integration.



Children participate in Zambia's Africa KidsSAFE Alliance for Street Children Program

U. S. Agency for International Development
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A growing HIV/AIDS epidemic, the December 26, 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami—some events draw world attention and generate a global response. Others go largely unnoticed by the general public and major donor organizations. When countries face longstanding conflict, economic collapse, or the marginalization of segments of society, it is the most vulnerable populations that typically bear the brunt of the devastation.

Since its inception in 1989, the U.S. Agency for International Development's Displaced Children's and Orphan's Fund (DCOF) has been working to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities in areas both in and out of the world's spotlight. The Fund has provided more than \$22 million to support projects in approximately 35 countries from Azerbaijan to Zambia.

DCOF emphasizes projects that are community-based—developed in close collaboration with local organizations, coalitions, and community members—and target the specific needs and strengths of the regions and populations they serve. Programs must be child-focused and demonstrate measurable improvements in the social, psychological, educational, and economic well-being of beneficiaries, as well as progress in capacity building and institutional strengthening. Projects focus on:

- re-integrating children into families or family-like situations and ensuring community inclusion
- strengthening systems of support, including networks of social services, community resources, and policies
- economic strengthening for families, adolescents, and communities

In 2004, DCOF projects operated in roughly 19 countries, addressing such diverse issues as the demobilization and social re-integration of child soldiers, countering child trafficking, addressing family and community dissolution, and encouraging innovative micro-finance programs for adults and young people alike.

THE DCOF APPROACH

DCOF programs focus on building capacities to meet the needs of vulnerable children. In addition to identifying and providing resources, DCOF supports efforts that reinforce children's own coping strategies and address family and community structures and systems for caring for children in the midst of conflict, crisis, or economic stress.

DCOF projects are guided by core principles. Each program is:

Community-based. DCOF believes that families and communities are best positioned to address the needs of vulnerable children, and that the involvement of the communities served is key to program sustainability. DCOF projects are increasingly designed to identify and support communities that demonstrate intent and commitment to protect and care for their most vulnerable children. Effort is made to enable community members to identify their priority concerns and assist in the design and execution of responses.

Community-focused work can have surprising results. When an Indonesian family discovered that sending their children to beg proved a good way to make money, others in their village began imitating this approach. The DCOF-sponsored project, Urban Street Children Empowerment and Support Program, discovered that raising the "lead" family's awareness of dangers and other options was effective in convincing others in the village to protect their children—that context helped define a strategy of targeted, direct community intervention.

Culturally grounded. DCOF continues to acknowledge that there are different driving forces that push children from the care and protection of families and into lives on the street and other dangerous situations. In Angola, for example, vulnerable children are too often made the target of all society's anxiety. Families experiencing hardship are often told by religious leaders that their children are conducting witchcraft—particularly in the case of blended families. This has led to the

expulsion of numerous children from homes and communities. With DCOF funding, the Christian Children's Fund is working with parents and families to help them see "with new eyes" that children are not to blame.

Results-Oriented. DCOF and the organizations that it supports must demonstrate the effectiveness and impact of interventions to support vulnerable children—the best methods include both process and impact indicators to monitor and measure outcomes and impacts of interventions.

Comprehensive. Children's safety and well-being depend largely on several influences that cannot be ignored—among them: family, community, social service systems, schools, religious groups, and the actions of government/rebel groups. DCOF supports projects that address these factors and bolster children's physical, social, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Furthermore, poverty permeates all the areas in which DCOF works, further endangering families and children. Addressing physical needs—health, nutrition, shelter, sanitation—is a component of most projects. Scarce resources can aggravate instability in communities, resulting in far-reaching effects on families' physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Collaborative. Collaboration with and among other organizations is critical to ensuring a holistic, integrated, and comprehensive approach. DCOF recognizes and encourages existing collaboration in project sites, and works to further partnerships and knowledge-sharing among organizations, agencies, and others. Networks are most useful to organizations that have reached a stage in their work where they can benefit from collaboration—DCOF provides networking opportunities to reward programs that have achieved results and to provide incentives to others to do so.

PROGRAMMATIC DEVELOPMENTS IN 2004

A Wider Geographical Reach

In 2005, DCOF expanded its geographical focus to include projects in Azerbaijan and the Republic of Georgia, where economic and social crises have left hundreds of thousands of youth facing life on the streets or in institutions. In many areas, Soviet-era social policies remain in place, and public and community services are limited, and often inadequate to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families.

In these countries, institutionalization is a common intervention for children from displaced, poor, or otherwise vulnerable families. These children face social stigmatization, isolation, and significant delays in their cognitive, social, and emotional development. When they leave the institutions, they are largely unprepared for adulthood. Research on similar institutions and structures in Russia has shown that as many as one in three children who leave residential care will become homeless, 20 percent will be arrested for criminal activity, and as many as one in ten will commit suicide.

As a matter of practice and philosophy, DCOF does not support institutional care for displaced, separated, or orphaned children. Instead, the Fund advocates and supports family and community-based care for all children. DCOF acknowledges that there is a place for orphanages in social service systems; it's just that it has seen them misused and overused and DCOF's particular mission is to work on family and community responses, rather than institutional responses.

To strengthen the social and economic support systems for vulnerable and marginalized Azeri and Georgian children, groups are working with the local government in the creation of Children and Family Development Centers. At these Centers, professional and community volunteers will interact with children and community members to support community-based alternatives to institutionalization.

Assistance to Children Living and Working on the Streets

Much of DCOF's work to date has been with children orphaned and otherwise affected by rising rates of HIV/AIDS. In fact, the Fund was one of the first agencies of the U.S. government to respond to this issue in the developing world when it sent a commission to Uganda in 1991.

Global attention and a recent influx of money and technical support targeting this important issue give DCOF an opportunity to reduce its program focus in this area and reach a broader population of vulnerable children. While the Fund will continue to play a major role in the response to HIV/AIDS and share its considerable expertise—for example, through such collaborative efforts as the landmark Children on the Brink guideline series, originally published by USAID in 1997 and updated in 2002 and 2004—DCOF will dedicate more resources to the needs of children living and working on the streets, the diverse factors that lead them to a life on the streets, and ways to foster their educational, social, and civic re-integration.

Response to Changing Environments

Regional and cultural developments in 2004 required adjustments in DCOF's approach. The 2004 tsunami devastated families and communities areas of Indonesia where DCOF operates, and separated children from caregivers—but it also yielded an unanticipated impact. In the months following the disaster, trafficking of children was essentially halted as the region entered the global spotlight and humanitarian efforts sought to identify, photograph, and reunite unaccompanied Acehnese children with legitimate caretakers.

The transition from a state of emergency to a post-disaster area, however, will likely leave children and young people even more vulnerable to trafficking. To counter this, DCOF

programs in Medan, Binjai, and Langkat are working to raise awareness of the existence of separated children of tsunami survivors and equipping communities to document and monitor these children and their placement with families.

In other DCOF project areas—including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, and Sri Lanka—the long-raging civil conflicts have calmed somewhat; there is no longer a state of crisis and humanitarian emergency. Although there are obvious positive implications for vulnerable children and families, such changes often mean a decrease in international aid and attention, leaving gaps in resources and support for interventions. Children continue to require special attention during these transitions.

Programs in Liberia and Sierra Leone continue to focus on demobilizing the child soldiers conscripted during the years of conflict. The work has successfully reunited with relatives 99 and 98 percent, respectively, of the countries' thousands of demobilized children. Sustainable community supports—including child welfare committees, peer educators, and opportunities for education and skills training—are being established to meet the needs of children and families in areas recovering from years of conflict and forced separation.

CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

Priorities for 2006 and beyond include increased resources and attention to influence mainstream social and economic strategies in recovering "failed and failing states," with the goal of placing children's and next generation-leadership development more in the forefront of strategic planning for these communities. In all areas of commitment, DCOF emphasizes assessing and strengthening the effectiveness of its efforts, services, and delivery systems.

Youth involvement

DCOF promotes a positive intervention model that views children not as “broken” social elements, but as resilient members of the community who, with the right supports and opportunities, can succeed and give back, shaping the future of neighborhoods and countries as a whole. Their involvement is also critical in helping families break the cycle of violence and poverty and mitigating the growth and impact of religious, ethnic, and/or nationalistic conflict among future generations.

Some DCOF programs incorporate youth directly. In Afghanistan, the NGO Consortium for the Psychosocial Care and Protection of Children Consortium kicked off the project with community meetings where more than 3,700 children and youth identified real or potential threats to their own well-being. More than 300 youth and children’s groups now manage ongoing community activities—including literacy courses, nonformal education, skills training, health education, and sports. In Liberia, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) established 11 peer education groups to serve as role models for fellow youth.

Still, more work is needed to understand the best methods of youth involvement. Future DCOF projects should aim to create further opportunities for young people to identify their own needs and priorities, and the roles they themselves can play in their protection, care, and social and educational reconnection. In some cases, it will be necessary to confront cultural biases (both Western and regional) that view unaccompanied youth as victims or problems.

Reaching Girls

In several countries, efforts to reach all unaccompanied and highly vulnerable children may be more successfully assisting boys.

In Sierra Leone, for example, the demobilization of child soldiers has gone well for those who were able to benefit from

these efforts—but only 8 percent of the demobilized children were female, despite the large numbers of girls known to have been abducted and conscripted. With DCOF's support, UNICEF and the International Rescue Committee are working to identify and assist these girls left behind.

Focusing on Prevention

In the future, programs will work to identify critical points in children's developmental cycle where modest levels of intervention with parents and other child care providers—from teachers to sports coaches to medical personal and institutional care providers—might have the greatest potential for affecting positive behavioral and attitudinal change.

DCOF remains committed to its core principles and fundamental goals of strengthening the capacity of families and communities to provide the necessary care, protection, and support for orphans and other vulnerable children. Its work in the coming years will be guided by this objective.

Afghanistan

Assistance for Afghanistan's Most Vulnerable Children

Implementing Partners: NGO Consortium for the Care and Protection of Children (Christian Children's Fund, International Rescue Committee, and Save the Children Federation)

Funding Period: 4/03 – 9/07

Amount: \$6,209,331

Purpose: Reduce the physical, social, and emotional threat to war-affected children and families in rural and urban environments in north, west, and central Afghanistan.

Project Highlights:

- Supported literacy courses for 20,000 children and youth.
- Provided 4,900 children with access to nonformal education.
- Provided 260 youth with vocational training.
- Trained 600 teachers in children's rights, listening skills, health training, and nonviolent conflict resolution.
- Trained 800 parents and community leaders and 90 police officers in children's rights, child protection, and child-friendly upbringing.
- Provided 16,000 children and youth with recreation and training in health practices.

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Millions of Afghan children suffer the consequences of war, displacement, the loss of homes and loved ones, injury from landmines, and severe hunger in the wake of the worst drought in recent history. Children in post-Taliban Afghanistan require drastic improvements in their basic living conditions and emotional support to build productive, balanced lives under enormously difficult circumstances.

In February 2003, USAID's Displaced Children and Orphans Fund awarded a \$2 million grant to the NGO Consortium for the Psychosocial Care and Protection of Children to assist particularly vulnerable Afghan children, including orphans, disabled children, working children, and former child soldiers. The project works with local communities and government ministries in three regions (SC/US in the central region, IRC in the southern region, and CCF/CFA in the northeast) to identify threats to the physical, psychological, and social well-being of children; identify and assist particularly vulnerable children; and advocate for government action on child protection issues.

The Project's approach is to enable communities to improve the safety and well-being of their most vulnerable children and to rapidly increase children's access to education and training. At the outset, the Consortium hosted community meetings where more than 3,700 children and youth identified real or potential threats. Based on the findings from these meetings, the consortium funded 300 community-based children's and youth groups to serve as the focal point for ongoing child protection activity in the target communities. Through these groups, more than 68,000 children and youth—many of them girls and young women—have benefited from literacy courses, nonformal education, recreational activities, health education, and skills training. The groups have also trained teachers and police to ensure better services for children.

Community-based groups also identified and assisted especially vulnerable children and families. In the northeast

Afghanistan (continued)

and mobilized community cleaning campaigns.

- *Engaged 1,000 youth in community civic works projects (roads, bridges, drainage, wells).*
- *Established home-based schools in 10 western communities.*
- *Implemented Mobile & Community Libraries, Growing Green Spaces, Child Friendly Spaces, children's rights education, and recreational activities in 20 communities.*
- *Constructed a school for children at the Herat Blind Association.*
- *Trained trainers in income-generation opportunities for illiterate and semi-literate women.*
- *Built two playgrounds in Kabul, giving 10,300 children safe play opportunities; one playground was built in District 12 by the Kabul municipality as a direct result of child lobbying.*
- *Dug or improved 32 wells to provide safe water for at least 28,500 children in Kabul and Shamali target areas, and dug one well to benefit 8,000 students at Char Qala High School; children reported that better access to water reduced fighting among them.*
- *Increased access to public transportation for 4,000 students.*
- *The Ministry of Education supplied 60 tents with flooring to serve as classrooms in District 12, in direct response to children's advocacy about the difficulties of studying and learning outside with no protection from the weather.*

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region of the country, Child Well-Being Committees now offer disabled children a chance to participate in formal education and community recreation activities. The Project also works with local community and government officials and other NGOs to mobilize responses to threats to children's lives and safety. It has developed a database of agencies serving extremely vulnerable children and families that has already proven useful in emergency situations requiring rapid response.

In addition, the project has provided vocational and micro-enterprise training to help former child soldiers, widows, and female-headed households to better support themselves. More than 900 particularly vulnerable women and 70 men have participated or are participating in training—many have started small enterprises, ranging from animal husbandry and yogurt making to carpet weaving and tailoring.

Each partner is the focal point for the Afghanistan Child Protection Network in its region. They host monthly meetings with other NGOs and government to tackle a range of issues related to child protection—including child trafficking, road safety, early and forced marriage, and juvenile justice.

In August 2004, USAID signed a three-year agreement with the Consortium to continue this project's support to communities in delivering and managing their own services and advocating locally and nationally for their children's needs and safety.



Trafficking in Persons: USAID's Response



March 2005

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Trafficking in Persons: USAID's Response

March 2005

“It takes a special kind of depravity to exploit and hurt the most vulnerable members of society. Human traffickers rob children of their innocence, they expose them to the worst of life before they have seen much of life. Traffickers tear families apart. They treat their victims as nothing more than goods and commodities for sale to the highest bidder.”

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH, JULY 2004

Introduction

TRAFFICKING: THE 21ST CENTURY SLAVE TRADE Trafficking in persons is driven by the persistent global demand for cheap labor, often in hazardous conditions, and for commercial sexual exploitation. Due to their relatively low social and economic status, women and children constitute the majority of trafficking victims, perhaps as many as 80 percent.¹ Men are also preyed upon or duped by traffickers in large numbers and forced to work in exploitative and dangerous conditions. The U.S. Department of State estimates that between 600,000 and 800,000 women, children, and men are trafficked between countries each year, plus millions more within national boundaries.² And the numbers are growing.

Most often, women and children are trafficked into prostitution or the pornography business, although they are also forced into domestic servitude, indentured labor, unwanted marriages, and begging. Men and boys are preyed upon through deception or force for exploitative and hazardous manual labor, including mining and on agricultural plantations. At times, entire families may be held in debt bondage. During conflicts, especially where rebel forces or militias are active, women and children are forced to serve the armed units either as sex slaves, cooks, combatants, bodyguards, or porters.

As with drug and arms trafficking, trade in human beings flourishes in societies in conflict and those with porous borders, high levels of corruption, and a weak rule of law. Where violence against women and female exploitation is considered acceptable, abuse by traffickers, pimps, neighbors, and, tragically, those charged with protecting potential victims is even more prevalent. Extreme poverty, political instability, bleak economic opportunities, inadequate education, and lack of protection under the laws and customs of society all create conditions conducive to trafficking. When natural disasters strike, destruction of

1. “President Announces Initiatives to Combat Human Trafficking,” Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel, Tampa, Florida, July 16, 2004, http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/07/20040716_11.html

2. Trafficking in Persons Report, the U.S. Department of State, June 2004.

the social order and safety nets for the most vulnerable also produce fertile ground for predators.

Capitalizing on corruption, poverty, and desperation, traffickers include organized crime, individual dealers, and even unscrupulous officials, who take advantage of the international appetite for cheap labor and sex by preying on vulnerable groups. In almost all countries, some degree of trafficking occurs, with poorer nations serving as sources of victims, others as transit centers, and wealthier countries as destination sites.

Human trafficking is the slave trade of the 21st century. It violates the fundamental human rights of its victims, who are tricked into accepting bogus jobs, captured or kidnapped, bought and sold, and forced into servitude. It weakens family and social structures, undermines government authority and the rule of law, and destroys the lives of millions while supporting and perpetuating international crime syndicates. According to the United Nations, profits from trafficking provide organized crime with its third largest source of revenue, after narcotics and weapons.³

Awareness of this egregious human rights abuse has grown in recent years, as have efforts to understand, untangle, and combat its complex and clandestine web of operations. Formal and informal networks of anti-trafficking activists—civil society leaders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), faith-based groups, governments, international organizations, and donor agencies—are emerging and joining forces to eliminate the causes, protect the victims, and prosecute the perpetrators of trafficking.

“Every nation that fights human trafficking has a friend in the United States.”

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH, JULY 2004



³ Ibid.

The U.S. Government was an early leader in the fight against trafficking and remains committed to continuing its support for anti-trafficking initiatives both at home and overseas. In 2003, the United States strengthened and expanded the provisions of its landmark Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000 through the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA). Over the last four years, the Government has provided nearly \$300 million to support anti-trafficking programs in more than 120 countries and is helping other governments develop laws to combat abuse, create special law enforcement units to investigate trafficking cases and rescue victims, build emergency shelters, and develop long-term rehabilitation and vocational training programs.⁴ In his address to world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2003, President Bush pledged \$50 million in additional funding to support organizations that rescue women and children from bondage and give them shelter and medical treatment. Eight countries—Brazil, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Moldova, Sierra Leone and Tanzania—were selected to receive this assistance.

THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: COMBATING TRAFFICKING STRATEGICALLY

“Human trafficking is a development issue. We cannot separate the development process in a country from the trafficking issue.”

ADMINISTRATOR ANDREW NATSIOS

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) plays a leading role in America's fight against trafficking. Despite the extraordinary complexity of the business, the Agency is making progress in helping developing and transition countries identify trafficking patterns, outmaneuver traffickers, and prevent incidents of trafficking while supporting victims and capturing and punishing predators.

In Asia and the Near East, for example, USAID has developed a region-wide anti-trafficking framework as well as a mapping project in the Mekong area that will inform all U.S. Government agencies working there of trafficking patterns and trade routes. Similarly, in Latin America, USAID and the U.S. Department of State are supporting the Peruvian Government's efforts to improve methods of collecting data and tracking trafficking cases. When asked for assistance, USAID responds quickly to countries just beginning to address trafficking. In 2004, Ecuador requested and received support to strengthen municipal policies and trafficking legislation, and the Ministry of Labor, Human Services and Social Security in Guyana sought aid to launch a public awareness campaign, which USAID supported.

4. “President Announces Initiatives to Combat Human Trafficking,” Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel, Tampa, Florida, July 16, 2004, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/07/20040716-1.html>

USAID's current anti-trafficking programs are larger, more strategic, more comprehensive, and of longer duration than in previous years. The Agency is acquiring keener insights into the complex trafficking web and developing the expertise to devise increasingly sophisticated, strategic, and successful responses.

Drawing on experience and improved information flows, for example, USAID designs and supports activities today that are carefully tailored to particular countries or regions as well as finely tuned to attack specific dimensions of the trafficking problem. In Bangladesh, USAID builds on nearly a decade of anti-trafficking work by supporting civil society coalitions and human rights organizations to conduct prevention and awareness campaigns throughout the country. With a USAID grant, a local NGO is training a group of *imams*—local religious leaders—to help spread the word that traffickers are operating in their country. After their training, the *imams* themselves conduct community-level training, leading to the formation of watchdog groups comprised of local opinion leaders, officials, and law enforcement agents. The project encourages the groups to develop strategies and tools to prevent trafficking while fostering exchanges between *imams* and community groups to share good practices and lessons learned in the fight against trafficking.

In the Ukraine, a long-term USAID anti-trafficking effort now supports a country-wide network of faith-based, educational, and non-governmental organizations to increase awareness among government and community leaders, social service providers, and the general public. This ongoing campaign also targets high risk groups, alerting them to the dangers of trafficking, arming them with information on how traffickers operate, and motivating them to protect themselves from traffickers.

USAID's activities work in concert, employing complementary approaches and targeting multiple aspects of the trafficking phenomenon simultaneously. In Albania, for example, three separate yet reinforcing programs are underway, all aimed at different dimensions of trafficking. A grants program helps strengthen and coordinate efforts by community leaders, NGOs, and the government to prevent trafficking and reintegrate victims into their communities. USAID's Office of Women in Development supports a program that targets trafficking-related legal issues, including training for judges. At the same time, another program for children trafficked from Albania to Greece and Italy includes activities geared to prevention, protection, assisted return, and the reintegration of victims.

To support the increasing need to combat trafficking in persons, USAID's budget for these efforts has increased significantly in the last four years. Funding for USAID anti-trafficking programs totaled over \$27 million in fiscal year 2004, including \$16.7 million from the

FISCAL YEAR	GLOBAL ANTI-HUMAN TRAFFICKING ASSISTANCE
2001	\$6,744 million
2002	\$10,715 million
2003	\$15,419 million
2004	\$27,591 million

USAID budget and \$10.9 million from a Presidential Initiative to Combat Human Trafficking. This included \$10.8 million in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, \$10.6 million in Asia, \$3.5 million in Africa, and \$1.3 million in Latin America and the Caribbean, with an additional \$1.4 million from the Office of Women in Development for global efforts.



USAID's Regional Anti-Trafficking Activities

AFRICA

In Africa, internal conflicts have provided fertile ground for the trafficking of child soldiers and women forced to serve as combatants or to provide sexual services for troops. Young women are also trafficked into prostitution and domestic servitude, both within the region and externally to Europe and the Middle East, and children are trafficked into forced labor in agriculture, fishing, mining, domestic service, and prostitution. The traditional practice of “fostering,” in which poor, rural families place their children with more prosperous family members or friends to receive an education or vocational training, is sometimes corrupted by traffickers who instead put the children into situations of sexual exploitation, forced domestic servitude, begging, or street vending.

USAID's response focuses on programs aimed at raising public awareness of the dangers of trafficking, especially for children and young women. In addition, activities provide psycho-social support, medical assistance, skills training, and improved job opportunities for trafficking victims, especially child soldiers and women affiliated with the fighting forces.

WEST AFRICA: USAID REGIONAL RESPONSES

Armed conflicts have repeatedly ravaged the Mano River Union area of West Africa, where women and girls have suffered as victims of violence and torture, including sexual violence and trafficking. With funding from the Presidential Initiative, USAID is supporting activities to raise public awareness about the nature and extent of this violence and to give traumatized victims access to quality mental health care to help them recover.

A coordinated counter-trafficking approach in West Africa will require a multi-sectoral and multi-agency response. USAID is working with its partners to address the root causes of trafficking, including poverty, lack of education, and gender inequality. USAID is also supporting programs to provide psychosocial support and medical assistance to trafficking victims, and to improve their economic situation through skills training and job opportunities. USAID is also working to raise public awareness about the dangers of trafficking, and to provide legal support to victims. USAID is committed to a comprehensive and coordinated approach to counter-trafficking in West Africa, and is working closely with its partners to achieve this goal.

A multi-dimensional program, implemented by the International Rescue Committee, the Center for Victims of Torture, and Search for Common Ground, will provide sustainable psycho-social care for Sierra Leoneans and Liberians suffering from war-related trauma and trafficking abuse. The program is designed to increase community awareness of the critical need for these mental health services and to motivate rescued victims to seek help. Through media and cultural activities promoting dialogue and information sharing among people in the border region, the program is also taking crucial first steps to begin building a culture of peace.

With funds from the Office of Women in Development, the USAID's West Africa Regional Mission Program is supporting a two-pronged effort to reduce trafficking in the 15 member states of the Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS). The program includes an awareness-raising component targeting civil society organizations with messages about the ramifications of trafficking as well as information about existing trafficking reduction and victim assistance programs. The goal of this component is to alert the general public to the risks of dubious job offers and the dangers of falling prey to criminal trafficking networks. Through a complementary component, USAID is supporting training for judges and magistrates to increase their knowledge of trafficking issues and inform them of available legal instruments for prosecuting traffickers and protecting victims' rights.

BENIN: INCREASED JOB SKILLS AND BETTER INFORMATION

The USAID Mission in Benin is expanding its earlier collaboration with the Ministry of Family and Children, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the growing national and local NGO community to prevent trafficking of children and young women. The objective is to increase jobs and options for poor and vulnerable populations to earn a living by providing flexible education, training, and marketable skill building opportunities. At the same time, USAID supports the production and airing of radio programs for both rural and urban audiences to increase public awareness of the dangers of accepting employment offers that can lead to exploitative and slave labor. The programs, which describe the types of offers that should be viewed with suspicion, also convey the message that jobs sounding too good to be true most likely are.

NIGERIA: MORE UNDERSTANDING AND BETTER TREATMENT FOR VICTIMS

The USAID Mission in Nigeria supports multi-faceted anti-trafficking activities implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Nigerian organizations and agencies. To combat an apparent public tolerance for trafficking, USAID launched an aggressive public education and sensitization campaign in regions known to be sources for trafficked victims. The campaign is designed to reveal the explicit risks and realities of trafficking to

communities where individuals are lured, duped, purchased, kidnapped, or captured. Yet another dimension of USAID's anti-trafficking program in Nigeria provides vulnerable women and children and returning victims a full range of support services, including shelter and access to medical and legal help, counseling, vocational training, and business development assistance.

UGANDA: A NEW START FOR CHILD SOLDIERS AND OTHER VICTIMS OF CONFLICT

One of the many unfortunate consequences of the prolonged civil conflict in Northern and Eastern Uganda is the high incidence of child abductions from homes, schools, and camps for internally displaced persons. Once abducted, both boys and girls are trafficked into the rebel force—the “Lord’s Resistance Army”—and coerced into serving as child soldiers, bodyguards, porters, or war “wives,” i.e., sex slaves. To combat this phenomenon, the USAID Mission in Uganda supports efforts to protect vulnerable children, who, in a desperate attempt to evade capture by rebel forces, must sneak out of their villages at night to sleep in the relative safety of nearby towns. For children who have been trafficked and rescued, the program also supports a variety of rehabilitation services.

ASIA AND THE NEAR EAST

Countries in South and Southeast Asia serve as source, transit, and destination venues for human trafficking. Trafficking of children and women for sexual exploitation, including prostitution and child pornography, is exacerbated by the infamous sex tourism industry in the region. Women are also trafficked into involuntary domestic servitude within the region and to external destinations in the Middle East and Europe. Men, women, and children are forced into situations of coerced, slave-like labor both within the region and in the Middle East. “Debt bondage”—an ancient practice in which loans or advances are repaid through the labor of family members pledged to lenders—is a persistent problem, tantamount to enslavement,⁵ which often keeps entire families working for generations to repay “debts.”

COMBATING TRAFFICKING IN SOURCE, TRANSIT, AND DESTINATION COUNTRIES

USAID's anti-trafficking programs attempt to combat the multitude of factors that lead to the widespread and diverse trafficking problems in the region. Support for community vigilance

5. “A person enters debt bondage when [his/her] labour is demanded as a means of repayment of a loan, or of money given in advance. Usually people are tricked or trapped into working for no pay or very little pay (in return for such a loan), in conditions which violate their human rights. . . . Today debt bondage is expanding through a combination of mass migration from poverty and the global demand for sources of cheap, expendable domestic labour, and cheap sexual gratification. Bonded labourers are routinely threatened with (and subjected to) physical violence, and are kept under various forms of surveillance, in some cases by armed guards.” Development and Peace, and Anti-Slavery International, June 1999. <http://www.developmentandpeace.org/slavery/bondage.html>

or watch groups and anti-trafficking NGO networks helps to inform vulnerable groups about the risks of trafficking, provide safe migration information, share the most effective practices for fighting trafficking and rehabilitating victims, and pressure government officials to pass and implement anti-trafficking measures. Campaigns launched with the tourism industry combat the demand for sex tourism. Integrated rescue and humane shelter, counseling, and economic skills training help to reintegrate and prevent re-trafficking of former victims. Training for judges and other judicial officials, and provision of legal aid as well as protection for potential witnesses, serve to increase indictments and conviction of traffickers.

In addition to implementing activities funded with its own resources, USAID also manages programs funded by the U.S. Department of State.

South Asia Regional Initiative for
Emergency for Women and Children
Cooperation in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh
The USAID Mission in India conducts three separate but
complementary programs with Presidential Initiative fund-
ing. These programs are designed to protect trafficked vic-
tims and witnesses, reduce trafficking-related sex tourism in
Goa, and strengthen cross-border rescue and protection at
the India-Nepal and India-Bangladesh borders.
The Victim-Witness Protection Program, implemented by a
consortium of NGOs and local experts, provides protection,
support, rehabilitation, and reintegration services to rescued
victims who are willing to testify against their traffickers. The
program also fortifies the Indian legal system's determination
and ability to obtain convictions of both traffickers and sex
tourists. In addition to safe haven and effective after-care,
rescued victims may also need long-term assistance such as
vocational training and outplacement because legal proceed-
ings are lengthy in India. Continuing contact with rehabilitated
victims will help to ensure a high rate of court appearances
by the witnesses.
Save the Children India will provide shelter house manage-
ment, care and rehabilitation, plus coordination of legal

INDIA: VICTIM-WITNESS PROTECTION, SEX TOURISM REDUCTION, AND CROSS-BORDER RESCUE

The USAID Mission in India conducts three separate but complementary programs with Presidential Initiative fund-
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VICTIM-WITNESS PROTECTION The Victim-Witness
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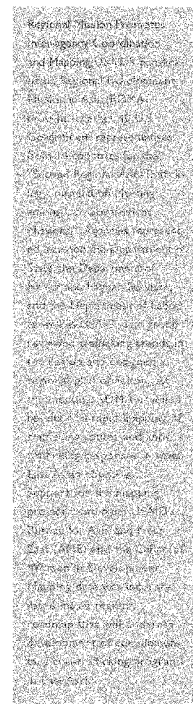
counseling and court appearances while Prerana, another local partner, will deliver counseling and manage a city-wide registry of rescued victims and services provided. The Nirmala Niketan College of Social Work will give psychosocial counseling, and a Lecturer in Law at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences will provide legal training for the judiciary, prosecutors, lawyers and police. To ensure maximum effectiveness, activities will be closely coordinated with a rescue program funded by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, with whom information will be exchanged on a regular basis.

SEX TOURISM Over the past several years, the tourism industry in India has grown rapidly, bringing increased and diversified economic opportunities for the Indian people. The growth of tourism has also brought increased demand from sex tourists, particularly in and around Goa, and a concomitant increase in trafficked victims there. Goa also is frequently used as a transit center for trafficking to the brothels of Mumbai. Preventing sex tourism and protecting victims in this area is essential.

The Goa Children's Protection Act of 2003 demonstrates an increasing political will to combat sex tourism, and the USAID Mission in India is working with local authorities to develop and implement strong programs to do so. Through its Combating Sex Tourism in Goa program, the USAID Mission in India addresses the demand for and incidence of sex tourism in that state by supporting increased advocacy, awareness, and rescue operations. Partnerships between anti-trafficking NGOs and key groups in the tourism industry will facilitate campaigns to educate tourists about how sex tourism fuels trafficking. Related programs will include building local media capacity to report on trafficking and sex tourism issues, anti-trafficking awareness-raising programs for school children, capacity building for anti-sex tourism NGOs, and establishment of help lines, community vigilance cells, shelters and rehabilitation programs. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) will implement the program in collaboration with local corporate, and NGO partners, working closely with the Government of Goa.

CROSS BORDER RESCUE The Cross-Border Rescue and Protection project prevents trafficking by enhancing border communities' and cross-border institutions' capacity and commitment to rescue trafficked girls before they reach their destinations. The project will strengthen and replicate earlier pilot programs, expanding them to two new sites on the Indo-Nepal border and on the Indo-Bangladesh border. In South Asia, effective trafficking prevention and rescues are carried out by "vigilance cells" composed of local anti-trafficking activists. These cells monitor border areas to intercept potential victims before they arrive at their destinations,

working with local law enforcement on both sides of the border, conducting community policing activities, implementing sensitization programs for a variety of stakeholders, and establishing networks to identify and arrest traffickers. Once rescued, victims need a safe haven and counseling for their emotional rehabilitation, which rescue operations provide by linking vigilance cells with transit homes where compassionate care is provided.



NEPAL: TASK FORCES FIGHT TRAFFICKING

The USAID Mission in Nepal provides technical assistance to Government Chartered Anti-Trafficking Task Forces to work at the national, district, municipal, and village levels, expanding support to new areas identified by the Government of Nepal as trafficking centers. The support will add value to the momentum of existing task forces, as well as to community groups of women and youth, enabling them to contribute more effectively to preventing trafficking. Communication mechanisms and links with Nepal's National Task Force will also be strengthened. In addition, more transport workers, students and teachers, adolescent groups, elected and potential women leaders, and task force members will participate in a trafficking orientation program so they can better identify suspected traffickers and victims and report or refer them to the proper authorities. Counseling booths will be established in target areas to provide information on safe migration, trafficking, and HIV/AIDS. In five districts, girls at risk of being trafficked and trafficking survivors are provided life skills and vocational training for effective rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

CAMBODIA: A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM IN A NATION BESET BY TRAFFICKING

Supplemented by Presidential Initiative funds, the USAID Mission in Cambodia supports a comprehensive anti-trafficking program targeting source, destination, and transit points in Cambodia.

PROTECTION, PREVENTION, AND PUNISHMENT USAID's program helps to reduce vulnerability and protect survivors as they reintegrate and build new lives. The program also provides access to legal aid so that victims can seek justice for themselves and provide evidence against traffickers. With USAID support, NGOs active in the fight against trafficking are building coalitions for coordinated action to hold their government accountable for enforcing anti-trafficking laws, ensuring victims' rights, and improving services for victims. Local NGOs servicing vulnerable and trafficked children also receive training and material support so they can respond more effectively to the psycho-social needs of trafficked victims.

Other prevention activities include:

- Forming community watch groups;
- Disseminating safe migration information;
- Providing shelters for young migrant girls and women passing through the bus and taxi stations in Phnom Penh; and
- Increasing economic opportunities for at-risk girls, as well as their families and communities, through training in marketable skills.

USAID plans to increase the quality and quantity of services for trafficking victims by providing more support for victims' shelters, legal aid, vocational training and scholarships for former victims, and improved job placement through networking. Work with the police will improve investigation techniques needed to strengthen anti-trafficking lawsuits and prosecutions.

RAISING AWARENESS In 18 provinces, USAID provides support to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to conduct multi-media information campaigns to raise awareness about safe migration and trafficking in women and children. The program also establishes a counter-trafficking database to collect and disseminate information.

RESCUING VICTIMS, AND PROSECUTING TRAFFICKERS Through a USAID-funded project implemented by the International Justice Mission (IJM), a training program focusing on investigative techniques is offered to the local police in the Anti-Trafficking Police Juvenile Protection Unit of the Ministry of Interior. Cooperating in individual cases, program personnel assist local officers in rescuing trafficked victims and referring them to NGO-managed shelters. The grant also encourages close collaboration with court personnel during the investigation and prosecution of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation cases.

REDUCING VULNERABILITY To reduce women's susceptibility to trafficking, USAID supports economic empowerment, literacy, and advocacy efforts. Activities conducted by Pact Cambodia include literacy training, development of savings-led village banking, income generation through micro-enterprises, and education and community outreach to at-risk women targeted by traffickers.

INDONESIA: IMPROVING GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING EFFORTS

Indonesian NGOs have been on the front lines in the fight against trafficking, providing services to victims and bringing pressure on the government to recognize and address the problem. Continued and increasingly effective collaboration within the NGO community, as well as with the government, is needed to combat trafficking in the country.

With funding from the Presidential Initiative, the USAID Mission in Indonesia is now supporting the Strengthening the Initiatives of Government and Others Against Human Trafficking project. The American Center for International Labor Solidarity (ACHS) and the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) are implementing the project as a follow-up to their earlier USAID-funded anti-trafficking program.

ENACTING AND ENFORCING LEGISLATION Building on earlier collaboration with the Ministry for Women's Empowerment to draft appropriate anti-trafficking legislation, USAID is now working with the Ministry to devise strategies for passing the legislation. USAID also is coordinating efforts with anti-trafficking NGOs involved in advocating with the national government and parliament for passage and implementation of the draft law. Local NGOs are encouraged to advocate as well for their district and city governments to pass related local laws and action plans, consistent with the National Anti-Trafficking Action Plan, and advocate with local police for enforcement of the laws.

In Indonesia, USAID has worked with The Asia Foundation to help local governments develop public policies to reduce trafficking vulnerability by responding to the needs and interests of women, the poor, and marginalized groups. Training and technical assistance, in partnership with civil society organizations and selected local governments, promotes women's participation in local government decision making and action in local parliaments and government departments to better serve poor, female, and marginalized constituents.

CARING FOR VICTIMS A second cluster of activities will strengthen efforts by Indonesian NGOs to collaborate with NGOs in neighboring countries to identify, repatriate, and reintegrate

Indonesian trafficking victims. To address immediate medical, psychological, and legal aid needs, Indonesian NGOs will operate small, local short-term shelters for returned victims.

REGIONAL COOPERATION USAID works with IOM to help four members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) improve their collection and analysis of trafficking data. Currently, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Cambodia lack the ability to accurately measure the extent of trafficking within and between their borders. With a new data collection protocol designed especially for the region, these countries will have access to an improved methodology for collecting, tracking, and analyzing trafficking information, thereby improving their ability to assess the extent of the problem, track the trade routes, and monitor the effectiveness of their anti-trafficking efforts.

LAOS: PROTECTING ECONOMIC MIGRANTS FROM TRAFFICKING

Laos' relatively low economic growth and scarcity of legitimate employment opportunities drive young people to become economic migrants, seeking a better life in Thailand or elsewhere, and many become exploited by traffickers in the process. USAID helps to prevent trafficking by supporting efforts to increase awareness of the risks potential migrants face from traffickers. The awareness raising program, implemented by Village Focus International, targets selected at-risk communities in southern Laos, using existing village-based schools and other networks to disseminate information and train local counterparts and key government officials about the dangers of trafficking. USAID's prevention program also includes efforts to increase economic opportunities for vulnerable groups. To improve the social and economic status of at-risk women, the NGO Service Fraternel d'Entraide works to increase women's income through micro-credit and training.

THE PHILIPPINES: STRENGTHENING ANTI-TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION AND ACTION

Advocacy efforts supported by the USAID Mission in the Philippines contributed to accelerated passage of a national law criminalizing trafficking in 2003. In support of the new law, several provinces identified as either senders or receivers of trafficked persons passed similar local regulations. Government agencies, NGOs, and businesses have also formed coalitions against trafficking, and more than a thousand victims have been rescued since 2002. Despite this progress, the government still needs support to strengthen implementation of the anti-trafficking law. With funding from the Office of Women in Development, the Mission is working to address this problem through enhanced anti-trafficking activities under an existing economic governance project. These activities are designed to promote effective enforcement of the anti-trafficking legislation and increase successful apprehension and prosecution of traffickers. The program targets government officials and police involved in handling trafficking cases and

delivering services to witnesses and victims, focusing on improving their ability to track complaints and cases, conduct investigations, gather evidence to document or build cases, prepare reports, and file cases.

THAILAND: ESTABLISHING PROTECTION AND PROSECUTION TEAMS TO FIGHT TRAFFICKING

Although Thailand has the necessary legal framework and systems to eliminate trafficking, professionals working in anti-trafficking capacities often lack sufficient knowledge of their roles and authorities. Without this basic level of understanding, it is difficult for individuals from a wide variety of organizations and agencies to establish the level of cooperation and information sharing needed to effectively fight trafficking.

USAID works with The Asia Foundation to establish multi-disciplinary protection and prosecution teams in major trafficking centers. Through the teams, all those involved in anti-trafficking efforts—social workers, prosecutors, lawyers, legal aid volunteers, investigative police, medical practitioners, and NGOs—are better able to coordinate the receipt of incident reports, provide comprehensive victim assistance through appropriate legal and welfare channels, and assist in the prosecution of traffickers.

To reduce trafficking, USAID also supported efforts by World Vision to provide safe repatriation for returnees and trafficking victims as well as to conduct a research project to track patterns of migration and trafficking on the Thai-Burma Border.

VIETNAM: EQUIPPING COMMUNITIES WITH ANTI-TRAFFICKING CAPACITY

The lack of domestic economic opportunities and the large number of economic migrants are leading factors contributing to human trafficking in Vietnam. USAID collaborates with The Asia Foundation on a program to equip communities with information and skills to combat trafficking. The program provides at-risk communities with education on safe migration and legal rights, supports micro-credit and micro-enterprise training, and establishes community monitoring groups. By fostering broader participation in drafting anti-trafficking laws, the program also strengthens the legal framework for victim protection. In addition, the program promotes cross-border collaboration on trafficking between Vietnam and Cambodia and Vietnam and China.

MONGOLIA: PROVIDING ANTI-TRAFFICKING SKILLS AND INFORMATION

Mongolia is known as a source country for teenage and adult women and may also be a transit as well as a destination country for trafficked persons. The Mongolian Government, local NGOs, and vulnerable populations all need more information to help them fight traf-

ficking effectively. USAID collaborates with The Asia Foundation to raise public awareness, increase the quantity and utilization of trafficking data, and help government partners draft anti-trafficking legislation.

EASTERN EUROPE AND EURASIA

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Europe and Eurasia region has been the fastest growing source region for human trafficking in the world, providing about 25% of all persons trafficked across borders annually. Actual numbers of victims are unknown, but estimates range from a minimum of 175,000 to 500,000 persons trafficked across borders annually,⁶ with many more trafficked within countries.⁷ All countries in the region are source and transit countries, and some are becoming destination sites.

Transitioning from communism to democracy has been characterized by a lack of rule of law and high expectations for a better life but low actual or perceived opportunities, combined with new freedoms, including the right to move across now open borders. All of this has fueled the trafficking trade.

Men are trafficked in Eurasia especially for exploitative labor, and women and minors primarily for sexual exploitation. Children are also trafficked into Western Europe as beggars and street vendors. As people seek a better life, many are duped by false offers of legitimate work or educational opportunities, often by people they know and trust. Victims who are rescued or manage to escape are often fearful of returning to their communities because of threats by traffickers or the stigma they may face. With few legitimate opportunities, they are highly vulnerable to being re-trafficked.

USAID's anti-trafficking programs in the region are designed to prevent trafficking, rehabilitate victims, and prosecute traffickers. Through education and public awareness campaigns, people are alerted to the dangers of trafficking and informed of the methods of operation traffickers most commonly employ. Training programs provide high-risk groups with marketable skills to increase their chances for employment, and shelters and a wide array of social services help victims rebuild their lives. Through capacity building programs, law enforcement agents, magistrates, prosecutors, judges, and other government officials improve their ability to investigate and prosecute trafficking cases. Officials also learn how to maximize cooperation with local NGOs so they can refer trafficking victims to appropriate services.

6. Review of USAID's Program Strategy for Europe and Eurasia, http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/eestrategy.html

7. "Situation Paper on Human Trafficking in the Europe and Eurasia Region: Proposed Response and Recommendations for Building an Anti-Trafficking in Persons Network," USAID Office of Women in Development, April 2004.

ALBANIA: STRONGER LOCAL GROUPS, BETTER-TRAINED JUDGES, SAFER CHILDREN

In Albania, USAID supports a comprehensive anti-trafficking program aimed at decreasing the country's use as a source of women and children trafficked for sexual exploitation, begging, and labor, often to Italy, Greece, or other European Union countries.

COORDINATING AND MONITORING ANTI-TRAFFICKING EFFORTS The Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking program promotes stronger, more coordinated efforts among community leaders, NGOs, and government agencies to prevent trafficking and to reintegrate victims into their communities. Four regional Cluster Groups of NGOs and local government representatives coordinate anti-trafficking programs, and technical working groups of Albanian and international experts advise the groups, promoting good practices in prevention, service delivery, and information management. Through sub-grants to local and international NGOs, the program provides care, support, and reintegration services for trafficking victims. The program also examines the effectiveness of trafficking prevention and victim service programs in Albania.

PREVENTING CHILD TRAFFICKING The Transnational Action Against Child Trafficking activity focuses on child trafficking from Albania to Greece and Italy. Implemented by the NGO Terre des Hommes, this comprehensive program includes activities to improve prevention,

protection, assisted voluntary return, and the reintegration of victims, as well as efforts designed to improve coordination with other anti-trafficking groups. This project benefits from broad support, including funding from the USAID Mission in Albania, the Office of Women in Development, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), UNICEF, the Oak Foundation, and the National Albanian American Council.



CONFRONTING LEGAL ISSUES USAID confronts legal issues related to trafficking through an activity funded by the Office of Women in Development. This activity promotes public education and awareness about trafficking, domestic violence, and the new Albanian family code, which includes needed protections and rights for women. The program also trains judges on trafficking issues and new anti-trafficking laws. In addition, this program assisted in drafting and advocating for passage of a domestic violence law and pre-

pared and distributed briefing books to judges to improve their handling of family law and trafficking cases.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: PROMOTING AWARENESS, PREVENTION, PROTECTION, AND PROSECUTION

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, USAID is working with local NGOs and government institutions to implement a nationwide counter-trafficking prevention and awareness-raising campaign. Using print media, radio, and television, the campaign provides information about trafficking risks, including the transmission and spread of HIV/AIDS. Another USAID-funded project covers operating costs for a shelter for women trafficking victims and offers them safety and social welfare services while they await their return home. This secure environment provides protection from their former traffickers, thus encouraging the women to consider testifying against them.

CROATIA: INCREASING AWARENESS AND PROSECUTION OF TRAFFICKING

A primary transit route for trafficked persons from Eastern to Western Europe, Croatia's black market economy benefits greatly from the trade. The Croatia Trafficking Prevention Activity raises community awareness about the risks of trafficking, as well as its negative social and economic effects, and supports anti-trafficking efforts and NGO implementers in selected border communities. The activity's goal is to increase understanding of trafficking issues and methods among the general population and local government authorities in their own locales, making trafficking more easily identifiable and subject to prosecution. Working with trafficking professionals, government agencies are expected to increase their ability to stop cross-border trafficking and to implement Croatia's new National Action Plan to combat trafficking.

GEORGIA: STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT ACTION AND PROVIDING LEGAL AID

Institutional weakness and corruption hindered the previous government's efforts to combat trafficking. USAID's anti-trafficking program in Georgia supports the current government's efforts to revise and implement its National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking, to adopt anti-trafficking legislation, and to enact measures to inform and educate the public, including potential victims. The program also provides legal assistance for victims through a national network of legal aid clinics.

KOSOVO: REINTEGRATING VICTIMS AND ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES

USAID's anti-trafficking activities in Kosovo focus on reintegrating trafficking victims and sharpening anti-trafficking enforcement. The program provides quick, concrete assistance

to victims and advocates for and builds the capacity of local authorities to attack the root causes of trafficking. Through support for the establishment of a Coordinated Referral System composed of local government agencies and NGOs, and through effective case management, USAID's program provides trafficked victims with needed care and helps them integrate back into society. At the same time, support to the Kosovo Inter-Ministerial Commission promotes development of a comprehensive Kosovo Plan of Action to counter-act trafficking in women and children.

KYRGYZSTAN: STRENGTHENING NGO SUPPORT FOR VICTIM SERVICES

USAID's anti-trafficking activities in Kyrgyzstan are designed to combat trafficking in rural areas by supporting NGOs that implement public awareness campaigns and provide victim services. To improve effectiveness, the program trains the NGO volunteers to increase their knowledge, skills, and technical capacity.

MACEDONIA: PROVIDING SAFETY AND SERVICES TO NATIONAL AND FOREIGN VICTIMS

USAID is contributing to a multi-donor funded program that is establishing a safe house to provide services for both national and foreign trafficking victims, especially minors. USAID also supports improvements to an SOS helpline, which provides information to potential victims and serves as a first point of contact for current victims seeking help.

MOLDOVA: ADDRESSING ECONOMIC ROOTS AND VICTIMS' NEEDS

USAID in Moldova is addressing the economic roots of trafficking as well as the needs of returning trafficking victims through two complementary projects. The Moldova Anti-Trafficking Initiative is a comprehensive effort to improve economic prospects for young women and girls through job skills and entrepreneurship training, increasing employment and business development opportunities, and forging stronger links with other concerned organizations. The activities are supplemented by victim assistance and support services and effective outreach and awareness programs. The second project, Better Opportunities for Youth and Women in Moldova, is implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) with funding from the Presidential Initiative. This project focuses on the long-term social and economic reintegration of vulnerable groups, including graduates from orphanages and boarding schools and the most traumatized returned trafficking victims, who often face particularly difficult transitions from shelters into the general population. Through the program, a network of ten halfway houses is being established in regions outside the capital, where each is run by a local NGO. At the houses, residents will receive psychological counseling, health services, and vocational training to improve their ability to find jobs. In addition, grants will enable each halfway house to develop viable small businesses such as guest



houses, cafeterias, or micro-agribusiness enterprises. The small businesses will provide residents with opportunities to develop useful job skills, and the revenues will enable the halfway houses to sustain their operations.

ROMANIA: REDUCING ADOLESCENT VULNERABILITY TO TRAFFICKING

Romania is both a source and transit country for trafficking, especially of children and women. Through its ChildNet Program, the USAID Mission in Romania works with NGOs to prevent child trafficking. Activities in 2004 included life skills and job skills training to reduce the vulnerability of adolescents leaving residential institutions by easing their integration into productive community life. In Romania, the USAID Europe and Eurasia Bureau's Incorporating Values Program supports production of a play to raise individual and community awareness about trafficking.

RUSSIA: FIGHTING TRAFFICKING BY INCREASING CONFIDENCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

USAID supports trafficking prevention and information dissemination through a project that helps high-risk women build confidence and increase their economic opportunities. Through the program, women's crisis centers develop greater expertise in spreading awareness and conducting anti-trafficking activities. A network of women's NGOs also provides vulnerable women and returned victims with job skills training and helps them launch small businesses.

In the Russian Far East, the Paths to Success project is funded through USAID's Bureau for Europe and Eurasia's Incorporating Values Program. The "Paths" project is designed to prevent trafficking by educating youth in the region about the prevalence and dangers of trafficking and the methods of traffickers. A key objective is to reinforce youths' strength of character, self-confidence, dignity, sense of responsibility, and respect for human rights. Equipping youth with such qualities is designed to improve their deci-

sion making abilities, which will help them avoid offers and invitations leading to trafficking. Through grants to NGOs, USAID supports their work to raise public awareness about trafficking, reinforce other anti-trafficking messages, and instill the positive values needed to combat the underlying social and economic causes of trafficking.

SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO: SUPPORTING LEGAL REFORM FOR VICTIMS AND ALERTING POTENTIAL VICTIMS

SERBIA: USAID supports three anti-trafficking activities in Serbia. When trafficking victims are arrested on charges of prostitution, their first contacts with Serbian officials often are with police and magistrates. The American Bar Association Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI) works with the Magistrate's Association to train magistrates not only to recognize trafficking, but also to consider possibilities for referring victims to shelters, psychologists, or other victim assistance resources.

In partnership with the Serbian NGO Victimology, ABA/CEELI is working to identify and promote changes to trafficking-related legislation, such as migration and misdemeanor laws, and monitoring victims' status at trials in magistrate courts. Through a grant to Freedom House, the EXIT Foundation, and the Anti-trafficking Center of Serbia, USAID supports activities to raise awareness among local groups about trafficking dangers and the methods of traffickers. The annual EXIT festival is a very successful regional cultural event for young people, drawing hundreds of artists and thousands of visitors from Southeastern Europe. In 2004, all of its performances, workshops, and outreach activities included anti-trafficking messages to build awareness and to help youth from around the region to protect themselves and others from trafficking.

MONTENEGRO: In Montenegro, USAID supports a shelter and shelter-related victim assistance programs through which a local NGO, the Montenegrin Women Lobby, is increasing its capacity to provide shelter to victims. The activity is conducted within a comprehensive anti-trafficking mechanism that coordinates systematic responses by local NGOs, the police, the Montenegrin National Counter-trafficking Coordinator, various government ministries, implementing international organizations, and the donor community.

UKRAINE: CREATING NETWORKS TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING

The USAID Mission in Ukraine is working to reduce trafficking, primarily of women and children 12- to 25-years old. By focusing on support to a country-wide network of faith-based educational and other non-governmental organizations, this project strengthens local capacity to provide prevention, return, and integration services to potential and returned

trafficking victims. The project also increases awareness among government and community leaders, service providers, and the general public about trafficking risks and operations, and high-risk groups are targeted to receive information designed to help them protect themselves from being trafficked. Network partners have developed a referral and monitoring system to facilitate safe and humane integration of returned victims.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) region, trafficking leads to many forms of exploitation, including domestic servitude, forced agricultural labor, begging, and impressment of children into fighting forces. The most common form of trafficking is for sexual exploitation of children and women. Children are especially vulnerable, with families sometimes complicit in their children's exploitation. Moreover, the number of sexually exploited children is increasing and their age is declining. Women are trafficked internationally for domestic labor and prostitution, primarily to Europe and the United States and within the region. Girls trafficked as domestic servants, usually within their own countries, are often sexually exploited while in service.

USAID supports a variety of programs to raise public awareness about the nature and scope of trafficking in the region, to promote passage and enforcement of local legislation to combat child sexual exploitation, and to provide shelter, counseling, and vocational training for rescued victims of trafficking.

BRAZIL: DESIGNING A COMPREHENSIVE METHODOLOGY TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING

The USAID Mission in Brazil supports the development, testing, validation, and dissemination of an integrated service delivery methodology to assist children and adolescents who are victims of trafficking for commercial sex. The methodology includes prevention, education, direct health, psycho-social and legal services, as well as appropriate referral of trafficking and sexual exploitation cases. This program helps strengthen government programs that assist victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation in six municipalities with particularly high prevalence of these abuses. In 2004, a total of 1,336 public agents, including social workers, psychologists, physicians and teachers, received training and were able to design their own local operational plans to guide their actions in 2005.

ECUADOR: PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Ecuador is a source, transit, and destination country for trafficking where most victims are children trafficked for prostitution, primarily to Spain.⁸ USAID's anti-trafficking efforts in Ecuador

8. "Trafficking in Persons Report June 2004," U.S. Department of State, p. 215.

Scaling Up Anti-Trafficking Efforts in Haiti and a Model for Latin America

USAID-funded efforts have been successful in Haiti, where the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labor, and the Ministry of Education have been instrumental in developing and implementing a comprehensive set of policies and legislation addressing this issue. As public and private organizations develop concrete action plans that comply with the regulations, they will receive USAID assistance to implement their plans.

GUYANA: A MINISTER GOES ON THE ROAD TO FIGHT TRAFFICKING

With support from USAID, the Ministry of Labor, Human Services and Social Security conducted an awareness campaign to increase public knowledge about trafficking issues. The Minister also visited communities throughout the country where he conducted group meetings to explain the meaning and risks of trafficking and encourage communities to work together to protect vulnerable groups, especially women and girls. After each outreach visit, community members were selected for training as community workers in monitoring and reporting trafficking incidents.

HAITI: CURBING CHILD TRAFFICKING AND ADVOCATING FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION

The Pan American Development Foundation, with support from USAID, is working to prevent trafficking of children for domestic servitude within Haiti and to the Dominican Republic through national- and local-level awareness campaigns. The project supports a Haitian/Dominican network of NGOs and other organizations that provide shelter, education, vocational training, and other services for rescued children. In 2004, it promoted a bi-national dialogue in border towns between local officials of both countries on the prevention of trafficking of children.

The Foundation also successfully advocated for an update of the Ministry of Justice circular to port and border personnel

focus on preventing, controlling, and eradicating commercial sexual exploitation of minors in the city of Santo Domingo. Defense for Children International is providing technical assistance to the municipal council to design and implement a comprehensive set of policies and legislation addressing this issue. As public and private organizations develop concrete action plans that comply with the regulations, they will receive USAID assistance to implement their plans.

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The Foundation also successfully advocated for an update of the Ministry of Justice circular to port and border personnel

regulating the travel of unaccompanied children and was instrumental in obtaining the ratification of the Inter-American Convention on International Traffic in Minors.

Through the project, NGO staff and government officials receive training to prevent internal and cross-border trafficking, enforce existing laws, and rescue and protect victims. The project is also working to improve coordination of anti-trafficking efforts by the Ministries of the Interior, Justice, and Social Affairs, as well as local and international NGOs.

JAMAICA: EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

Jamaicans are generally unfamiliar with the term “trafficking” and are unaware of the problem, which includes internal trafficking of children for sexual exploitation and pornography as well as trafficking of illegal migrants moving to the U.S. and Canada.⁹ To increase awareness, the USAID Mission in Jamaica is continuing support for a public education and research project implemented by the NGO People’s Action for Community Transformation. Preventive education on commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking is targeted to reach 10- to 18-year-old girls who are deemed at risk for trafficking into the sex trade. The program provides young persons exposed to commercial sexual exploitation with counseling to increase their self esteem and training to improve their job opportunities. An important component of the program targets tourism centers, where trafficking often occurs, to sensitize employees in that industry to the trafficking problem. To broaden the understanding of trafficking, USAID also will support a research project to gather data on the extent of trafficking in Jamaica.

PERU: TRACKING TRAFFICKERS

The USAID Mission in Peru provides support to the Foundation for Missing Peruvians, which is establishing a methodology and infrastructure to collect statistical data and track trafficking cases in Peru. When completed, law enforcement officials will be trained to use the system to better identify, locate, and capture traffickers.

9. “Trafficking in Persons Report June 2004,” U.S. Department of State.

Conclusion

USAID has taken important strategic steps to combat trafficking in persons in coordination with other U.S. Government agencies. Yet much remains to be done. Trafficking is not only complex, it is also dynamic. Traffickers' change their methods of operation and routes constantly in response to changes in the demand for forced labor and commercial sex, for example as clients demand younger and younger girls. Shifting economic conditions, conflict, and natural disasters give rise to new trafficking patterns. Operations and trafficking routes also evolve in response to pressure from increased law enforcement or community awareness. The use of technology, including the internet, has aided the sex tourism industry, which has become better established in recent years. USAID is committed to working with its partners in the U.S. Government, the international donor community, and developing and transition countries to share knowledge of trafficking patterns and to collectively strengthen the capacity to respond quickly and effectively to trafficking throughout the world.

United States Agency for International Development
Office of Women in Development

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Mr. FEINBERG. I would be happy to respond to any questions that you or the Members of the Committee wish to ask, and I thank you for this opportunity to present you with this information.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Feinberg follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. LLOYD FEINBERG, MANAGER, DISPLACED CHILDREN AND ORPHANS FUND, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I am honored to be able to sit before you again. You may recall that on June 23, Dr. Danuta Lockett and I had the privilege to exchange views with the committee on the U.S. Agency for International Development's Victims of Torture Fund.

In this instance, I am pleased to have the opportunity to share with you information on what USAID is doing to prevent as well as protect vulnerable children, and specifically those children who do not enjoy the care and protection of a family or family-like environment.

I would like to suggest at the start, however, that while many of our activities do indeed address the issues of "street children," I believe it is important to ensure that we not allow ourselves to "pigeon-hole" or "stovepipe" any children into categories which might unintentionally serve to undermine the development or funding of appropriate and effective programs that are designed to address their needs.

For example, most of the activities that the DCOF supports involve children who could be included under a number of descriptors.

- Many children are separated from their families as a result of conflict.
- Others have served as child soldiers or slaves to combatants.
- Others are orphaned or otherwise affected by HIV/AIDS.
- An unconscionable number of children worldwide suffer labor, sexual or other forms of inhumane exploitation, including human trafficking.
- One of the most heinous and objectionable phenomena that I have encountered (and USAID is addressing) is the widening practice in Angola and the two Congos, of accusing children of witchcraft and then subjecting them to cruel "exorcisms" that are tantamount to torture.

At the present time, the Displaced Children and Orphans Fund (DCOF), which I manage, provides financial as well as technical support in over 19 countries. We have programmed more than \$160 million since the Fund's inception in 1989. In FY 2005, we have obligated approximately \$14 million. In 15 of these countries, DCOF supports activities that address issues related to street children.

Besides the significant programs that support street children, accused child-witches and other vulnerable children that I alluded to earlier in the two Congos and Angola, USAID also currently supports significant NGO-supported activities that help street children in such countries as Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Georgia, Liberia, Indonesia, Uganda, Ukraine, Sri Lanka and Zambia.

With respect to some of the other presenters today, I would like to mention that in Brazil, we have recently completed a ten-year DCOF investment in a major street children's program, called POMMAR, in the impoverished northeast sector of the country. That program is now being followed up with a highly innovative Youth Employability Strengthening project.

The program in northern Uganda is primarily focused on children abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army who are now living in severe conditions in camps.

In the mid to late 1990s, DCOF also supported two excellent and innovative street children's programs in the Philippines (where I was honored to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the 1960s) and in Thailand.

In each of these countries, USAID tries to ensure that our supported activities have the greatest potential impact on the greatest number of children.

We believe that from the perspective of an international donor agency, we need to strike a healthy balance in order to avoid supporting programs that may have great impact for a relatively small number of children, as well as programs that have little or no impact but purport to reach thousands of children.

In directing our funds, we try to support activities that do the following:

- Ensure that every child has access to a caring and responsible adult who, ideally, can provide that child with unconditional love and understanding.
- Prioritize early interventions, in terms of:
 - age of the children

- length of time on the street, and
- prevention of family dissolution.
- Strengthen institutional and human capacity of indigenous, child care and protection organizations, both in governmental as well as non-governmental sectors.
- Support responsible monitoring and evaluation of activities to ensure that USAID funded grantees employ meaningful outcomes, and, where possible, measurable impact indicators on the well-being of children.
- Support collection and sharing of information on successful (and unsuccessful) interventions with a view to strengthening the state of the art and the identification of replicable approaches and models.
- Support the strengthening of national standards and the appropriate roles of government which encourage the involvement of civil society, including NGOs, faith-based organizations and professional and business communities in child care and protection.
- Support and advocate for appropriate host country legal reform.

I am pleased to be able to provide you with a copy of a full report on the 2004–2005 DCOF activities.

I would be happy to respond to any questions that you or the members of your committee might like to ask, and I thank you for the opportunity to present you with this information.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Feinberg. Thank you for this report, and again, for the good work that USAID is doing on this as well.

Let me ask a few opening questions with regards to some basics. Do we have a sense as to how many street children there really are, whether or not that number is going up or going down? I noticed that at a recent conference in South Africa at the Institute for Security in Johannesburg, it was predicted by the year 2010, sub-Saharan Africa would have 20 million more orphans. That doesn't mean, obviously, all of those will be street children by no means, but a significant number probably will.

I just would point out, parenthetically, I was recently in Ethiopia, and the Order that was founded by Mother Teresa was running a home for abandoned children, some of whom are orphans and some abandoned, and they were at capacity, 400 children, ages 2 through 6, kids who otherwise would be out on the streets. HIV positive, each and every one of them, but they are being very well cared for. The need so outstrips the ability to provide for them. As the nun that runs the home was telling me, they are at capacity. They are getting support from USAID, they are getting support from a number of donor nations, and especially from us, but they still can't expand because they just don't have the resources. So they are kind of like the lucky ones who have a safe haven to go to. But there are many more others. So are we looking at a growing problem or a problem that is at ebb?

The second question would be on the issue of the political will. Is the State Department routinely—does the President and the Secretary of State, obviously the Director of the Democracy, Human Rights and Labor—regularly engaged in dialogue with countries, particularly those countries that have a serious problem with street children, like Brazil? We are told by human rights groups that extrajudicial killings by police and prison authorities are Brazil's most pressing human rights problem. How pervasive is this with the street children?

Then let me also ask you, with regards to the Philippines if I could, we have seen estimates, I know we do assist a lot of Amerasians in Vietnam in trying to provide a means for them to come to the United States. But I have seen estimates that there are as many as 50,000 Amerasians in the Philippines. How many of these kids are street children and how many other indigenous Filipinos are on the streets as well? Is there something we could do to help the Government of the Philippines do more with regards to their very serious problem?

Finally, on Africa, are African governments responding to the problem of street children with repression or with assistance? Is this part of our strategy vis-a-vis the African Continent, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, to try to get each of these governments engaged? For example, we know Mugabe is tone deaf to anything we might say. But his mistreatment—and there are reports that he utilized street children as thugs in the most recent election in 2002 as well—what is the status of trying to get that government engaged to be on the side of protection rather than exploitation and abuse?

Mr. DENEHY. I will address a few of the questions. Some of them are probably better for USAID to address directly.

First with regard to numbers of street children, we find it difficult to collect data, because it is also a definitional problem of what constitutes a street person, or street children, rather, so we have very little hard data, other than NGO reports.

Again, I would encourage the NGOs here today and others involved in this issue to communicate with the Department and to communicate directly with the human rights, democracy and human rights officers in each Embassy or posts about the problems that they see.

The basic bottom line though, Mr. Chairman, is that we believe that one vulnerable child, one street child, is one too many. So therefore, whether the problem is one or 100,000, we can assure you that the Department takes this issue seriously and will report this issue.

I would like to use that to segue into the political will of the Department, if I might. Before coming to this hearing, I had asked our folks in DRL to do a search, to look at when there were cables issued on when this was raised in bilateral relationships. I was encouraged to see that, even in the past few months, there are a good number of indications via cables and other correspondence that indicates this was an issue raised in our bilateral relations, particularly in countries such as the Philippines and Brazil and those types of places.

Coming from the Bureau of Democracy and Human Rights and Labor, I can tell you there is commitment and there is will. It is raised at the highest levels by our Ambassadors and senior levels of the Department and the Administration and their relations with foreign leaders. I would just like to reassure you that that does take place.

As for your two questions with regard to the Philippines, I would like to ask Lloyd to perhaps comment on USAID's programs in the Philippines to help street children or children who are vulnerable. I would be happy to respond to you after this hearing with direct

actions that the Department is taking with regard to those vulnerable populations. I am not prepared now to discuss the full range of activities that we have.

With regard to Africa, this is a very serious problem. It is definitely on the radar screen of the Department. We have raised it with African leaders in our bilateral relations. Again, I would leave it to Lloyd, the description of USAID's programming to deal with this.

As you rightfully indicate with regard to Zimbabwe and President Mugabe, we have difficulty in communicating concerns to him or at least getting a response to those concerns, although I can tell you that I was at a conference last week on a different issue in which Mugabe's use of street children in the elections was discussed with pro-reform forces from Zimbabwe. They are aware of it and they made sure it was raised on the State Department's agenda as well.

Mr. SMITH. Lloyd?

Mr. FEINBERG. Mr. Chairman, let me comment very briefly on a couple of the questions to the best of my ability here.

With regard to the number of street children and the number of orphans, I don't know what the latest estimates are, but certainly work that we had done in the mid-1990s to late-1990s in preparation of a book that has been updated, I believe four times, called *Children on the Brink*, produced the projections of the number of children who would be orphaned by HIV/AIDS, and certainly the numbers are in excess of 20 million that are anticipated.

With respect to your observations about the orphanage in Ethiopia, that was reaching maximum capacity. I would like to just state our perspective on the issue of how we deal with the millions of children who are losing parents, the grandmother, the grandparent phenomenon, where you have, especially in Africa, grandparents taking care of 50, 60 grandchildren, where the whole middle generation is dying because of HIV/AIDS. We have actually documented a terrible phenomenon in Malawi where you have that situation.

The idea of having orphanages as a response to this phenomena is, unfortunately, too expensive and it is inadequate. It would just be too expensive, we feel, to use that as a strategic option, a strategic solution. That is why we and other donors, other organizations, are trying to promote approaches that use community-based approaches to caring for and protecting orphans and other vulnerable children in their communities.

We feel there are opportunities to have extended family or foster families or child protection networks in countries that can provide the care and protection. Orphanages and adoptions certainly are appropriate for those children who cannot be taken care of, but it is a very, very difficult and frightening phenomenon. I do appreciate your sharing with us your views and certainly the orphanages such as the one that Mother Teresa's Order is doing is exceptional.

With regard to the Philippines, I am sure I will have to get back. I know our USAID strategy in that country does not promote the issue of vulnerable children. Most of our strategy, I believe, is directed toward the conflict areas in the south. But we, as I mentioned before, we have supported programs dealing with street chil-

dren in the Philippines in the mid- to late-1990s, and certainly we would be happy to engage in providing technical support where it might be appropriate. But that is an issue that would have to be addressed by our USAID mission director in Manila.

I say that with a very sincere personal preference to work in the Philippines, because I was a volunteer there, and I do have a special relationship and feeling for the country.

With respect to Africa and the responses of governments, I do believe that it is a mixed bag. The issue of children and other social services in countries, in fragile states and transitional states where resources are scarce, other pressing challenges confront them, everything from education and basic health, infrastructure, jobs, et cetera. I am afraid the children often get the short shrift, and that is why we are trying to mainstream the issue of vulnerable children into our development activities and to highlight the issue of—in all of our health programs and education programs, to try to ensure accessibility for all children to schools and to look at non-formal, informal, appropriate vocational approaches to education and training.

Some countries where we are working, the governments are not responsive. In others, they are doing the best that they can. After the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, for example, we felt there was a very, very strong engagement on the part of the government both to ensure education as well as to deinstitutionalize many children put into orphanages and reunify those children with existing families. I think we have come quite a ways in terms of reducing to the bare minimum the number of orphanages which are in place and maximizing the number of children living with their families.

Mr. SMITH. Let me just ask a couple of additional questions, and then I will yield to my colleagues. First, with regards to Brazil, when President Lula was Candidate Lula, he made much of being the person for the downtrodden and the poor. Has anything changed there since he has gained power? Is Brazil doing anything about its impunity, and do we raise that issue with our friends in Brasilia?

Secondly, are we providing enough resources, we being the Congress? Is this a resource issue, is it a political will issue or both? Is there more we could be doing?

Thirdly, tomorrow I will be chairing a hearing on the ongoing problem in Romania, where the anti-adoption law that has been foisted upon the Romanian Parliament by Emma Nicholson, who is the rapporteur who held the issue of adoption over the head of the Romanian Government as a Sword of Damocles, has actually gotten them to adopt a law that is anti-adoption for foreigners.

There are at least 200 Americans who had children in the pipeline whose cases have not been resolved, and there are thousands of others. The idea of domestic adoption is great, but when you don't have sufficient adoptive parents, the issue becomes one of, where do you put these children? I am one who, throughout the 1980s, made several trips to Romania under the Ceaucescu regime, and saw what that dictatorship did to its people. But as soon as he fell, right after the December 1989 revolution, they got into many of the places where these children were being warehoused. In some cases, there were 50 to 60 children in these orphanages,

and adoption is a way of providing a humane alternative to state housing, or in this case, a state orphanage.

Just recently, I have been in one of those homes that is designed to help street children. I am very, very concerned that in Romania itself, where there is a significant problem of street children, the adoption option has now been foreclosed and we will see a spike, I would predict, in more street children in Romania as a direct result of the European Union's interference, and again, undue pressure by this member of the European Parliament, Rapporteur Nicholson.

You mentioned adoption, which is why I brought this up. It does provide a durable solution, it seems to me, of a Hague Convention-type of adoption, where the home study is properly carried out and there is no buying or selling of any child. So I would appreciate your view on that. I think Romania, Emma Nicholson again, has said publicly in a number of news articles that this could become a wave of the future, where intercountry adoptions are shut down. I think that is an ominous and very, very dangerous step for the world community to take, that adoption becomes a non-option.

Mr. FEINBERG. I can't speak knowledgeably about the specific situation in Romania, except the fact that ever since the opening of Romania and the realization of all the children who had been institutionalized, USAID made that a top strategic priority and had invested quite a bit in terms of both improving and developing of rationale the deinstitutional process and to support and strengthen the social service systems to allow for appropriate permanency planning, including domestic as well as international adoption. I do know that the cessation of the option of international adoption has created a serious humanitarian issue for children as well as political problem for bilateral relations.

I am not sure—I can't really comment on the status of that situation, except just to say that from the USAID perspective, that mission is still investing in strengthening the social service system on the ground to the extent possible.

Mr. DENEHY. With regard to Romania, it is obviously an issue that we have raised bilaterally and also raised multilaterally. I would say that we have, within our consular affairs section at the Department, an office of children's affairs which covers these issues. I would be happy to coordinate communication between you and that office so they might more fully answer any questions that you might have with regard to that.

With regard to the question of a resource issue, what more can we do? I think, first, again, I would like to commend you for shining the spotlight onto this issue due to this hearing. As you know, street children, vulnerable children, was an issue very much in the forefront several years ago. It has somewhat been consumed by trafficking and other types of issues. So holding these hearings and bringing it back to the fore increases our attention to it. I want to assure you that after this hearing, we intend to communicate to our posts overseas the outcome of this hearing and to sensitize them to the issue as well as bolster chapter 5, our section on children, in the *Country Reports* itself.

At this point, from our perspective, we feel we have the resources that are necessary. We don't necessarily need any other legislative

or statutory authority to work this issue. But we would also encourage you to have NGOs both be in contact with the Department directly, whether it be consular affairs on children's affairs issues or DRL, or Country Reports Office, to ensure that we get the widest breadth of reports reflected in the *Country Reports* that we will submit to you in the coming year.

With regard to Brazil, while this was an issue that was raised and we have seen some minimal progress as indicated by our *Country Reports*, we still remain concerned. There are still a lot of reports from NGOs that there are organized police roundups of children, although I am told that this is in contradiction to the law, which says they can only be arrested if there is a legitimate infraction of the law. But, for instance, in our country report, we cite three instances of known police harassment and/or mass arrests of children. One, for instance, in San Paulo, in a "crackland," an area which street children inhabited, was basically cleansed of them, the streets were cleared. It is not clear to us whether this justice placed the children into other areas or if they were found homes or got into programs. All we know is that harassment continues and it is an issue we are following closely.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. Ms. McCollum.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the discussion we had on orphanages. I was very pleased to work with Chairman Hyde and Ranking Member Lantos and the White House in getting the language included in the bill, which included funding for vulnerable children and orphans and having an opportunity to meet with many of the African Ambassadors in my office, as well as speaking with families in Tanzania, Ethiopia and South Africa, and finding out that they really want to see other solutions and big institutions built for orphans, than the faith-based organizations I have also spoken with, says that needs to be absolutely an option, that is, after every single other option has been explored.

So, Mr. Chair, I think as we move forward toward that portion of the funding becoming available for use for vulnerable children and orphans, it would probably be good just to have a hearing on some of the creative and innovative ways USAID and some of our NGOs are working with communities to come up with community-based solutions. I visited one area in which they are training young adults for the opportunity to become tailors, carpenters, and they integrated in their community while they are doing that. Some of these are head-of-household children going back and helping as head of household as well. Other families are pooling together with resources, sharing responsibilities, helping an elder grandmother, who maybe watches them during the day, not feel solely responsible for providing food. But there is much work to be done and there are many who still are not accounted for that are slipping through the cracks as these countries find themselves so stressed.

There are a lot of good things going on out there, but we need so much more happening in this situation. So I look forward to working with you on it.

One of the testifiers mentioned there is a challenge between the definition of vulnerable child on the street or of the street. "On the street" means there might be some kind of loose family support. "Of the street" means that family support is probably not there at

all, there is not a significant elder even loosely connected with the child maybe to help that child, to give them any support.

But I would think, Mr. Chair, for the purposes of what we want to focus on, just the aggregate, and not worrying about breaking them out for this Committee, is something that would be helpful. Those where they have the different aggregates broken out “of” and “on” the street, I think our Committee staff could take those numbers and use them in a way that would help us be more directive in what we need to do in-country.

I recently have been approached by some people with conversations that I have had dealing with mothers who have found themselves forced going to the street for prostitution to feed their children. It is wrong, it shouldn't happen. I don't stand in judgment of these women that I have met or the churches that are working with these women to get them off the street. Organizations, including some of the governments I have spoken to, are confused about the interpretation of how the pledge that we have, the anti-prostitution pledge, is being used.

There are rumors out there, and I am sure they are not true, of repercussions: If you sign the pledge and you are working or you come in contact with a prostitute, including religious leaders that I spoke with, both Catholic, Protestant and Muslim, that in approaching these women and trying to gain their trust, to get them into different occupations, or finding these young girls that either have been sold off by their families into prostitution, ran away and continue to do prostitution, to put food on the table for themselves, that there is attention that if they encounter a prostitute and they are working with a prostitute, that somehow it will be seen as a breaking of the pledge. So I am hearing a lot of confusion out there as to what the pledge means.

I said I thought it was pretty clear, when I read it, that it doesn't prohibit our NGOs from first encouraging people to end this lifestyle, which is not a healthy one, emotionally or physically or spiritually, but if they are not going to do that, to provide them with the tools necessary and the information necessary to try to keep them alive and HIV-free to the best of their ability while they still continue to reach out and have those children or those children's mothers who are on the street.

Can you comment? I have heard this from, as I said, Lutheran bishops, people who are very active in the mosques in Africa, as well as many other NGOs, as well as faith-based NGOs. Why is everybody so nervous about this pledge and how it is going to be interpreted?

Mr. FEINBERG. I am afraid that I am going to have to beg off responding to that. I am aware of the pledge. I don't know the details. We don't come in direct conflict or contact with the implications. However, I would say that certainly in all of our programs, the issue of survival sex, prostitution is certainly a major issue for all, for very vulnerable populations.

Where the pressure is, the political pressure in terms of the pledge, how that plays out, I would have to ask that we could come back to you with a response later.

[The information referred to follows:]

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HIV/AIDS FUNDING AND HIGH-RISK GROUPS

The U.S. Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis Act of 2003 provides that: "No funds made available to carry out this Act... may be used to provide assistance to any group or organization that does not have a policy explicitly opposing prostitution and sex trafficking." The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the World Health Organization, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative and United Nations agencies are specifically exempt from this provision.

The Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator requires that agencies receiving HIV/AIDS funds implement the law consistent with the U.S. Government's opposition to prostitution and related activities, especially those that contribute to trafficking in persons. Under the leadership of Ambassador Tobias, the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, USAID, HHS, and the State Department, have coordinated the inclusion of language that implements the policy requirement in all awards of HIV/AIDS funds.

There is nothing in U.S. law or President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief policy that prohibits the U.S. Government or any of our partners from providing services to high-risk populations, including prostitutes. In fact, a number of Emergency Plan-supported programs are dedicated to providing services to high-risk groups, including prostitutes and those at risk of entering prostitution. For instance:

- In Vietnam, the U.S. funds a number of Women's Health Clubs to provide women - with special emphasis on women in prostitution - a safe space and access to HIV/AIDS/STI prevention messages and health services. These clubs provide outreach and peer education services to attract women from venues where sex is sold, and are linked with interventions directed at men for a dual behavior change approach.
- In Zambia, an Emergency Plan-funded program called Corridors of Hope targets high-risk men and women, including prostitutes, truck drivers, minibus drivers, and uniformed personnel, at border and high-transit sites to reduce the transmission of HIV. The program provides behavior change interventions that promote treatment of STIs, counseling and testing, partner notification, adherence to treatment, and consistent condom use, along with positive living and reduction of stigma for people living with HIV/AIDS.
- In Cote d'Ivoire, the U.S. funds the Clinique de Confiance in collaboration with the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp,

providing women in prostitution with counseling and testing, treatment for STIs, condoms, and links to other services.

In addition to educating prostitutes on HIV/AIDS and providing treatment, some of our programs give them the skills to choose another line of work.

- For example, in Haiti, one of our programs provides women in prostitution with training in cosmetology.
- Another Emergency Plan-funded program in India, sponsored by the YWCA, offers courses in skills like cutting and tailoring, giving young women a viable alternative to life on the street.

We will continue to treat people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS - including prostitutes - with dignity and compassion. We remain focused on fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic, not those who live with the disease.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we need to clear this up, because in Committee, I felt we were pretty clear that we don't support prostitution. I certainly don't. We don't want to be funding people who support prostitution. But there is a difference between supporting prostitution and trying to reach out in support of prostitutes changing their lifestyle and providing them life skills to help them do that. Mr. Chair, there is a lot of confusion out there, and I would like to look to your leadership in clarifying this confusion.

Mr. SMITH. If the gentlewoman will yield, as the sponsor of that amendment when we were marking up Henry Hyde's AIDS bill, we made it very clear, in the guidance that has come out of the Department at USAID, and obviously as you pointed out, if you read the statement that needs to be signed prior to receiving funding, it couldn't be more clear. We want to assist the prostitute. We don't want to enable the brothel owner in any way, shape or form, or to convey that somehow we are working in tandem with him or her in this continued subjugation of these women.

Moreover, the thrust of what we hope will happen, and this goes for trafficking as well, is there will be a rescue—that the woman will find a way. In Ethiopia again, a few weeks ago I went to a USAID-funded program about women who had been trafficked into the Middle East, out of Ethiopia; they are the lucky ones who have been reclaimed and repatriated, are learning a number of skills, including the making of shoes, sandals and other leather goods, some of which I bought and have upstairs. They are very well made.

So they are learning a very marketable skill which will keep them, hopefully, from being trapped into that kind of thing again. But clarification is always good. I think the intent of the language, the clear language that we offered, was approved by the House and the Senate and signed by the President, and the implementing guidance has been very clear. But where someone has confusion, we need to make sure that they understand.

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Chair, if there is implementing guidance available, I would love to see it so that I can reinforce what the

intention of the language was, and that was groups working with prostitutes, do exactly that, work to change their lifestyle. But in the meantime they weren't prohibited from providing any, at all, resource in order to reduce their risk to the transmission of AIDS. So I look forward to working with you on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Pitts.

Mr. PITTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, the governments that have been mentioned by the Chairman, how aware are they of this problem? What are the governments, the countries doing, and which ones are dealing well with the problem? What kinds of shelter, education, health programs have been most successful in helping street children over the long term? And what resources would local governments need to duplicate these successful programs? What is the UN doing and, what are international organizations doing to address the problem of street children?

Also, to look back at what Congress might need to do to respond, what would you think of the treatment of street children being a separate performance indicator for, for instance, the Millennium Challenge Corporation's eligibility determinations? Should we adopt something similar to our report and tier system for trafficking to deal with the problem of violence against street children?

Mr. DENEHY. I will punt the programmatic questions over to my colleague Mr. Feinberg, but I would address a couple of issues.

You asked a question, Mr. Pitts, of are these countries aware of this problem, and the regard that the Department and the U.S. Government takes in our bilateral relations. And I would say resoundingly, yes, we make them aware. They are certainly fully aware that it is reported to Congress in the *Country Reports*. It has been and will continue to be raised in our dialogue at all levels with officials in bilateral and in multilateral fora.

With regard to programmatic resources and those types of questions, I think I would leave that to Lloyd. He has a much better handle on that than I do.

I would like to address the question of a tier ranking system, or specific—perhaps a separate section of the *Country Reports* with regard to vulnerable children or street children. With regard to having it as a separate section of our *Country Reports*, we feel as it is handled now is appropriate.

We have instructed our posts and will again instruct them this year to focus on this issue so that we can expand chapter 5 on children, and again would encourage NGOs to establish relations with the human rights officers at posts as well as the Department so we can do that.

We believe children are the most vulnerable. We applaud all the work that is done by the groups here today to include Congress and the NGOs.

We have been reporting on children in the *Country Reports* for years. This is not a new phenomenon for us. We acknowledge there is always room for improvement and look forward to doing that in the coming year, but we feel right now it is appropriately handled in the *Report*.

With regard to tier ranking, we feel that the *Country Reports* and the supporting human rights and democracy report adequately cover that, the vulnerable children and street children issue. It is used in a calculation of our holding sentence in the *Country Reports* about whether we feel the human rights situation in a country has improved or degraded.

We are concerned that, by a problem that lacks precise definition as we have outlined here today, that it is a subjective measure as opposed to an objective measure such as trafficking, and would therefore urge that we continue along this process of using it in the formulation of our holding sentence in the *Country Reports*.

Mr. FEINBERG. Thank you for the questions, Mr. Pitts. I think they are quite important to address.

In terms of records of successful government actions, I think it is a hard—it would be a hard statement to make, because a lot of times governments may have nice policies, but zero implementation. And other times it is really a matter of who is at the head of the responsible agencies.

I think in our experience, for example, recently we have been working in Indonesia where there has been a major push to provide for identification documentation for children, which, without documentation, children are—you know, start off way behind their own goal line.

And in Ethiopia there has been a very strong government support for strengthening networks. I think there has been some very significant work that is being done by the Street Children's Forum in Ethiopia in the past decade that does receive good government support and a strong history of their social welfare ministry supporting activities such as this.

In Georgia, where we have a new program starting up, there is a very strong government push for the deinstitutionalization of children, and certainly in Zambia, where they have a terrible problem of children orphaned and affected by HIV/AIDS, there is a strong commitment by the government to build safety nets.

Those are different examples. I think there are a lot many more that you could mention, and I think, as I said before, in Rwanda they had demonstrated real commitment to the closing down of unnecessary orphanages. So I think that one of our objectives of this year within our fund is to try to identify successful and replicable models and experiences which do work in this, as well as those that don't.

With respect to indicators, I would just urge caution. Indicators are very dangerous things. To use quantitative indicators as measures of progress sometimes can really misguide programs. Programs that become focused on meeting their targets, their quantitative targets, sometimes can just miss the qualitative need of the program.

And certainly at the project level, you have to look at how many children might be affected, might be included, as well as trying to determine how you are trying to improve the well-being of children. But in terms of using program-level or global indicators, there really is a danger that in order to meet targets, agencies such as our own and our collaborating NGOs sometimes can really be under an unnecessary burden to meet targets and miss the real boat.

Mr. PITTS. What about the UN or international organizations? Are they doing enough; what are they doing?

Mr. DENEHY. I would say that our experience, as I am sure you are aware, is slightly schizophrenic there in the sense that we have seen conventions such as Convention on the Rights of the Child and other multilateral efforts to attempt to protect vulnerable members of society, which we feel are inappropriate. However, there are two optional protocols of that convention which we have ratified and signed on, pornography and abuse and sale of children and on child soldiers.

We have seen the UN and some of its affiliated organizations such as ILO and others do valuable work with regard to child labor and identify this issue. But, again, it is a mixed bag. What we see in the international conventions and agreements, we have some concerns, but we have also seen on the programmatic side some good work. And perhaps—I don't know if you want to talk about—

Mr. FEINBERG. It is a broad range. Certainly we have worked closely with UNICEF, which is the main UN agency responsible for the care and protection of children. Generally they work primarily with host governments in terms of establishing policies and strengthening their systems.

But with any program, there is certainly the wide range of quality and commitment.

Mr. PITTS. That you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Dr. Boozman.

Mr. BOOZMAN. In listening to the testimony and listening to the previous testimony over the past several months, it is easy to get discouraged. As you know, we have discussed a number of different countries. We talked about Darfur, the Philippines, Peru, Brazil, Uganda. The list goes on and on, crossing different continents, different religions, and different reasons; child soldiers, child sex, children enslaved for work purposes, and children that are left to fend for themselves. And on top of that, we have UN peacekeepers that abuse children. There really doesn't seem to be a common denominator. If there is, you can tell me about it. The only common denominator that I see is that people really don't care.

We saw pictures on television, you know, for the last couple of weeks, last week or so, we had situations in New Orleans where you literally had the news commentators in tears. The Nation was in tears watching this stuff. You can show pictures like that day in and day out that are going on right now except in most worst extremes. Okay, but again the difficulty is—it is really getting people to care at all.

After visiting several of these countries, visiting the African Union, visiting the UN, I've noticed a lot of lip service, but like I said, there really isn't a lot of caring going on. Certainly nothing like was done in New Orleans, where the Nation has opened their homes to these folks and we've had this tremendous reaction.

This is not the most glamorous Committee in the world, but we are here because we really do want to help. I think we have made a difference under the leadership of our Chairman and Ranking Member, but again, we really need some direction as to how to

push this thing forward. And, like I say, my frustration is that it doesn't seem a whole lot is changing.

Mr. DENEHY. If I could just respond very quickly by saying, one, is I am here in part to dissolve any belief that the State Department does not care about vulnerable children, because we do, particularly the bureau that I work in, but the Department at large.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Don't misunderstand. I believe that is the case, okay. But you do understand what I am saying?

Mr. DENEHY. I do. I understand your point. I would just like to respond to one thing, the common denominator question, if I might.

It seems to me what I attempted to address in my remarks, and I think Lloyd addressed in his maybe more articulately, is the one common denominator is the lack of familial unit or caring adult who watches over these children and this systematic or individual abuse by adults or older children of these most vulnerable people. And I think that is, as Lloyd points out in his testimony, what his programming is trying to address.

Mr. FEINBERG. It is easy to be cynical and discouraged. All I can say is, I started working on this as a side issue as part of my regular job over 15 years ago, and I am still doing it, maybe because I can't get another job. But frankly, I like coming to work every day, and I don't plan on changing it because I am encouraged. And I am mostly encouraged by the people who are committed, the people who do care, and the progress that has been made, and, most importantly, when you see how many children, given the opportunity to take advantage of their own natural resilience, that are able to make it. Sure, it is a very discouraging picture, but I think there is an awful lot that has been done and can be done, and so I am quite optimistic.

Mr. BOOZMAN. And like I say, don't misunderstand, I understand that you are doing this, too, for the same reasons that the Committee is here, and we are interested in the same issues. You know, we are pretty tough on countries like Cuba for various reasons. Are there countries that we need to pick out as the worst offenders and just say we are going to get really tough in the same manner as we are with Cuba? What I am looking for are specific things to do versus what we are doing.

Mr. FEINBERG. It is tough to politicize the issue, and I leave that up to David to respond to.

I feel that in terms of our investments at the program level of looking at ways of addressing issues of the most vulnerable children, working to get them—provide access to school, to mitigate the impact of severe tragedies, conflict, impact of HIV/AIDS, to look at ways to increase the ability of children and their parents to generate income, get children out of institutions, it is a slow process. There are no quick fixes. But there is a—it is very much of a multifaceted strategy that unfortunately is not discernible unless a government happens to come in not because of foreign pressure, but because of national pressure and says, we are going to do something.

A lot of the political issues cannot be imposed from the outside even with economic sanctions or—but certainly the issue of participating at the political level, at the multilateral and bilateral level has to be maintained.

But I would just say I don't think there are any silver bullets, no quick fixes, but certainly there is a lot of need to continue, I believe, what we are doing.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. I just have a quick question. I didn't hear your testimony, so I won't ask any questions except a quick question and a quick statement.

Did someone mention that we have ratified the Convention on Children Soldiers? Has the U.S. ratified that?

Mr. DENEHY. My information is that the two optional protocols on the convention, one on the sale and pornography and sex abuse of children and on child soldiers, we have approved, yes.

Mr. PAYNE. That is good to know. That is news, and that is very positive.

Let me just say that I agree that there are a lot of people who are trying and who really want to see things happen. I happen to have been, last evening, with a group that really was very supportive of the Millennium Challenge, the millennium goals that our Administration decided early on, several weeks ago, that 5 years ago when the goals were made, that there was an attempt to reexamine, and in the goals it said after 5 years we would have a review of the goals. And our Administration wanted to eliminate the goals totally after several weeks of debate, and sort of outrage by some of the—most all of the other countries, we have somehow reestablished some support of the millennium development goals.

I say that there are people, though, who are very, very interested. I was with—Jeffrey Sachs, I guess you know, wrote the book on the end of poverty and how we can make it happen in our lifetime, and Jeffrey Sachs has done an outstanding job, and I was with him last night and had dinner with him and Angelina Jolie, who is the UN Goodwill Ambassador for refugees. I mention that because Ray Chambers, who was just an individual, a very wealthy person actually, from Newark, New Jersey, decided that if governments are going to fail, that he has brought together about 75 of the wealthiest Americans and organizations last night to say that they will do it.

They are going to take 100 villages, Ray Chambers group—grew up in my town, went to one of the public high schools up the street from where I went to. Schools are very, very strong supporters of this Administration as a matter of fact.

However, you know, people at that dinner were disappointed, but they are going to take private dollars. He is going to give millions just to say, "If the government is not going to do it, then we who have been blessed, we who have been privileged, we who have the wherewithal, and we will have to do it," and they have a goal of 100 villages before the end of the year. And they showed a film which is going to be on MTV tonight of a village in Kenya where they simply brought fertilizer in this project of Jeffrey Sachs, and the average yield was about 6, 7, or 8 inches high of maize. Just bringing in simple fertilizer, having an expert in farming bring in some new seeds, the yield was fourfold, just with a basic cost of probably \$75,000, \$100,000, which will transform that entire village.

And so in a sense it can be done so quick, economically right at the grassroots. They are going to do it. So I was very elated; called it Millennium Development Goals of the Millennium Development Challenge, Village Challenge—some name—and they intend to have thousands done in the next few years. So there are people that are really very interested and are really putting their dollars where their mouths are. And I really commend Ray Chambers and that whole group that was over in New York last night and had a late dinner after the presentation. And that really has been a tremendous lift and a boost to me to see how the private sector has decided that maybe they need to do it.

So there is hope. Mr. Feinberg said he enjoys going to work every day, and I don't blame you because there is a lot of great things that are done and that we need to continue to do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

I want to thank our very distinguished witnesses for your testimony, for your leadership, for your courage, and for making a difference in the lives of so many children. And we want to work as partners with you, and we look forward to continuing that dialogue and seeing what we can do to enhance congressional actions and roles going forth. So I want to thank you again. I appreciate it.

I would like to now welcome the second panel to the witness stand beginning with Lord David Alton, who is another famous resident of Liverpool, currently a Professor of Citizenship at Liverpool John Moores University. He is a Co-Founder of the Jubilee Campaign in the British Parliament and was the Founding Chairman of the all-party Parliamentary Group on Street Children. Lord Alton has traveled to areas of the world with significant street children populations and sought to work through governmental and through compassionate NGO channels to bring about effective change to stop the killing and improve the overall conditions for children at risk.

For 18 years, Lord Alton was a member of the House of Commons and today is Independent Crossbench Life Peer. In 1972, he was elected to the Liverpool City Council as Britain's youngest city councilor. Twenty-five year later, in 1997, David was made a Life Peer of the House of Lords.

Lord Alton, again, welcome, and please proceed as you wish.

**STATEMENT OF LORD DAVID ALTON, HOUSE OF LORDS,
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRE-
LAND**

Lord ALTON. I thank you very much, Mr. Chairperson. First of all, can I thank you very much and Members of your Subcommittee for the gracious way in which you welcomed us earlier today. And may I also say that it gives me particular pleasure to see you in the chair. I have been a longstanding admirer of all the work that you have done, particularly on human rights issues, but it has also been a privilege to collaborate with you in the past on issues such as human trafficking.

And, of course, also I was very struck by the welcome of Congressman Pitts. It has been a pleasure for me to cooperate with Congressman Pitts on earlier occasions. We have traveled together

the Burma-Thai border to see refugee situations there and to take up religious liberties issues in countries such as Laos and Vietnam.

But it has also been a pleasure for me to meet other Members of your Subcommittee, to hear from them this afternoon, and also to hear from your expert witnesses who set the scenes so admirably for us today.

I think it is not unreasonable to link this issue with the issue of trafficking, which has been referred to earlier on, because it seems to me that this is very much like an iceberg, and that if you look below the water levels, you can see that what is producing the problems of trafficking, sexual exploitation of children, children in prisons, children on the streets, children who are carrying arms—the sort of points that Congressman Boozman was making earlier on—the reason for that is that there is this army of street children in so many countries and continents all over the world. The scale is, I think, quite breathtaking.

I submitted to you the full statement, but I will, if I may, just give a precis of that this afternoon. I would like to link with it, and make a further submission to you, of a report that the Jubilee Campaign has just published called *Kids Behind Bars: Why We Must Act*.

Jubilee Campaign has been lobbying to protect children's rights for over 10 years, and as you have said, I helped found Jubilee Campaign in the British Parliament 20 years ago. But, of course, it not only operates in Westminster, it has a sister organization here in DC. Members of your Subcommittee have cooperated with its work in the past, and we are grateful to you for that. Jubilee Campaign's advocacy has stood alongside the direct and practical support provided by the campaign's other organization, Jubilee Action.

Street children have been the focus of Jubilee Action's work, and in the British Parliament, it is the Secretariat to the Parliamentary Street Children Committee. Jubilee Action also provides or funds accommodation and shelter in many parts of the world. And picking up a point I thought was well made by Congresswoman McCollum earlier on today about the link with prostitution, Jubilee has a number of hostels which it has opened in Mumbai for children whose mothers have been working in the sex tourism industry. And one very practical way of ending the vicious circle of children going into sex tourism is to make this sort of provision.

But I was also struck, Mr. Chairman, by the link that you made with the issue of conflict, and I think that that is perhaps the biggest link of all. From your own recent visit to Sudan and Darfur, you will see that in that country where 2 million people were killed over 19 years, in Darfur where maybe up to 400,000 people have died, but the situation is appalling. I was in Darfur myself a few months ago and traveled 2 years ago into the war-torn areas of southern Sudan, and there is no doubt that conflict has played its part.

I also traveled recently to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where 3.7 million people have died over the last 15 years. And in a meeting yesterday with Senator Brownback, we agreed that this has been one of the great untold stories of our time and how conflict has generated many of the problems on the streets. In

Kinshasa, for instance, the capital of Congo, there are more than 30,000 street children estimated to be there today, between 20,000 and 30,000 street children.

Now, in the early 1990s, Jubilee Campaign was one of the first United Kingdom groups to highlight the killing of street children on the streets of Brazil, and we shined a torch on that subject. We were able to see some action; working with journalists John Downing and Danny McGrory, we exposed the reality of police death squads, a point that was alluded to during questioning earlier on. This made front page headlines in some of our national newspapers, and we were pleased that when we launched this report about children behind bars just a couple weeks ago, that CNN and ITN gave it worldwide coverage. So in other words, the situation continues today, but maybe in different manifestations.

I want now to illustrate my remarks with some visual slides. The slide that is being shown at the moment of Copacabana in Brazil. [The slide referred to follows:]



In the forefront is a cardboard box, and if you look very carefully, you will see the two tiny feet of a child who has been killed and literally dumped like so much detritus, so much rubbish on the beach there.

An expert from Brazil's National Movement of Street Children said that between four and five adolescents are murdered daily. I repeat, every single day in Brazil, between four and five children and adolescents are killed, and you will hear more from one of our other witnesses in a few moments about the situation firsthand.

Every 12 minutes a children is beaten; 4½ million children under the age of 12 are working; 500,000 children are engaged in domestic labor. In 40 percent of crimes, children are the victims.

In a visit to Brazil last year, in the report that I wrote—I will also submit to you the report arising out of that visit, it also appears on the Jubilee Campaign Web site—I saw a small cross outside the church in this slide—the Church of our Lady of Candelaria in Rio.

[The slide referred to follows:]



On the cross are the names of eight boys who were shot dead by police as they slept. And on the pavement is a picture I took of the sidewalk there in front of that church. There were eight children asleep on that pavement who were shot dead by the Rio police. The silhouettes of the dead children are etched red on the footpath to this day.

The massive proliferation of small arms, something that is graphically described in the movie, *City of God*—for those of you who haven't seen it, it shows a great deal of violence, but it is a truthful depiction of what is taking place in the favelas. Those small arms are a major cause of these statistics. One of the activists from the National Movement of Street Children in Rio told me it is easier for a child to get a gun—you can see a picture here of not actors, of real children brandishing guns—it is easier for a child to get a gun than to get a bus pass.

[The slide referred to follows:]



But this situation is not restricted to Brazil, as we have been hearing earlier on. Street children across the world may be homeless, work on the streets, have no contact with their families, live on the streets with their families, live in day or night shelters, or spend time in institutions; for example, the prisons I have referred to.

There are no confirmed figures, as we have heard, on the total numbers of street children. They are not easy to count due to migration, exclusion from infrastructures such as schools and colleges, and due to differing definitions, a point that Congresswoman McCollum made earlier on, due to the differing definitions of what constitutes street children. But I think she was right to say we shouldn't get into a theological argument about that. We should understand that this is a grave problem, and an increasing one.

But some statistics we have produced for you, which have been provided by NGOs working in these countries, in Kenya it is estimated a quarter of a million children are on the streets there; in Ethiopia, 150,000; in Zimbabwe, where the number has most certainly risen, as your expert witnesses referred to earlier on, because of the deprivations of Robert Mugabe. This is something you, Mr. Chairman, referred to in your questioning, that number has undoubtedly increased as a result of the bulldozing of the homes of some of the poorest people in Harare; in Bangladesh, an estimated 445,000; in Nepal, 30,000; and in India, maybe as many as 11 million.

There are many other countries though. And I am Chairman of the British Parliamentary Committee on North Korea, and I visited that country 18 months ago, and, of course, 2 million people died in North Korea during the terrible famine there. We heard even

from North Korean officials, who were quite candid about this aspect of life in their country, that there are many of what they call “street swallows,” abandoned children, living on the streets in many parts of their country, too.

Now, while these figures are therefore estimates, and problematic in statistical terms, there is anecdotal evidence that these figures are increasing country by country, and that, in my view, is being fueled primarily by conflict. But there are other issues, uncontrolled urbanization, directly linked to poverty; conflict within families, conflict with the law, and children, of course, being orphaned due to AIDS and HIV. And in Kenya especially, where I visited the biggest shantytown in Africa in Kibera 18 months ago, the situation there is appalling with vast numbers of children who have been orphaned because of the AIDS pandemic.

Examples of what I mean, well, street children in conflict with the law, the Philippines situation, which we will hear more about from Father Shay Cullen in due course, but the Philippines and the Congo are two examples I would like to highlight in this slide.

[The slide referred to follows:]



Jubilee Campaign – September 2005

Philippines

Conservative estimates indicate 20,000 children imprisoned.

Children as young as 9 can be tried in Filipino courts and sent to adult jails.

Children are:

- 5 times as likely to be sexually assaulted
- Twice as likely to be beaten
- 50% more likely to be attacked with a weapon

than children in juvenile facilities

Jubilee Campaign – September 2005

Vagrancy in some countries is an offense, and the police round these children up from the streets and throw them into prison; other children accused of petty crimes and imprisoned, often without having a first hearing, in overcrowded adult jails where they are at the mercy of prison guards and fellow prisoners. Some will even be in prison for pedophile offenders. Imagine putting children, like the young girl in the picture on the front of this report, into those kinds of prisons. This girl, Rosie, was just age 6, and if it hadn't been for the actions of Father Shay Cullen, whom you will

hear from, she would have remained in prison. He rescued her from there.

UNICEF estimates that in 2001 there were 1 million children illegally imprisoned in jails across the world. The proportion of juvenile detainees throughout prisons varies from country to country, from 0.5 percent up to 30 percent of total prison populations.

Mr. Chairman, in the Philippines there are an estimated 20,000 children imprisoned in conditions that amount to torture over the course of a year. And yesterday morning we had the opportunity to meet with the authorities from the Philippine Government at their Embassy here in Washington. They confirmed to us, officially, that there are, at least on this day—while their own President is meeting with other political leaders in New York, there are over 3,700 children in their prisons in the Philippines today. Children as young as 9 can be tried in courts and sent to jail. Some children have been found in jail younger than 9, like Rosie, age 6.

Children in prison with adults are five times more likely to be sexually assaulted. They are twice as likely to be beaten, and 50 percent more likely to be attacked with a weapon than children housed in juvenile detention centers. Many of them are children who committed no offenses whatsoever, simply rounded up off the streets and placed in prison.

One example was given recently of a young man—and we were given this example yesterday by the officials from the Philippine Embassy—the young man who spent, I think, 4 or 5 years in prison was ultimately released with no criminal record, no offenses were ultimately indicted against him, and during that time he did at least have the opportunity of some education. He is now a Fulbright scholar, which only goes to show the opportunities that are being denied to the vast numbers of street children and what could be done if proper education were provided for them.

Further original research was undertaken within the other example I want to give of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UNICEF estimates that between 20,000 and 30,000 children under the age of 12 are under arms, and that makes up 10 percent of the armed groups in the region; at least 20,000 children are believed to live on the streets in the DRC capital, that is Kinshasa; and of the children imprisoned in the central prison of Makala, all of them were found to be in acutely traumatized states.

The slide that will follow now follows on the report that we did on Brazil, and I will come now to the conclusion in my remarks.

[The slide referred to follows:]

Jubilee Campaign – September 2005



Website launched in September 2004



www.stopkillingchildren.com

E: info@jubileecampaign.co.uk
T: 01483 854767
F: 01483 854797

Jubilee, St Johns
Cranleigh Road
Weyersh, Guildford
Surrey, GU5 0QX

now with over
750 cases



Jubilee Campaign – September 2005

In September 2004, Jubilee Campaign, at my instigation, launched a new Web site. It's called stopkillingchildren.com. We thought this would be a way of shining a light on the situation in Brazil, because we thought it unacceptable for any country to allow the routine killing of children without redress, and for those deaths to go on being unrecorded day by day. And I remind you again of the statistics I gave earlier: Between four and five children and adolescents die every single day in Brazil—not in Iraq or in the Middle East, but here in the Americas, and in a country which is one of the wealthiest countries in the world.

When children like Danielle Becham are killed in the United Kingdom, that tragedy is rightly front page news. In places in Brazil, where violence against children is common, the lives of children who are killed are easily forgotten.

Our Web site will always in the future report cases in countries such as Guatemala, the Philippines and Honduras. However, starting with Brazil, this Web site has two aims; firstly, in the absence of a gravestone for many of these children, the site would document the deaths of children killed through armed violence. The site will be a memorial and a reminder that their lives are not forgotten; and secondly, to be a tool in order to provide leverage and political pressure on the relevant authorities to take effective action to prevent the killing of children by armed violence.

The Web site has letters to be downloaded to the Brazilian President, President Lula, who was referred to earlier, and a petition to sign because we do believe that the Brazilian Government is a democratic government and is properly susceptible to reasonable political pressure. And there are many people in Brazil who recognize that this is a stain on the name of their country and want to

see something happen about it, but many are frightened. A journalist, 2 years ago, who reported on events in Brazil was himself assassinated for telling the story of some of the armed gangs and drug barons who are involved in using the street children as what are called “little planes” to fly their merchandise.

The number of cases we have documented on this site now exceeds 750 during this year alone. I want to end my speech by giving you just four examples of cases we have already compiled of children and young people whose lives have been needlessly cut short. These are not history. Their deaths all happened this year.

On May 9, 2005, a 6-month-old girl—I repeat, a 6-month-old girl—was raped and killed. It was on a Saturday around midday at home in the locality of Sitio Extrema in the municipality of Ico, Ceara. Reportedly, the crime was committed by the victim’s uncle while her parents were out of the home. The alleged killer is now in police custody.

On June 14, 2005, a 2-year-old boy was shot dead by his cousin. Reportedly the victim’s 13-year-old cousin showed his father’s gun to an 11-year-old cousin, and the child was near them. According to the 11-year-old boy, the teenager said that he would shoot him, and he decided to take the child back home. As they turned back, the 13-year-old boy shot the victim.

On August 9, an 8-year-old boy was found dead, cut in pieces. The 8-year-old boy was found inside a pack cut in pieces. This happened in the district of Vila Bahia, in the municipality of Encruzilhada in Bahia. Reportedly the boy was last seen on Sunday afternoon. The confessed killer, Zenilton Barbosa dos Santon, 28, said he committed the crime because the victim had offended him. The crime is under investigation.

On August 18, three children were found dead on a Tuesday afternoon. Reportedly the victims, two aged 8, one of them age 7, were last seen on Monday afternoon; were found in different places along the Almada River 15 kilometers away from the downtown of the municipality. According to the police, the victims, two girls and a boy, were strangled.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for listening to these graphic details. I know that Members of your Subcommittee are deeply committed to doing something about these issues. Thank you for the opportunity of shining a light on these issues. Let’s hope that together through our British Parliament and through the American Congress, that we can make this a serious issue that will be taken seriously worldwide. These street children represent the future of their countries, and unless this issue is taken seriously, their countries will have no future.

[The prepared statement of Lord Alton follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LORD DAVID ALTON, HOUSE OF LORDS, UNITED KINGDOM
OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

INTRODUCTION & PRESENT REALITY:

Good afternoon.

Jubilee Campaign has been lobbying to protect children’s rights for over 10 years. Jubilee Campaign’s advocacy has stood alongside the direct and practical support provided by Campaign’s sister organisation, Jubilee Action.

Street Children are not a recent phenomenon. Whenever there has been a major social, political or economic crisis the existence of Street Children has been prevalent.

Estimates for children living in the streets include:

Brazil—200,000 to 8 million
 India—over 400,000 in the cities alone
 The Philippines—1.5 million

In the early 1990's Jubilee Campaign was one of the first UK groups to sound the killing of street children on the streets of Brazil.

Working with journalists John Downing and Danny McGrory we exposed the reality of police death squads—making front page news in the Daily Express, a National UK daily paper.

Many well-known figures including Paul McCartney, George and Olivia Harrison, Richard Branson and Imran Khan have supported the campaign.

A defining moment was when the issue of street children was put on the agenda by John Major during his visit to Rio for the 1992 Earth Summit.

During this period, Jubilee gathered shocking evidence of police death squads routinely shooting children on the streets to clear them off the streets.

I visited to Brazil, in February 2004, hoping to discover the situation had changed.

We began our mission by making a quiet pilgrimage to the church of Our Lady of Candelaria, in Rio.

It was here, in July 1993 that six police officers opened fire on a group of street children who were sleeping in some doorways opposite the church.

Today, a small cross, with the names of the eight boys who died, has been erected in front of Candelaria. Their silhouettes have been etched in red onto the surface of the street.

Our investigation found that the killing of street children in Brazil continues—at an alarming rate. The only perceivable change since 1990s is a redistribution of where the killings are taking place.

The police no longer shoot children in public—they have learnt that bad publicity is not good for tourism.

Hidden away in the sprawling favelas of Brazil's major cities, children are on the front-line of an urban war between rival drug gangs.

An expert from Brazil's National Movement of Street Children says that between 4 and 5 adolescents are murdered daily; that every 12 minutes a child is beaten; that 4.5 million children under 12 are working; and that 500,000 children are engaged in domestic labour. In 40% of crimes children are the victims.

The massive proliferation of small arms is a central cause. One of the movement's activists told me, 'It is easier for a child to get a gun than to get a bus-pass.'

Alongside the greater accessibility to guns, what has changed since the 1990's and deepened the crisis, is the emergence of a ruinous drugs culture. Formerly, Brazil was simply a transit country for the notorious producers of Columbia, Bolivia and Peru.

Today, Brazil ranks only after the USA as the second biggest consumer of cocaine. In Rio's 680 favelas—where about 25% of the city's 12 million people live—this has led to the emergence of no-go areas controlled by rival gangs such as Red Command and Third Command, who organize and arm the children.

Children as young as four have guns and are used as 'little planes'—to use the jargon of the street-trafficking drugs and messages between sellers and buyers.

I was struck by the remark of one youngster in the favela who told me that, "The only way to go up in society is to go through the trafficking of guns or drugs."

The role models are young men with designer clothes and brand new motorbikes. They earn phenomenally more through the drugs trade than their fathers. But, if they come to represent the only ladder on which the young can climb out of destitution, Lula will end up presiding over a dead country. It is impossible to reconcile rhetoric about social justice and opportunity with the reality of corpses lying like litter in the streets.

During our visit, we went to Santo Amaro which is situated in North East Brazil on the edge of one of Recife's biggest favelas and is the most violent area in the city. Last year, sixteen young people were shot, or died, as a result of either non-payment to pushers or from overdoses. The youngest urchin was ten years old.

One of the workers at Santo Amaro, has seen his three brothers killed and the young woman who trains the dancers recently saw her brother gunned down.

Tellingly, she demanded to know why firearms should be freely available: "Children who can't even get food to eat can get a gun. 74% of the killings are by gun. I never saw a gun in my life and now they are everywhere." She described how two

more young people, aged 20 and 21, who passed through their centre, had been killed in the previous week. One was another case of mistaken identity: "They took him from his mother's arms and killed him." The other had been a drug user who hadn't paid his bill.

She wanted to know where the international pressure to end the bloodbath was. Pointedly, she said that, "While the killers are free, it is society that is in prison.

Her son died just one year ago and unlike most people, who are cowed into silence by a fear of brutal retaliation, the people of Peixinhos rallied to support her as she organized a public procession of crosses and candles. *In all, there were eighty crosses—each bearing the name of men, women and children who had been killed over the previous two years. Repeat: eighty people from one small community in just two years.*

This situation, however, is not restricted to Brazil.

STREET CHILDREN—A GLOBAL OVERVIEW:

Street Children across the world may be homeless, work on the streets, have no contact with their families, live on the streets with their families, live in day or night shelters or spend time in institutions, for example prison.

There are no confirmed figures of Street Children, they are not easy to count due to migration, exclusion from infrastructures such as schools and colleges and due to differing definitions of the term Street Children. Figures for these children are estimates and can often be wildly exaggerated. Most statistics are simply estimates for example:

Kenya: 250,000
Ethiopia: 150,000
Zimbabwe: 12,000
Bangladesh: 445,226
Nepal: 30,000
India: 11 million

Whilst these figures are estimates, there is anecdotal evidence that these figures are increasing country by country due to the following:

- Uncontrollable urbanisation—directly linked to poverty
- Conflict within family
- Conflict with the law
- Children being orphaned due to AIDS/HIV

STREET CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW—PHILIPPINES & CONGO:

Vagrancy is in some countries an offence, and the police round these children up from the streets and through them into prison. Other children are accused of petty crimes and imprisoned, often without having a first hearing, in overcrowded adult jails where they are at the mercy of the prison guards and fellow prisoners.

UNICEF estimated in 2001 that there were 1 million children illegally imprisoned in jails across the world. The proportion of juvenile detainees to adult prisoners varies from country to country from 0.5–30% of the total prison population.

Jubilee Action, a children's human rights charity from Guildford, UK has released a report detailing this horrendous situation, and took an ITN camera crew to the Philippines to document the reality of child prisoners. This report was subsequently shown on Broadcast Networks worldwide, including CNN.

In the Philippines there are estimated to be 20,000 children imprisoned in conditions that amount to torture. Children as young as 9 can be tried in courts and sent to jails, some children have been found in jail younger than 9, like Rosie aged 6.

Children imprisoned with adults are:

- 5 times more likely to be sexually assaulted
- Twice as likely to be beaten
- And 50% more likely to be attacked with a weapon, than children housed in juvenile detention centres.

Further original research was undertaken within the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

UNICEF estimates that 30,000 children under the age of 12 are under-arms and this makes up 10% of the armed groups in the region. 20,000 children are believed to live on the streets in the DRC capital, Kinshasa, and of the children imprisoned in the Central Prison of Makala, all them were found to be in an acutely traumatised state.

STOP KILLING CHILDREN WEB SITE:

In September 2004 Jubilee Campaign launched the Stop Killing Children website because we believe that it is unacceptable for any country to allow the routine killing of children without redress.

When children like Danielle Becham in are killed in the UK, this tragedy is rightly front page news. In places like Brazil where violence against children is common place, the lives of children who are killed are easily forgotten.

The website will also report cases from countries such as Guatemala, the Philippines and Honduras. However, starting with Brazil, this web-site has two aims;

1. In the absence of a grave stone for many of these children, this site will document the deaths of children killed through armed violence. This site will be a memorial and a reminder that their lives are not forgotten.
2. To be a tool in order to leverage political pressure on the relevant authorities to take effective action to prevent the killing of children through armed violence. The website has letters to be downloaded to the Brazilian President and a petition to sign because we believe the Brazilian Government is susceptible to political pressure.

The number of reported cases on this website has now exceeded 750 in a single year.

I want to end my statement by giving some examples of these cases we have already compiled of children and young people whose lives have been needlessly cut short.

May 09, 2005

6 month old girl raped and killed

A six-month-old girl was raped and killed on Saturday around midday at home in the locality of Sitio Extrema, in the municipality of Icó (Ceará). Reportedly, the crime was committed by the victim's uncle whilst her parents were out of home. The alleged killer is in police custody.

Jun 14, 2005

2 year old boy shot dead by his cousin.

Reportedly, the victim's 13-year-old cousin showed his father's gun to an 11-year-old cousin and the child was near them. According to the 11-year-old boy, the teenager said that he would shoot him and he decided to take the child back home. As they turned back, the 13-year-old boy shot the victim.

Aug 09, 2005

8 year old boy found dead cut in pieces

Eight-year-old boy was found dead inside a pack cut in pieces yesterday afternoon in the district of Vila Bahia, in the municipality of Encruzilhada (Bahia). Reportedly, the boy was last seen on Sunday afternoon. Confessed killer Zenilton Barbosa dos Santos, 28, said he committed the crime because the victim has offended him. The crime is under investigation.

Aug 18, 2005

Three children found dead on Tuesday afternoon.

Reportedly, the victims, two aged 8 one of them aged 7, were last seen on Monday afternoon and were found in different places along the Almada river, 15 km far from the downtown of the municipality. According to the police, the victims, two girls and a boy, were strangled.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Lord Alton, thank you very much for that extremely sobering but candid assessment of the plight of the street children and for your extraordinary leadership. I have known and admired you for many, many years, and the work you have done with the Jubilee Campaign and the work you have done on a broad array of human rights issues. It is a privilege to have you here providing testimony to our Committee and to have you in these halls.

So I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your work. You certainly live the Gospel and take it seriously that we are our brothers' and sisters' keeper. I know I am inspired by it, and I think many of us who have known and admired you are inspired by it.

Let me just ask a couple of questions because you have answered so many questions and provided, I think, a roadmap for all of us to follow in terms of exposing this sense of impunity about the killing and maiming of these street children and their wrongful incarceration with adults. As you point out, if they were in juvenile detention, many of these problems would be mitigated, particularly the rapes and beatings that these children undergo when they are incarcerated.

But in your observation of U.S. and U.K. and international programs, are they enough? Have we all done enough, or is there significant room to grow these programs and to expand them? The churches, like in Brazil where the church is relatively strong, what has been their partnership with NGOs as well as with the Government of Brazil and Philippines, again where the church is very strong, in trying to provide safe haven and help for these individuals?

And then let me just ask you as well, has the G-8 done enough in raising this as an issue, something very specific on their agenda? Perhaps you and we, you in the U.K. and we in the United States Congress, could jointly pen a letter to our President and to your Prime Minister asking that it be raised in a way that the debt issue has been rightfully raised and some of the other North/South issues. But this is obviously an issue that is found all over the world; so we should try to get this on the agenda if it has not been adequately done in the past. And so if you could spend some time with those questions.

Lord ALTON. Thank you.

Taking your first question about what—whether we are doing enough, inevitably the answer is there is far more we can do. But I don't want to give the impression that nothing is being done, because I have been enormously impressed by the work that is being done in particular countries. But never enough, given the scale of the problems. And I think because the problems have been accelerating the way I have described, that we need to take this issue a lot more seriously and link it with some of the other questions that we have been looking at, not least the trafficking question.

There is a danger, it seems to me, in political life of things being sort of "flavor of the month" and moving on faddishly from one issue to another. And we feel we have "done" trafficking, so that is the end of that, so let's move on to debt cancellation or something else. And there is a linkage between these questions. If we don't properly train and mobilize the young people in these countries, and ensure that they have the opportunity to succeed in the future, first of all, they are going to be deeply alienated, and therefore, themselves, will be open to some of those very organizations that we are all too familiar with who are happy to exploit poverty, deprivation, alienation. Therefore, in terms of our own security in countries like Kenya, for instance, it is vitally important that alienation is addressed.

Secondly, in light of things like the AIDS pandemic, these are some of the most important people in terms of sustaining the economies of these countries in the future, so they mustn't just be seen as a problem. They should be seen as one of the greatest resources available to their nation. So for that reason I would cer-

tainly like to see a lot more going into the training of young people and provision of safe and secure housing of young people. To dump them in prisons or to leave them on the streets, open particularly to drug dealers and so on, is clearly not the way we should be dealing with this issue.

You mentioned the faith communities and the role that they play. They are crucial. If they were not there—and there are many idealistic people who give their lives to this work—the situation would be disastrous. I am full of admiration for what they do and projects that Jubilee Action has supported. We raise privately about half a million pounds a year. It is small beer in terms of the scale of the problems, but it is a contribution, and just because you can't solve all the problems, it is not a reason for not solving any of them.

And so, for instance, Jubilee Action has funded the work of Sao Martino, which is the biggest agency in Rio dealing with children on the streets, and over the years we have been very proud to support that. The late Princess Diana opened a shelter there which is named for her, and it has been visited by our Prime Minister's wife, Mrs. Blair, who has herself held receptions in Downing Street in order to raise money toward the funding of some of these projects. Our previous Prime Minister, Mr. Major, visited some of Sao Martino's work to give it focus, and one of the children who actually came to dance in the cultural activities that were provided that evening was a street child who himself was subsequently shot dead. I know that that deeply moved Mr. Major. It is one of the reasons why he again got personally involved in this issue.

So I think we need to get more political leaders involved in the way that you described. I think there is a lot of goodwill, and probably we do need to take it ultimately to the G-8, as you suggested, and get them to take it as seriously as they have taken, for instance, the relief of debt issue.

Ultimately, though, you can remove debts, you can feed people, you can provide vaccination programs, and you should be doing all those things, but if you don't resolve things like the conflict in countries like Sudan and Congo that is leading to so many children being killed, well, there is no point to doing all those other things, because there won't be anybody left to feed or to inoculate or to care for.

So all these things are inextricably linked, and we should see them as joined-up issues, not as separate issues. And I think that we need to give this the profile that certainly the issues—that trafficking had as a result of the sorts of measures that you took here in the Congress during the last decade. And I think now concerted action on a variety of fronts is needed.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much for your very graphic report, and I compliment you for the work that you have been doing in this area. You know, the problem of street children in Brazil has been a long-standing problem. As you probably know, many years ago, even before the gangs became more organized, and certainly before the event of illicit drugs, it seemed like Brazil had a problem with children, even at that time. They were—it was sort of perhaps like nuisances. They were not even in any kind of serious crimes. We went to Brazil in '68 with the YMCA group and went up to the

favelas, and as a matter of fact, we were the only persons on the tour bus that were allowed to go into the favelas around Rio because they are up, as you know, on the hills, and the city is down in the valley. Even at that time, in '68, the situation was bad.

But today it seems as though—I guess my question is, it seems like the politics in Brazil has improved. They have elections. You have a labor leader who was supposed to be of the people elected to office.

Have you seen any—do you think that this Brazilian problem with street children is just endemic, and it has just been inculcated and engrained over the years? Or do you see any—as a matter of fact, there was always the denial that the police would—on weekends they would simply take their uniforms off, wear street clothes, and their job was actually to see how many children could be killed because they were simply nuisances. Have you seen any more progressive admission that this seems like an engrained problem? I mean, there are problems all over Latin America, but Brazil has simply stood out for the last 50 years. Is there any attempt on the part of the new government or relatively new government to come to grips with this and talk about it as a national shame or national issue?

LORD ALTON. I think you have put the question very well. When President Lula came to office, there was great hope and expectation that because of his own personal experience, having himself moved up from quite acute poverty in his childhood, that he would understand these issues and tackle them. And although Rome wasn't built in a day, and one does hope that change will come, disillusionment was already setting in when I was taking evidence there just over a year ago. The sense that there hadn't been the changes, the fundamental changes, the radical changes that people had hoped for from Lula followed the allegations of corruption within the administration which are beginning to dog them.

So I hope that this surge of democracy and hope and expectation in a country which is fabulously wealthy in terms of its own natural resources, although those resources are very disproportionately spread will bring a response on this issue, because if it doesn't, I think the consequences in terms of internal unrest and so on in the future will be enormous.

I was very struck by what was said to us by a lot of the people we met about the need to tackle education. As a result of the grip of the favelas—and there are 680 favelas in Rio where 25 percent of the city's population of 12 million live, and inside those favelas gangs like Red Command and Third Command have a total grip of those places. Now, in the early 1990s, you are right, the police themselves literally treated children as though they were vermin, and they would shoot them dead on the street. These days the police simply turn a blind eye and sometimes literally watch while one gang sells children to other gangs and people pay off old scores.

I was very struck by the total lack of respect for life itself, and I do think that the civil society organizations, the faith groups, the media, everyone should do a lot more to promote the idea of the sanctity of human life in a country like Brazil. It certainly didn't seem to me that there was any understanding of that concept whatsoever.

Education, therefore, is a key. Many of the children from the favelas don't go to school because they have to cross through the areas controlled by other gangs in order to get to those schools, so they are too frightened to go. And anyway, the only lucrative route to making any progress for any of these youngsters is seen to be by becoming part of the gangs themselves. So it just fuels the same cycle of despair, and that is, I think, the fundamental thing they have to tackle.

We took evidence not just in Rio, but also in San Paulo and in Recife. Let us just underline the enormity of the sorts of things that we heard. I will mention, if I may, just one area in Recife which is called *Inferninha*, Little Hell, and it reads like pages out of *Dante's Inferno*. Child prostitution is concentrated there. Forty children are known to be working as prostitutes, more than 60 a weekend. Some of the boys and girls are as young as 10. Some have been sent there by their parents to supplement their incomes.

The men who exploit the children fall into three categories: The men who live in the neighborhoods; members of the police force, including senior officers; and foreigners who stay in *posadas*, small local hotels, and have children brought to them.

When I asked whether the police simply closed their eyes to this, I received this reply: No, they go to the bars and the pimps every Tuesday for their share of the takings.

We heard the appalling story from an aid worker of a faith-based organization about one young woman who had become a prostitute and was taken into that living hell by four men. They gang-raped her. When they were finished, they killed her, gouged out her eyes, ripped out her heart, and threw her into the sea. We also heard from, in the same area, about 15 killings in one town on the Sunday before we had met them. And again and again we heard about impunity of the police turning a blind eye, failing to carry out prosecutions. We met all the leading organizations dealing with street children, and there we heard the same story again and again and again.

Now, I do believe that the Brazilian Government, like the Government of the Philippines, is very susceptible to proper, legitimate pressure, and this is an area in which I think the United States Administration really can play a leading role. I think you are seen as a friend and ally, and sometimes friends have to tell their friends the truth. If Brazil wishes to be the leading nation of South America, if it wants to play its part as one of the great economic nations of the future, it has to tackle this problem at source, because if it doesn't, it will remain a stain on their character.

Mr. PAYNE. I couldn't agree with you more, and it seems, as it has been indicated, there is a strong church organization. And it just seems that, you know, with the new government and with the church having a concern all along, if these things get endemic and they are hard to turn around, as you indicated, it is difficult to turn around.

Like I said, this has been going on, and quietly. It was not brought to attention, like I said, I was very active with the YMCA, and we saw it as a problem at that time before—like I said, before there was the gangs that are there today and before drugs become a big issue. I mean, a kid would maybe smoke a cigarette and sit

on the hood of a car just very, very, you know, nuisances. But I think that because the police were so—as a matter of fact, one of the favelas they allowed me to go in, they said no authorities are allowed to go up in the favelas. They do not have—haven't seen a doctor, haven't seen authority, have not seen a government worker, have not seen any kind of authority at that time. That was in the 1960s. And I am sure that in many of these areas, the law enforcement people do not go into those areas.

Lord ALTON. Absolutely right. And you can be encouraged, though, in one agency, a Catholic aid agency that I visited in Recife, there was a lady there who had organized the women of that area to hold a protest through the streets complaining about the killings of people. What had happened to her, her 25-year-old son died in her arms on the street after being mowed down in a shooting. It was a shot fired in a case of mistaken identity. His mother told me this: "We are overwhelmed by all this violence."

The Brazilian society regards killing as normal. Some people believe that if the children are on the streets, it serves them right if they are killed. We are trying to confront and fight this line of thinking. In telling me, she demanded to know why firearms should be so freely available to children. She said that children who can't even get food to eat can get a gun. Seventy-four percent of the killings are by gun. "I never saw a gun in my life," she said, "and now they are everywhere." But she and the group of women in that area had taken action, and they had seen a reduction in the number of killings during the period following the demonstration.

And one of the projects that they were running also, to me, was a sign of hope. Five hundred children in that church-led project were being given computer literacy skills, and an Irish businessman who traveled with me to that favela took out his checkbook and wrote a check to enable that project to double in size. There are now 1,000 children from the most violent favela; they have been given computer literacy skills and which will one day give them jobs, and hopefully that will help break that cycle.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much. I appreciate your comments.

Mr. PITTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And again, thank you, Lord Alton, for your sobering and very compelling testimony. I, too, have the greatest admiration for your work and have been privileged to work collaboratively with you on human rights on a number of occasions.

I want to say that I visited the compounds, the homes in the Bombay region that you and Teen Challenge sponsor there, and these compounds, these hostels outside of Bombay for children of the sex workers, they are beautiful little islands of hope and healing and happiness just 2 hours from the red light district of Bombay and the dark despair of the prostitutes and the brothels, the exploitation that occurs there. So thank you—for I know firsthand from visiting the compounds, they have them for girls, separate ones for the women—it is a wonderful work of restoration to those children involved in that industry.

You skipped over one slide on page four where you mentioned the term "little planes." I wonder if you would elaborate on that. What part do illegal drugs play in this whole problem of street children? Then remembering that this is a public hearing, that this

will echo across the country as this issue is given publicity in the light of day, how can private citizens, how can religious groups, how can charitable organizations here best contribute to helping solve this problem around the world? If you would talk about that, please.

Lord ALTON. Well, thank you, Congressman Pitts. Thank you particularly for mentioning the projects in Bombay.

They are a good illustration of what perhaps people can do, what private individuals can do. It is worth mentioning, Jubilee was able to establish those projects because of the generosity of a Scottish comedian, Billy Connolly, who hosted an event at Hammersmith in London, and gave all the proceeds, about 100,000 pounds, to help establish those houses in Bombay. Olivia Harrison, the widow of George Harrison, one of the Beatles from my own City of Liverpool, has been extraordinarily generous, both in Romania, referred to earlier on by the Chairman of the proceedings, but also in Latin America, in Brazil. She has been very generous in funding a number of these projects.

So individuals can play their part, whether it is thousands of pounds or whether it is just a few pounds or a few dollars. People can make some kind of difference.

The truth is, we often feel a bit like the boy in Robert Louis Stevenson's book, the one that says, "The world is so big and I am so small, I do not like it at all, at all." You can feel intimidated by the scale of these problems. But people are making a difference and doing some fantastic work.

You will be hearing from Teresa Santos a little later on about the work she is personally doing in Rio and her network there. People like her are doing some wonderful things on the ground helping street children.

There is a tea company, based in my own former constituency in Liverpool, who took up the challenge about India, and they agreed to give a percentage of the proceeds from the sale of a particular brand of tea they manufactured to support those hostels in India. So there are lots of ways, individually, collectively, corporately, that people can respond.

You asked about the role of drugs. I think this touches back on the point Congressman Payne was making a few moments ago about what has changed in Brazil. In the early nineties, as well as accessibility to guns, there became much greater accessibility to drugs and the emergence of what is a ruinous drug culture.

Formerly, Brazil was simply a transit company for the notorious producers of Columbia, Bolivia and Peru, but today, Brazil ranks only after the United States as the second biggest consumer of cocaine. In those 680 favelas in Rio, that has led to the emergence of a no-go area, as we have already discussed, controlled by rival gangs like Red Command and Third Command, who organize and arm children. Children as young as 4 have guns and are used, as I have said, as "little planes," that is the colloquialism, the language of the street. They are the ones who transmit the drugs from place to place and the proceeds as well, and they take messages between the sellers and the buyers. Those children then get caught up in the escalating violence, and they are effectively child soldiers, by any other name.

Mr. PITTS. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Just one final question, Lord Alton. In your written statement, you pointed out that very many well-known figures, including Paul McCartney and others, have supported this. Is that past tense, or are they still actively promoting the cause of street children? It seems like it needs a shot of adrenaline, which they can certainly help provide.

Lord ALTON. You are right. It does need a shot of adrenaline. It needs others to come to the fore. But, in fairness, they were not just one-night stands. They have continued to support. Olivia Harrison in particular, I would pay a great tribute to her for the support she has given over a very long period of time now, and recently decided to give I think 10 percent of the proceeds of the re-issuing of the My Sweet Lord album that George Harrison made to Street Children Project. So there are some generous people around, and we should never underestimate that even given the scale of the problems that we see.

There is though far more that we as politicians can also do and the pressure we put on governments through our Ambassadors. We can encourage people to use the Web site I referred to earlier to fill in petitions, to contact their Senators and Congressmen, members of Parliament and members of other legislatures, so there is a concerted worldwide approach to this problem.

Mr. SMITH. Let me just say finally, thank you again for your leadership, Lord Alton.

You know, all things must pass. This must pass, too. I think you made a very good point. Your testimony, the information you have conveyed, the best practices, that a child can't be incarcerated with older people—as you pointed out, they are five times more apt to be sexually assaulted and all the other terrible things. We will use this Committee to energize or re-energize our efforts, I assure you. But your testimony has been pivotal, and I thank you for it, as well as your leadership.

Lord ALTON. I know those street children will thank you for the efforts and commitment you are putting in.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you so much.

Let me now ask our third panel of distinguished citizens to make their way to the witness table, beginning first with Father Shay Cullen. Father Cullen is a missionary priest to the Philippines from Ireland, and a member of the Missionary Society of St. Columban, an Irish organization working for human rights around the world. In 1974, he established the People's Recovery Empowerment Development Assistance (PREDA) Foundation. He was an invited delegate to the conference drafting the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Helsinki of 1989 and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001.

Father Shay was awarded the German Human Rights of the City of Weimar Award in December 2000 and the Italian Human Rights Award at the City of Ferrara in 2001. Numerous newspaper articles and TV documentaries have reported the success of his work protecting children and campaigning for human rights.

We will then hear from Teresa Santos, who works as a network coordinator for Rede Viva-RJ, Rio de Janeiro. Viva Network is an

NGO in Roster Consultive Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. They have 66 network initiatives in 43 countries linking 16,000 workers, reaching 160,000 children. One of these networks is located in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Rede Viva-RJ is a network of faith-based organizations and businesses, NGOs and other institutions working with children at-risk on the streets of Rio de Janeiro.

In the early 1990s in Rio de Janeiro, Ms. Santos built and operated two shelter homes for street children and is actively engaged in bringing practical solutions to transform the lives of these children.

Finally, we will hear from Andy Sexton, who is currently the International Director for Children at Risk, OASIS International, based in Uganda. He also serves as Chairperson of the Global Strategy with Street Children Initiative. Mr. Sexton was a co-designer and trainer for the OASIS Streetwise Course, which provides training for street-children workers. Mr. Sexton also established street children's initiatives in three cities in Zimbabwe between 1995 and 2002.

Previously, Mr. Sexton served as a workshop facilitator on Child Development and Best Practices in Children's Ministry in Mozambique; Street Children, at the Viva Cutting Edge Conference; Children at Risk, at the Scripture Union International Conference; and on The Future of Streets Ahead, one of the longest-serving street children projects in Zimbabwe in 2002.

Mr. Sexton is also Co-Founder of the Bulawayo Task Force on Street Children, a coordinating body for street-children work in the city.

If you could begin, Father, with your testimony, and then we will continue with each of the other witnesses.

**STATEMENT OF FATHER SHAY CULLEN, FOUNDER, PREDA
FOUNDATION, PHILIPPINES**

Father CULLEN. I will make more of a summary of the presentation for the interests of brevity.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, all of your prepared testimonies and any attachments will be made part of the record.

Father CULLEN. Right. Well, last week, before I left the Philippines, I have been working with street children. That has been my life work for the last 35 years. One particular group, as I say in my paper, is a Filipino-American boy living under a bridge, abandoned by parents and society. These are children addicted to sniffing industrial glue to ward off hunger, and they suffer malnutrition and parasites. They live in fear of police beatings, brutality, arrests and detention without trial. They live in dehumanizing conditions.

I would just like to point out for the record, this was captured in a television program by ATN and shown on CNN. I would like to submit a copy of that for the record.

A lot has been said already here today about the condition of the children on the streets and in prison, and I will not elaborate much more. But there are reasons. We have to look at the root causes of much of this problem of street children.

The children themselves are typical children of the streets. They are vagrants, and in some cities, I have to mention, particularly Davao in Mindanao, they become victims of the shadowy death squads that act with impunity in executing teenagers, leading us to believe that they are government-sanctioned in some way. As we heard from Lord Alton, this is going on in Brazil. But we have a big problem with this in the Philippines.

Some years ago, we at the PREDA Foundation took it upon ourselves to confront the mayor of the city, Mayor de Guzman, and we had strong evidence that would indicate that he had the responsibility or accountability for all the dead children. And we were, of course, sued by the mayor because of our speaking out. We won our case, and we are trying to support the right of human rights' workers to speak out to the Philippine Government and ask them to just listen to us. They are of goodwill, but they don't seem to be too interested in the condition of the street children.

Yes, we have been harassed because of this. We have been threatened. We get death threats and have been brought to court to be deported and charged in many cases by those who oppose our work.

But street children also end up trafficked into the sex industry, and much of our work has been to confront the traffickers and the sex mafia, which is internationally based, both European nationals, American nationals. At this time, we have one trafficker on trial, and we are pursuing cases against him, an American national, and a partner, an Australian national. So we take direct action against the abusers of the children.

We have this problem of the children being considered as pests by the business community. Many have gone on the record in the business community in the Philippines saying they should be eliminated. These are people looking for maybe loans from banks, from international institutions, and we have to bring a sense of awareness and some values to the business community not to take such an attitude toward street children.

I will just correct some statistics for the record. In 1998, a government report put the figure at 1.2 million street children in the Philippines and 70,000 of them in metro Manila alone. Another estimate done by ECPAT, which is an NGO, approximately 1.5 million children on the streets. In short, today, that would be at least 2 million all over the Philippines, an estimated number. We have to look at the spiritual paralysis of the lack of spiritual values and the human neglect, the failure to live up to the standards of respect for human life as being behind this.

The Philippines is actually a fractured democracy. As we will hear, the feudal practices persist, and the greater part of the national budget is dedicated to servicing foreign debt and paying a bloated bureaucracy, which are somewhat wasted, and money on fake and overpriced development projects. There is very little available for social projects that would benefit street children.

Foreign aid is wasted when it is poured into the pockets of rich politicians. This is where the foreign aid projects, even loans through the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, should be scrutinized and monitored carefully. This is taxpayer money from American citizens in some cases, and this has to be scruti-

nized, because the cronies of the politicians, I am sad to say, they corner all of these funds for themselves, even set up fake NGOs.

Disaster relief, in our experience, has been squandered in the past. We have had a very sad experience, recently looking, when we tried to expand our homes. We have existing homes for children we rescue from the brothels and another home for children we rescue from the prison system, because we are active in that rescue program, and we are trying to establish more.

But just to show you some of the practical problems we are up against, when we asked some politicians to give us buildings that were actually abandoned after the relief, the expenditure of the relief money for Pinatubo victims, these structures are, 10 years later, rusting, big buildings, all wasted. They said, no, they are going to give those buildings for a car park, for the Department of Public Works and Highways, but not for the children. So we are campaigning in the Philippines for simple gestures like this from government. So that hard-hearted attitude, to neither let the children go or help them, has to be confronted. So that is part of our work, to increase public awareness.

We do a lot of positive things, and there are changes. We had big changes by lobbying to the Supreme Court, and this is a very positive development. Over a year ago, they started changing the rules of court, which enabled us to then put the legal wheels in motion and to get many children out of prison. They are assigned to us and to our custody, and then we reintegrate them very quickly into school and back into their families.

It is not an institutionalization of these children, but it is a half-way home, where they get values formed; they get a sense of dignity, a sense of affirmation. There are no guards, no gates; it is a whole new system. And we want to share this capacity-building with other NGOs, so they, too, can treat children in a positive manner, which is not detention. We have 55 of these children living in an open center, and they are not criminals. And they don't run away. So positive things can be done, and change can come. We have seen that in the change of attitude in some of the government, the response of government agencies in recent months. But much more has to be done.

One particular case that comes to mind: A 14-year-old boy, Francisco. He is a Filipino-American. As you said, Mr. Chairman, in your own introduction, a lot of the street kids even today, for so many years after the bases close, we take care of these children. Particularly, we have a special program for Filipino-American kids, and many of them are now very successful and come to school and college, but some are still on the streets. We just found some more of these kids living in these terrible conditions.

Just for the record, we took, in 1993, we did take a class action suit in the International Court of Complaints here in Washington on behalf of the children. Unfortunately, the court ruled against our case and said that these women were unmarried women who provided sexual services to U.S. service personnel. And they were engaged in illicit acts of prostitution, and therefore, it could not be the basis of any legal claim. So we failed in that regard. But the Women's Caucus in Congress very helpfully came to the rescue,

and they made a recommendation to USAID, who did give some money.

So all of my other background to the nature of these children is in this report. I will not go on much longer. But I would like to say, we have a few points of recommendations, positive things that can be done that we would like to put forward as a positive way.

In collaboration with our friends in the British Parliament, Lord Alton, and here, our friends in Congress, friends of the Philippines, to strengthen existing expectations for good governance in the Philippines, so that existing resources and the finances made available through the World Bank and the ADB loans and other forms of aid will be used to diminish waste and abuse and corruption in government. This is number one. Because we are dealing with poverty.

Street children are there because of poverty and exploitation in the home. Poverty alleviation by supporting fair trade and positive attitudes. We support ourselves financially. At least we provide 25 percent of our own funds through fair trade. We have hundreds of livelihood projects all over the Philippines with farmers, and we export all these products.

Getting markets: Our main market is Europe, so we sell their goods and have the funds, and we provide livelihood for hundreds of families of children who would otherwise be on the streets or in prostitution.

Prevention: We do expanding finance and help and support for preventive education. It is very important to change public opinion in their attitude toward street children. So we do a lot of that, and we also have seminars and workshops for government officials, hoping that they, too, will do their duty toward street children.

Debt servicing: Obligations to be reduced is another big help, if it is linked to good governance and an end to corruption. But that link and that monitoring, I think, is very, very important.

Directing aid toward community-based projects, again, as I said earlier, for benefiting the parents of street children. And as we do encourage, of course, friends in Congress, as Lord Alton said, friends are there to tell friends how life can be better. So we do a robust encouragement, and support and pressure to Filipino authorities will help.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Father Cullen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FATHER SHAY CULLEN, FOUNDER, PREDA FOUNDATION,
PHILIPPINES

INTRODUCTION

Dear Honorable Members:

Last week before I left the Philippines to come here, I was working with street children. One particular group led by a Filipino-American street boy lives under a bridge abandoned by their parents and society. They are addicted to sniffing industrial glue to ward off hunger and they suffer malnutrition, parasites, and live in fear of police beatings, arrest and detention without trial in dehumanized conditions.

They are typical children of the streets, vagrants and in some other cities, such as Davao in Mindanao, they become victims of shadowy death squads that act with impunity in executing the teenagers leading us to believe they are government sanctioned. The silence and inaction of the authorities despite the mounting death toll is for us a sign of approval. When we protested the killings some years ago we were sued by the city mayor for defamation, but won our case when we proved we were merely defending the human rights of the children and freedom of speech on their behalf. We have been harassed, threatened with death and brought to court to be

deported for working to protect the street children and defend their rights to experience childhood and not to be abused.

Street kids are considered pests by some of the business community—as vermin to be exterminated. But they have committed no crime and are the victims of the wrongdoing of uncaring and corrupt politicians and abusive, impoverished parents.

According to UNICEF, an estimated 100 million children worldwide live at least part of their time on the streets (see below for statistics in other countries).

In the Philippines, a government report in 1998 put the figure at 1.2 million street children—about 70,000 of them in Metro Manila alone. Another report estimates that there are approximately 1.5 million children on the streets working as beggars, pickpockets, drug abusers and child prostitutes (ECPAT). Today, the number of children and youth living part of their lives on the streets in the Philippines could reach two million out of a total population of 84 million.

This is the result of human neglect, spiritual paralysis, greed and political irresponsibility that allows and exacerbates the entrenchment of poverty in an unjust social system. The Philippines is a fractured democracy, where feudal practices persist and where the greater national budget is dedicated to servicing foreign debt and paying a bloated bureaucracy, or is wasted on fake or overpriced development projects. There is very little for social programs.

We believe that foreign aid is wasted when poured into the coffers of rich politicians for projects they design to benefit their own family businesses or those of their cronies. Even disaster relief money is squandered and dissipated through corrupt practices.

Homes and shelters for street children are urgently needed. We are trying to establish more. When we requested last month the use of a government building constructed with relief funds given for the victims of the volcanic eruption of Mount Pinatubo (and soon abandoned), we were told it was better used for officials' offices and vehicles.

Advocacy and public awareness is achieved by workshops and training seminars on the rights of children that PREDA gives to members of the government, the public, students and teachers. The police and prosecutors are specially targeted audiences, as they inflict the most harm on children. The training and awareness—building sessions teach as many as 11,000 people every year.

Street children are always hungry. They leave home hungry and beg on the street where they are vulnerable to sexual exploitation, disease, malnutrition, illiteracy, abuse and trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Most male street children in the Philippines are in conflict with the law at some time and as many as 20,000 see the inside of a prison cell, where they are mixed with pedophiles, drug addicts, murderers and rapists. The street children are exposed to HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis in the prisons.

One of the street children we are helping is a 14-year-old boy I call Francisco. He is a Filipino-American living on the streets—abandoned like many others when the military bases pulled out in 1992 and thousands of children were left stranded. All support ceased and many children fathered by American servicemen became street children.

We filed a class action suit in 1993 on their behalf in the International Court of Complaints here in Washington, DC, to establish these Filipino-American children's rights to assistance. They have been consigned to live on the streets in hovels or slums in unimaginable poverty. Our case did not prosper. The court ruled that the children were the products of unmarried women who provided sexual services to US service personnel in Olongapo, Subic Bay and Angeles City and were therefore engaged in illicit acts of prostitution. Such illegal activity could not be the basis for any legal claim.

The Women's Congressional Caucus, however, recommended that USAID provide financial assistance for throwaway Filipino children on the streets of the Philippines. They gave, I believe, a sum close to \$650,000 to a US organization, some of which was distributed to various charities, although none went to the PREDA Foundation.

Through the PREDA Foundation we are doing all we can for the street children, the Filipino-American kids and those street kids put in jail, where they suffer the worst punishment of all for a street child—the unjust deprivation of freedom. Thousands of street kids are behind bars for petty misdemeanors and no other crime than being homeless on the streets, taking food without paying to ease their hunger or, when no food is to be had, sniffing cheap industrial glue to ease the pangs.

Solutions can be found in fair trade and by creating jobs for the parents of street kids. This is one of our interventions to break the cycle of poverty passed on from parents to children. Using our own financial resources, we have saved hundreds of street children and Fil-Am kids. Our funds come from PREDA Fair Trading, raised

from marketing the products from development projects PREDA has established for the poor. The products are then exported and the parents of street kids or those in dire circumstances are employed when possible.

By providing direct service homes, feeding programs, street education and advocacy to change the system, our work for children has continued unabated and we have been able to save many from the streets, bring them to a residential home, give values formation and formal and non-formal education. Many have good jobs today. This work still goes on. We have a home for former street kids who had been imprisoned, some of whom were never charged and others were not found guilty of any misdemeanor or crime. Some as young as eight and ten years old.

We are asking that foreign aid assistance be focused, directed and used to bring change in protecting the rights of street children, that World Bank loans and ADB loans be more closely monitored for waste and abuse and that child support programs be a component of every aid package.

WHO ARE THE STREET CHILDREN?

Street children are those children who, when they experience family problems, hunger, neglect and domestic violence, escape from their homes and live part-time on the streets. When they are settled and know street survival techniques, they return at times to their hovels and shacks to visit their families and bring food for their younger brothers and sisters. When they see that the food they bring is not enough, they return to the street and their brothers and sisters sometimes follow them, looking for the source of the food.

Parents at times send them out to beg and scavenge and even prostitute them or sell them in to bonded labor. We cannot forget the children born of teenage street children and aborted in backstreet clinics.

Other street children are child workers, permanently on the streets and engaged in scavenging, child labor, begging, peddling drugs and petty theft. Many end up in jail. Their rights are frequently abused by the police while on the streets. The girls are sometimes raped in custody and forced to hand over their daily earnings.

Others are accused falsely for crimes committed by street children who have been recruited into gangs controlled and protected by the police. The gangs of street children prey on the younger and weaker children and sometimes make them sex slaves, using drugs, food and fear to control and dominate them. The street children are trained to be drug couriers. Although innocent, the younger and unprotected can suffer untold abuse by the other street youth. When in the jails, they can be mixed with criminals, rapists and pedophiles.

They are runaways from dysfunctional, broken homes with an abusive parent. In the home, usually a hovel and poor environment beside a polluted canal or malarial swamp, they suffer sexual abuse, rape, physical abuse, verbal battering, rejection, malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea and dengue.

Most street children are illiterate. Having no incentive, money or support and encouragement to study, they have dropped out of elementary school. They join street gangs for their own protection and use industrial glue as a mind- and mood-altering tranquilizer. They work selling plastic bags, newspapers and flowers or begging for a syndicate. Many are controlled by pimps and sold to sex tourists on street corners or brought to the *casa*, a house of prostitution.

Street children are the poorest of the poor; they are the most vulnerable and weakest and unless they are helped they will be the HIV/AIDS victims of the future. They are forced to be child prostitutes that attract foreign sex tourists. They are susceptible to becoming criminals or even terrorists angry at the adult world that gave them life in the worst misery imaginable. The adult world has done this to the children.

GENDER BALANCE

The gender balance of the street children is roughly estimated to be two-thirds boys and one-third girls. No exhaustive research has been done to determine this. Based on the reports of charity workers, this is a fair comment. The groups of children are divided into those who live on the streets permanently and those who live part-time on the streets but go home every three or four days for a few hours or a day and then return to the streets.

They sleep in doorways, in push carts, under plastic sheets, under bridges, in drainage pipes, in derelict buildings, in abandoned cars and buses. Some even make shacks in the trees along the fashionable boulevards. They favor being with the rich dead in cemeteries where the tombs have roofs. They sleep in doorways on the pavements or in the church porch. They live along the sea walls and canals.

HOW YOUNG ARE THEY?

The children on the streets a few days a week are the youngest, from seven to twelve years old. The older boys and girls on the street who have been there for one or two years—that is, permanently on the streets—are aged 13 to 16, although nine- and ten-year-old children are also in this group.

WHERE DO STREET CHILDREN COME FROM?

The unstoppable march of global materialism and economic domination further enriches the elite and plunges the poor into even greater poverty, increasing the number of street children and displaced families.

Poverty drives hungry farmers into the arms of the communist rebels and the ranks of the Muslim rebels and other insurgents. They recruit the children as child soldiers and expose them to terrible dangers, violence and killings.

These child soldiers are mentally and emotionally damaged and flee the war for the streets. As the economy worsens, poverty increases, political violence grows and more and more impoverished rural families are driven from their homes in the countryside because of an insurgency and rebellion.

FROM THE STREET TO THE JAIL

Frequently arrested, street children are jailed without proper legal procedures. They are at times treated as non-persons. In a society where money is the measure of human worth, the children have no value. In the subhuman conditions of overcrowded jails and mixed with adults, they are deprived of light, learning, exercise, family and companionship.

They are sodomized and sexually abused by adult prisoners in overcrowded cells without even enough space to lie down together. Half of the prisoners have to stand while the other half sleeps. The only schooling the street children receive inside is how to be a criminal. They suffer systematic violation of their human rights from the day they are accused and are incarcerated without due process of law. When they do get out, they return to the streets and are able to organize street gangs of children to engage in crime. They are psychologically damaged and traumatized and sometimes deranged. They face the dangers of tuberculosis and other diseases while in the prison.

WHAT ARE THE INITIATIVES ON BEHALF OF STREET CHILDREN?

Community-based

The children are helped where they are—on the streets. Street contact workers are trained to conduct non-formal education and provide basic needs. Some are successful in getting the children off the streets and into school. This project needs constant follow-up, monitoring and financial support.

Street children themselves are sometimes trained to become street educators themselves. They belong to the peer group and are respected and accepted. They help to break down the lack of trust that street children have of social workers and helpers. Maximum participation of children in the work is a sign of best practice. Non-formal education on the street is an indication of this.

Jobs for street children

The children are helped to find income-earning activities to support themselves on the streets, such as washing cars, guarding parking areas, working as shine boys, selling products on the streets and selling plastic bags around the markets. Sadly, some are made professional beggars, drug couriers, pimps and child prostitutes.

Education

This is an approach that tries to bring responsive children into the school system by providing support and encouragement and regular follow-up and monitoring.

Livelihood opportunities for parents of the street children are sometimes proved by the project. Thus the child becomes valuable to the family, as the child is a source of financial assistance.

Drop-in centers for street children are common in the major cities, but they are vulnerable to the children's love of the freedom they have on the streets. The drop-out rate can be high. There is the added difficulty of providing sufficient care that will make a difference in the lives of the children. The centers provide basic needs and shelter but the programs are usually short-lived. When children do stay longer, they are referred to centers that provide care for the long term.

Residential live-in centers are expensive projects and there are not many of them. Unless they are placed in an area remote from the street and efforts are made to locate and bring the parents into the process of helping the children, their success rates will be low, as many children will be enticed to go back to the streets.

Forming special action groups of street children

The goal of these strategies is to help street children organize themselves for self-protection and help. Some have been successful. They feed each other, run for help to organizations like PREDA in emergencies, bring medical help and in the past have even made collections to pay extortion money to police to release their group members. Today they call on PREDA's legal officers to get their group members out of jail.

Street contact for children

This project entails regular contact by dedicated social workers with groups of street children. The workers relate with the children to win their trust, offer legal and personal protection against acts of abuse by the authorities and work to release the children from jails and holding cells or to get charges against them dismissed. The project provides basic needs such as clothes, food, medical help and shelter when needed. Efforts are made to contact parents and enable the child to visit the parents. Part-time work for older children is provided when possible.

Livelihood projects for parents are at times an aspect of street contact, as are meetings, outings and non-formal education. This model is being implemented by the PREDA Foundation, Olongapo City and other agencies. There is no attempt to take the children off the streets unless they are willing to enroll in school or agree to take non-formal education courses.

TRUE STORIES: JORDAN, ARTE, ANGEL AND HAKIM

Jordan, a 16-year-old Afro-American, is the son of an American sailor who was stationed at the US Naval Base in Subic Bay, Philippines, in the 1980s. (The base closed in 1992.) Like thousands of other Filipino-American children, Jordan was abandoned and left on the streets.

He endured racial slurs and discrimination because of his dark skin color and he was ridiculed as the child of a prostitute. His mother died of disease. He was a car washer who had no educational attainment but possessed high intelligence. He was recruited at 14 by the Communist rebels and made a child soldier for six months, after which he was captured by the military during an encounter. He was released after six months but returned to the streets, where he became a gang member and survived by washing cars and becoming a petty thief. He was found by a charity and helped recover through a program of recovery based on affirmation, esteem-building, spiritual formation, character development and skills training. He is now on the way to a better life.

Arte, 10, was a street boy. He ran away from a broken home and lived on the streets selling ice candies. He slept in doorways, begged at traffic lights and never went to school. He was falsely accused of robbery and put in jail while the police reported that they were defeating crime. He had no judicial hearing for four months, was beaten, made to work for the adult criminals and forced to eat off the floor. He was found in the Malabon City Jail in a small jail cell overcrowded with 88 inmates but designed only for ten. It was so crowded that not all could lie down to sleep at the same time. He had skin diseases. His only possession when found with many other street children behind bars was a pair of dirty cotton shorts and a torn t-shirt. He was rescued by a charity and is safe and receiving education.

Angel, 11, grew up in the countryside. Her father was a tenant farmer who was indebted to the land owner and gave 40 percent of his harvest to him, rendering him unable to feed his own family. Angel grew up with six brothers and a sister. At age 11, she was accosted by her 56-year-old uncle, who took her from the fields to the riverbank and raped her.

She ran home, but her parents would not believe her and were angry that she had made such an accusation. They were afraid of starting a family disruption because they owed money to the uncle's family and were ashamed of the publicity that would result if they believed her and filed a complaint.

Angel told her teacher, who reported it to the police. The accused uncle and Angel's parents negotiated a deal with the police. The family of the uncle would pay Angel's parents compensation in the form of debt relief. Such settlements are common occurrences. The child and her rights as a victim were forgotten, the crime was covered up and she was blamed of inventing it. The abuser carried on abusing other children.

Angel was hurt and angry when her uncle scolded her for telling what he had done. She ran away from home and persuaded a bus driver to take her to town. There she joined a gang of street children, both girls and boys, who slept under a bridge and ate castaway food from the market. She did small jobs and survived on the street like this for six months.

Local pimps forced her to become a child prostitute until she was rescued by a charity.

Jordan's half-brother, Hakim, was also abandoned to live on the streets at age 14 when his mother died. He was taken in by a charity and sent to school. At first he was successful, but he was led astray by a gang and resorted to petty crime and a life on the streets. After two years, he was drawn into a drug gang and became a pusher. An envious rival ambushed him one night and stabbed him to death. Hakim was 16.

WORLDWIDE STATISTICS ON CHILDREN

- At least 100 million children worldwide are believed to live at least part of their time on the streets. These street children are first and foremost working children. (UNICEF, 29 March 1994)
- One in five children in the developing world have to work.
- 5.7 million children work under especially horrific circumstances, such as in the virtual slavery of bonded labor.
- In Southeast Asia, between 30% and 35% of sex workers are aged 12 to 17.
- At least two-thirds of Egyptian street children resort to drug abuse.
- About one million children are exploited each year in the sex industry. This is fueled mainly by local demand, although sex tourism is also a significant problem. The Internet has the potential to promote this and to disseminate child pornography on a global scale.
- There are around 200,000 child soldiers forced to fight in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and thousands more elsewhere.
- Between 8,000 and 10,000 children are killed or maimed by land mines every year.
- Abortion is legal in 54 countries, accounting for 61% of the world's population. Source: Alan Guttmacher Institute
- 150 million children under five are malnourished.
- 56% of children under five in Bangladesh are at least moderately underweight.
- 19% of children have no access to clean drinking water.
- Worldwide, more than a million children are in prison. Many are imprisoned for minor offenses such as vagrancy, begging, smoking or non-attendance at school. In the Philippines, an estimated 20,000 children a year see the inside of a prisoner detention cell. (Newsweek)
- 246 million children around the world are exploited for their labor, most often in dangerous environments such as mines or factories, or in situations where they are exposed to harmful substances.
- Approximately 1.2 million children are trafficked each year, many for exploitation by adults either as child prostitutes, child brides, street beggars or workers in cruel and extreme forms of dangerous labor. They migrate and run away from these situations and live as migrants and street dwellers.
- These children are often arrested and detained as illegal immigrants once they arrive at their destination.
- Worldwide, 13.4 million children under 15 have lost their mother or both parents to AIDS. By 2010, this number will have more than doubled, adding to a crisis for many extended families and communities.
- Half of the 57.4 million people displaced by war are children, and millions of these have been separated from their families in this time of crisis.
- Globally, one in four children lives in abject poverty. Their families survive on less than \$1 per day.
- In the 1990s, more than two million children died as a result of armed conflict.
- 20 million children have had to flee their homes due to conflict and the violation of human rights.
- Around 30,000 children under five die each day, mostly from preventable causes. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, 3,000 die from malaria every day. (Source: UNICEF)

Mr. SMITH. Father, thank you so very much for your testimony and for your great work.

Teresa Santos.

**STATEMENT OF MS. TERESA SANTOS, NETWORK
COORDINATOR, REDE VIVA-RJ, BRAZIL**

Ms. SANTOS. Good afternoon respected Committee Members, ladies and gentleman. Before sharing a bit more about Brazil—a lot has been already said—I want to express my sympathy for the victims of Katrina and especially the children there. Talking about children, street children, in my written testimony, I started sharing the testimony of a boy that we helped take out of the streets, and his name is Joao. This boy has been an encouragement to me to press on in the work that I believe I was called to do and the work that I have done among the street children.

Joao was 11 years old when he was taken out of the streets, and his life shows exactly how thousands of other children ended up on the streets and how a young boy can easily get involved in the drug business and how a young boy, who is Black, who has been on the streets, can be easily excluded from society. Until today, he is fighting to find a job; he is fighting to be an honest person. As I share in my testimony, I will say a few of the words that he has been sharing with me until today.

Children of the streets, like Joao used to be, are those who make the street his home, his playground, his living, his life, who can find in the street group the understanding that many times he cannot find in the family or society, one who can find in the other street kids best friends and a family.

A recent study conducted by the City of Rio de Janeiro said that there are 700 children on the streets, living on the streets, perhaps as many as 1,000, and approximately 100,000 children aged 7 to 18 living on the streets of the cities of Brazil. Children on the streets—that is different than of the streets, of those 7 to 8 million that normally we hear in the statistics given by UNICEF and some other organizations—are those kids who spend the whole day on the streets working by themselves, working with their mothers or brothers and sisters, helping with the family income. Sometimes you find a whole family, and you can see even a 4-year-old selling candies, polishing shoes, playing games in front of the cars to make any kind of money.

A great probability of a child on the streets is to end up becoming a child of the streets, as the situation of Joao presents. According to ONU, Brazil has the tenth largest economy in the whole world, but also ranks eighth in the world in social inequality. This has aggravated chronic social ills; 50 percent of our economy is held in the hands of 5 percent of our population, and this raises a lot of poverty, malnutrition, kids dying, children dying of starvation and so many other problems that you are aware of.

As I said, in reality, Brazil has the highest rate of child abuse in Latin America and the second highest in the world after Thailand. The Brazil Center for Childhood and Adolescence has recently estimated there are about 500,000 girls that have turned to prostitution to earn a living, some of these girls as young as 9-years-old.

I would like to share some recommendations and a few things that I believe that we can do. There is a need for more pressure on our government for the implementation of the children's law. Brazil has enacted in 1990 the Statute of Children and Adolescents. It is a very good law. It has been a model for more than 10 different countries around the world. But 15 years after the law has been enacted, we still need to see implementation.

One thing that we would like to see is international organizations and governments putting pressure on our country—is really to implement the laws. Our Constitution states in article 227, it says that children and adolescents should be the priority, the absolute priority, and until today, we don't see that children and adolescents are priority for our country, because it is not priority in the budget; it is not priority in any social policymaking.

There is a need for our government to implement public-social policy for the family where it can guarantee they care for the children; it can guarantee quality education and a school system where the children can be receiving an education in all areas and they can spend most of the time being given a chance; for the parents to work and make the income. This is one of the ways we would avoid children going to the streets.

Several private NGOs have tried to develop their own projects, what they would call social educational projects, that would come outside of normal public education. But those NGOs have struggled financially to survive and to maintain, because, unfortunately, there is not much investment in such programs.

Eighty percent of the NGOs in Brazil are financed by international organizations, and we need to see more investment and more balancing and more investment for the issue of children.

Families: We need to address violence. We heard a lot here about violence. Violence is a big issue in our country and more in my City of Rio de Janeiro and San Paulo and some of the main cities. Violence needs to be addressed in a different way than with violence.

As we have seen, many children have been killed. A lot of them have been killed among themselves, among the drug dealers, the different commands that there are there. We can see children 5 and 4 years old working for the drug business because many of them do not have an option for life, and several thousands of young people who do not have an option to maintain their own families.

We can see that child pregnancy, early pregnancy, is a big problem because when the girls have to maintain their children, when a young boy has to maintain a family, he will look for an easier way to get it. When he is not educated, when he doesn't have enough vocational training, he will look for the easiest way, which is working for the drug business. A minimum wage is about \$100. In the business, you can make \$200 a week or even more. So this problem needs to be addressed in a different way.

Our country is debating right now on reducing the age of the penal age, and I don't believe this is a solution, because we don't have a rehabilitation system that would really rehabilitate those kids. This is one thing we need, rehabilitation centers, and this is a problem we face with our shelters.

We don't have a shelter for young people, for young teenagers, 14, 15, 16. I have worked in some slums, and several of the boys

would like to leave the slums, would like to leave drugs, would like to leave criminal life, but there are not shelters for them. Some shelters are afraid to receive them because they don't have all the necessary needs to address the problem of drugs, and this is something that our country needs to see in a very particular way, and we need more rehabilitation centers.

Also vocational and professional training, it is something that we are trying to do with our network. A network is a very good strategy to reach out to a lot of street children, to reach out to a lot of number of kids, because when we can enforce and help the leaders in these small NGOs to come together as a group to build a strategy to reach out to a large number.

Mentors: One of the things that has kept Joao out of the drug business, out of criminal life, is because he has me, a reference of something better than the kind of life he has.

If you ask a street child what he would like to be, the majority of them will say they want to be the police. They will grow up and be a policeman, because they have a reference like the police have power, can kill and do anything, and they need a role model.

If you ask a child in the slum what they want to be, they want to be a drug lord, because he has power, he has money, he has girls, he has women, and those are the two role models that our street children have, and we need to present them different role models. The church can play a big role in that, and society also needs to see in a different way that they also need to come together and be mentors. One of the Jesuit houses is putting together a program looking for people who can be mentors for those kids.

There also is a need of articulation between the three sectors, the state, the NGOs and society, and the enterprise, because we also know that, by itself, the government cannot reach out to all the problems, that the government cannot do it by itself. There is a need to sensitize society and the enterprise.

Right now, we have what we call corporation social responsibility. It is something I am starting to approach businesspeople to come together and help, always reminding that society and the businesspeople cannot replace the responsibility that the state has.

Finally, it is bringing back the network subject. It is very important that we live in a global—we need to address the situation of unity. Isolation has been a problem. Also, we have seen projects wasting money. We have seen projects wasting time, and it is sad that houses that have been built, and nothing has been done. Through a network, we can minimize the cost. We can minimize time and resources, and we can be able to reach out to many more children, as we have been experiencing so far with some partnerships with Bank of Brazil raising implements, computer centers for more than 20 different communities, and that has helped thousands of children, and we hope to implement even more programs.

I would like to close with a word that Joao told me 2 days before I came to the States as I was talking to him and telling him that I felt that I still had not done much for him after 9 years. He encouraged me with a phrase that I wanted to close with this afternoon.

I told him that I felt like I did nothing for him, most of what I did was just to be there when he needs to talk, when he needs to

share, when he needs a push. He told me, "Your nothing is a lot for those who have nothing."

So may we come together and bring our nothing together and do a lot for those who think they have nothing.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Santos follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MS. TERESA SANTOS, NETWORK COORDINATOR, REDE VIVA-RJ, BRAZIL

TESTIMONY: THE LIFE OF STREET CHILDREN IN BRAZIL AND INITIATIVES TO HELP THEM

Dear respected committee members:

Good afternoon. My name is Teresa Santos. Since 2002, I have been the facilitator of a network of Christian organizations that work with children at risk in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This network, Rede Viva-RJ, is affiliated with an international organization called Viva Network. For seven years prior to 2002, I worked among the street children and was able to open three homes for children at different stages of recovery. In this work, I have seen many lives transformed. For about ten years Jubilee Campaign has been our contact and a partner in the work we started among street children in Rio de Janeiro.

I have a son by heart, João Ricardo, one of the boys we took off the streets about nine years ago. He was a challenge for me and for the whole team that used to work in the homes. But in another way he is a great motivation for me to press on fighting for the rights and lives of the thousands and millions children who are of the streets and on the street. There is a solution; there is a way out. It is possible for them to change.

João Ricardo was twelve years old when our street team approached him in a group of other street kids in one of the districts of the city of Rio de Janeiro. He had not been on the streets long, but he was there enough to be considered a street child, one who makes the street his home, his playground, his living, his life; one who can find in the street group the understanding that many times he cannot find in the family or society; one who can find in the other street kids best friends and a family. Unfortunately, a street child can also find dissolution, hunger, a lack of protection, violence, abuse, fear, hopelessness, rejection, enemies and death, which can come as a result of the excessive use of drugs, sicknesses such as HIV/AIDS or drug gangs. Death also comes for street kids when they are murdered by those who believe it is better to eliminate a street child today than to face a criminal tomorrow.

This brings to mind the horrifying murder of eight street kids by police officers one night in July 1993 as they were sleeping in front of a church in the center of the city of Rio. Driving today in the place makes me think that although there have been many proposals and programs for addressing the problems of Brazilian street kids, not much has been achieved. There are still a large number of kids on the streets, and murder takes place with impunity. I am glad João did not hang around that area and was able to face a different future.

João was the oldest of four, though his sister and two younger brothers had a different father who was already dead. The family lived in a small home in a big slum area on the periphery of Rio de Janeiro. His mother struggled to survive and to raise the kids. At the age of eight, João, being the oldest, used to accompany his mother as she worked on the streets selling things for the provision of her family. He had to work to help her, and began spending most of his time on the streets. A similar situation is faced today by millions of children all over Brazil, who work and live on the streets.

João's family was part of the 35% of the population in which families live on incomes of \$60 or less per month. The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) affirms that poverty in Brazil is concentrated in the children, with more than 27.4 million poor children. Consequently, thousands of children have to work to survive, losing their childhood, losing interest in education and becoming street children like João. Little by little he learned about life on the streets, was deceived by a false sense of freedom and one day, being afraid of his mother's violence, decided to run away and make the street his new home.

A recent study conducted by the city of Rio de Janeiro said there are 700 children on the streets—perhaps as many as one thousand—and approximately 100,000 children aged 7 to 18 living on the streets of all the main cities of Brazil. But some NGOs suggest that there are many more than two thousand in Rio. The point is that the profile of the street child has changed. From his experience throughout al-

most twenty years working with street children, Robert Schmidt has seen changes in the characteristics of the street children. As the leader of Refuge for Street Children Association (REMER), an organization with its headquarters in Rio de Janeiro, Schmidt says there has been growth in the number of kids who leave home and, instead of living on the streets, invade empty and abandoned buildings around the city or in the slum areas, living in groups without any infrastructure and without the means to provide for their basic needs.

Because of the difficulties of street life, children build protective barriers inside themselves. One of the greatest challenges for anyone trying to reach out to those kids is the challenge of taking not only the child out of the street but the street out of the child. After a time of friendship building and trust gain, João came to the transitory home with five of his street friends. But the whole group came with no limits, with no sense of respect, with a false concept of freedom, with their hearts full of anger, hate and fear, and with the street inside themselves. João was what some people would call a “hard case,” a “lost cause.” Three times he led the other boys in rebelling and motivated them to go back to the streets. But they would always return. The third time was a turning point in João’s life. Somehow I could see that he was telling the truth when he asked for another chance, that he needed help and would really change. I knew it would not be easy for him, but he had to be given a chance and my team workers and I would have to be prepared to help him overcome those difficulties and be an example of social inclusion, not exclusion.

Sometimes society has difficulty seeing that a street child is just like any other child: a human being in his stage of development, an individual just like any other citizen, with feelings, dreams and needs, and that the streets cannot provide the means to face reality. Instead, they are seen as delinquents—criminals that need to be punished. This attitude simply legitimates a process of exclusion.

João’s transformation was a process that required a holistic, multi-stage program, involving a lot of understanding, love and care. The holistic approach is very important, for it is not only the physical and emotional aspects that need to be restored and fulfilled. For the transformation of João’s life, the spiritual relationship had also to be restored. Religious teaching was very important, for it was at this point that he and many other children had the chance to understand what it means to love and to be loved, what it means to forgive and to be forgiven. It gave him new hope to continue in life, to be motivated to return to school and to become a different person—a citizen respected by society in spite of his past. I had the privilege to be one of the educators who helped João in this process. I remember when, after we had found his family—his mother, brothers, sister and some relatives—when his mother met him after a long time and could hear him give her advice about life, she was shocked and asked me what we had done with him, for he was a completely new kid. He used to be violent and disrespectful of authority and had no interest in studying or in religious things whatsoever—a boy full of anger and hate. His mother’s words made me reflect on the need for a holistic way of working, for his new concept of God—the concept that he was loved and forgiven—was the starting point for his life changing.

After a process of working with his family that involved helping his mother rebuild their home, making possible João’s return to some minimum conditions of living, and restoring family relations, João was ready to return home. But one day, the sad news came that his mother had been killed by HIV/AIDS. She left a letter asking that the two other boys be taken to the institution and the little girl be given to some neighbor. What to do at this point? Would the institutionalization of these two little boys be the solution for their lives? After some research and much talking, it was agreed that they would be cared for by an aunt who was the closest relative, but the institution had to commit itself with some financial and food help, for she had five other kids to look after and was not able to work. She was willing to receive João as well, but her house did not have space for everyone. Several actions were taken to help the family structure receive João.

When João was finally able to be reintegrated to his relative’s family, he was back in school, taking English and computer classes, and had been prepared to face life back in the slum. In order to make João’s reintegration possible, the institution had to help his relatives to start a project of building a new home, for the other one was too small and half of it had come down after a strong rainstorm. After a few years, one of his brothers died of AIDS at the age of nine. Once more, João had to face another great loss in his life, but the interesting thing is the resilience he had created to overcome the difficulties of life and to press on to seek a better and more respectable future. There he was, an orphan living with his brothers’ relatives, without a reference in life, but with a great desire to be a successful person. I saw that to help João to persevere in his heart desire and not to return to the streets or, even worse, to get involved in the drug gangs, he needed a strong reference. By the

time he returned to his family, I was no longer working in the institution, but I have developed a very good relationship with him and often contact him to check on him and motivate him to press on. I became his mentor, his reference—almost like his mother—someone he would always look for when he needed advice or needed to share his heart, his desires and his problems. Sometimes it was hard even for me to believe he was the same tough boy who had come to the children's home, who would not listen to or obey anyone. João is 21 years old today and he still finds in me his point of reference, which I perceive as a great responsibility.

One of João's biggest desires was to serve in the army, but because he was a boy from the slums he was not accepted. He was very frustrated and desolate, but he did not despair or lose hope. Inside himself there is a young human being with dreams and a strong desire to be a winner. Unable to find a job, to find a way to help supply the needs of his brothers and sister or to help his aunt raise them, he felt tempted to accept the easy and short way to life. He told me that several times he has received invitations to work for the drug business, which pays a child in a week more than a hard worker can make in a whole month. But he always overcomes those difficult times and says no to the offers, for inside him there are still good principles he learned during his time in the institution. He has the fear of God and a strong desire and assurance that he will make his way by honest means, in spite of all rejection and exclusion by a prejudiced society that cannot see a black boy who use to be a street child and who lives in the slums as anything but a threat.

Once, not long ago, I was very concerned for João and his whole family. His aunt had separated and had to take care of his second brother, who was becoming very sick and would spend hours and days being attended by our failed hospital system. She still had to provide for her other five children, only one of whom was working. There were times that they did not have anything to eat or had only one meal a day. The family was registered in a local government program that gave a check to help to supply the family's needs, but it was not enough. Several other people had to get mobilized to help them. João could not find a job, almost became depressed because he felt rejected and useless, having to face his second brother's illness, his aunt in despair and the whole family expecting him to get a job and help to support them. I had to intervene and find something for him to do, for by that time he was about to come to the conclusion that there was no other way aside from working for the drug business, which was still inviting and encouraging him to join the group. It was a hard time. The government program helped some, but did not solve either the physical or the emotional problems the whole family faced. Finally, through the network that has as its one object the exchange of information, we were able to get his aunt a job. Not long after, we also found João a job, and his cousin found a job as well. João did not make much money, but he told me that was not the most important thing. The point was that he felt dignity and that he was a respectable citizen because he could say he had a job. Assistance programs will help in a survival situation, but will never replace the need for concrete actions to help people have their rights as human beings and citizens. I was very happy to hear the other day that the family gave back the assistance that they were receiving from the government, for now they were happy and proud to be able to provide for their own needs.

According to ONU, Brazil has the tenth-largest economy in the world, but also ranks eighth in the world in social inequality; this has aggravated chronic social ills. As a sad illustration of further social decay, the Brazilian Center for Childhood and Adolescence (CBIA) recently estimated that about 500,000 girls have turned to prostitution to earn a living. Some of these girls are as young as nine years old. According to the *Jornal do Brasil* newspaper, the Government of the State of Pará estimated that there were 30,000 child prostitutes between the ages of 11 and 15 in that state alone. Since the 1960s, Brazil has seen a massive exodus from the rural areas to the big urban centers. A large number of these migrants come to the cities looking for a better life, a job and a place to live. Many of them end up not finding jobs and have to face the reality of life in the crowded slums when not on the streets. As the number of slum dwellers grows, so do the numbers of street children. With the growth of the tourism industry, poor girls have found that selling their bodies has become a way for them to have access to the dollars of tourists. In the Northeast, moreover, thousands of children who resist malnourishment have to live with some mental disorders.

In 1990, as the result of intensive work by a number of Brazilians on behalf of the rights of children, the Statute of Children and Adolescents—the "ECA" (Law 8069/90)—was enacted. It regularized the 1988 revision of the Brazilian Constitution, which in Article 227 states: "It is the duty of the family, society and the state to assure with absolute priority the rights of children and adolescents to life, health,

food, education, leisure, occupational training, culture, dignity, respect, freedom, and family and community life, and in addition to protect them from all forms of negligence, discrimination, exploitation, violence, cruelty and oppression.”

Up to this point children had been considered the object of state intervention, but from now on children and adolescents have the right to be seen and considered the subject of elementary needs of human beings, with the right to receive universal assistance. They are seen as citizens with the right to be respected and protected. The ECA also brought about the decentralization of public policies so that now the most important actor is the locality. The responsibility established in the new legislation to organize, create and put in practice local public policies that will guarantee the rights of children is now the responsibility of the nearly 5,000 municipalities around the country. With the creation mandated by ECA, each municipality has the challenge to form Children’s Rights Councils (*Conselhos de Direitos*) and Guardianship Councils (*Conselhos Tutelares*), whose members are from both the government and nongovernmental organizations.

The creation of effective councils throughout Brazil has become one of the foremost priorities for organizations concerned with the rights of children. The implementation of the Child Statute is thus not only a reform of child welfare laws, but also a significant test of—and precedent in—the democratization of Brazilian society.

There is no doubt that the ECA is an efficient legislation. It has served as a model for more than ten different countries, but 15 years after the law was put in place, most of it is still merely words on paper; it needs to be put into practice. UNICEF says that the Brazilian statute is one of the most advanced in the world. But it will become reality only when remaining disparities are overcome and each of the 61 million boys and girls in the country has an equal opportunity.

Drawing attention to the fact that the ECA says children and adolescents are the absolute priority of the family, society and state, I would like to present some important points that I believe we all need to reflect on as we seek solutions better to protect and help the millions of street children in Brazil:

1. THE RIGHTS OF STREET CHILDREN NEED TO BE APPLIED BY THE FAMILY, THE SOCIETY AND THE STATE AS AN “ABSOLUTE PRIORITY,” AS STATED IN THE CONSTITUTION.

A priority for the state

All the rights a street child needs are written in the Children’s Statute, but the problem is that we need to see more interest from the parties involved to make the statute effective. From the state side, there needs to be a real interest in making this an important issue; they need to raise the subject as much as they can, formulating and putting in practice public social policies that will help the street child.

Children should be a priority in the government’s budget. The lack of money creates a problem for the quality and sustainability of the few shelters that exist, and a problem for the reintegration of the kids back into their families.

The state should seek for means to guarantee that all 5,000 cities will have a Children’s Rights Council and a Guardian Council. Thousands of children are suffering maltreatment, are on the streets and are unprotected because there is no interest on the part of local governors to establish the Children’s Councils. A friend of mine who started a ministry in a city called São José de Caiana, in the interior of the State of Paraíba, was shocked at the way children had been abused and maltreated when she arrived there seven years ago. One day she decided to denounce the maltreatment of a little girl who was about to die. She had to go miles away looking for one Guardian Council who could help in the case. The help the Council gave was not effective for several reasons, the distance being one of them. But the most amazing and shocking point was the reaction of the local population, who strongly discriminated against her and hired someone to kill her, which, by a miracle, did not happen. Unfortunately, by that time she had decided she would never do it again. Very recently she decided to adopt a child who was also suffering from malnutrition and maltreatment. And last week she asked me for help to establish a Children’s Council in her city.

A priority for society

Society is very badly informed about the rights of children. In the case mentioned above, almost the whole town was against the idea that a local family would be denounced because a child had been maltreated, something they consider “normal.” There are so many situations like this and nothing much is done about them, because maltreatment of children has become acceptable in the society. If there is no interest from the governmental side about the creation of a Children’s Council, the organized society could push for it; the problem is that in many towns and cities

the society is neither organized nor educated, as in the case above. There is a need for a strong campaign to make the children's law understandable, acceptable and applicable by the whole society. I believe it would help to decrease the number of cases of children who run away from home because of maltreatment and domestic violence, which is the case for many street children.

But we do not need to go to places where the population is less educated to see the lack of understanding of the children's law. In the mega-cities such as Rio or São Paulo, where the population lives under the constant fear of violence, people do not understand that the way to reduce violence is not by reducing the penal age or desiring the return of the use of violence and brutal penalties against young lives. People need to understand that the new law does not aim to protect criminals or give them immunity, but aims to guarantee basic rights that will reduce violence in the society.

I remember a boy in the streets telling me that it did not matter to him if he did bad things—if he robbed or killed—for he did not have much to gain out of life except death. What does one do in cases like this?

A priority for the family

Families also need to contribute to the well being of children. Most street children have a family, and the law states the need for every child to be reintegrated into his family and that all the shelters are temporary. I agree with this, but I do not understand how it can happen when little is done to reverse the disintegration of families.

When I asked the NGOs associated with our network that have shelters for street and abandoned children what their recommendation would be, they were unanimous in saying they would like to see a public social policy put in place for the family. We cannot require some care from a family when the family itself needs to be taken care of. We cannot reintegrate a child when his family is struggling to survive, when there is not enough money to help the family to provide for their basic needs.

There are thousand of single-parent families in which the mother is the head of the household and has to provide the family's income, as in the case of João's family. If a social policy for the family would guarantee day care for small kids, if it would guarantee an education system in which João could have received a quality education, spending not only half a day but a full day in school, with sports activities, cultural activities and other important things for his life development, he would not have needed to go to work on the streets and probably would never have become a street child. His brother who died would have been more likely to receive health care and could be alive today. In reality, though, several daycare centers have been closed because of delays in receiving the money the government had the obligation to provide. Some institutions have gone more than six months without receiving the designated funds and have been forced to close. Pressure needs to be applied to decrease corruption and to place more investment in quality education.

2. STREET CHILDREN NEED TO BE EDUCATED.

The quality of education is another very important issue. Violence is a reality all over the country and much more so in the urban centers and slum areas. But the solution is neither repression nor a larger number of police; it is a holistic social-education system that will teach new values, that will change the focus of children's concept of life, that will raise hopes for a better and equal future for poor youth who find in the drug business their means to dress like the others, to buy brand-name clothes, shoes and the material things they think are important. I believe drug addiction can be fought with a good education and new opportunities for income.

In his article, "Why so many executions in São Paulo's periphery?" Bruno Paes Manso, a journalist and researcher at the Fernand Braudel Institute of World Economics, wrote:

The range of actions needed to contain violence demands a level of political will never before seen in dealing with São Paulo's huge problems. One key area is education. Police statistics indicate that both homicide victims and killers have little or no formal schooling. According to police numbers, only 2% of homicide victims ever reached high school. The remaining 98% is composed of young people who dropped out of school before the 8th grade, many of whom are illiterate. Of the killers, only 10% reached high school. Violence in the urban peripheries suggests that the other 5% makes a big difference. Parents complain that half-day class schedules (in Brazil children attend school in either the morning or the afternoon) provide too little learning and too much idleness. Un-supervised children often get mixed up in criminal activities in the street, en-

couraged by what parents call the “wrong crowd.” Child labor, criticized by the U.S. government, is often viewed with pride in Brazil’s urban peripheries. Going to school in the morning and working in the afternoon is one of the surest ways for a teenager to live a long life away from crime. Special programs could be developed by both the public and private sections to lengthen the school day from, say, four to six hours and to subsidize part-time jobs for adolescents. Government projects involving the moral authority of mothers in these communities could be a viable way of encouraging children to live decent lives. Mothers are the care providers that most willingly invest their time in bettering the community. But they cannot do it alone.

3. STREET CHILDREN NEED HELP TO GET OFF DRUGS.

A major problem faced by street children and children living in the slums is the use of drugs. Some of the kids’ drug use is limited to sniffing glue, which helps them overcome the difficulties of life on the streets. As they grow, however, they start using heavier drugs and get involved with the drug business. There is therefore a high number of deaths related to drug use. From 5% to 77.3% of street children in the city of São Paulo between the ages of nine and 14 use heavy drugs. The Brazilian Center of Psychotropic Drugs Information (CEBRID) said in 2001 that in Fortaleza, 33.2% of street children use not so heavy drugs, but 55.7% use heavy ones. In Rio de Janeiro, 82.4% between the ages of twelve and 18 make use of very heavy drugs. The number of deaths related to drugs and the drug traffic in Rio de Janeiro is comparable to the number of deaths in a civil war.

In this area there is a need for a social policy to help those kids involved with drugs. The numbers are alarming, and the existing shelters complain of the lack of specific rehabilitation centers for youth involved with drugs. Most of the rehabilitation centers I know of in the city of Rio are for adults. Normally, the kids with drug addiction are sent to the shelters that serve abandoned children who suffer from other kinds of maltreatment, where they do not have the specific staff and resources to offer quality assistance. Very often our office receives calls from parents, friends and relatives looking for a place for a youth who wishes to get free of drugs, or who needs to be removed to another place because he has been threatened by the drug business and is in risk of being murdered. But there are no places for these kids. I know that the cost of providing more facilities is very high, but if we want to reduce violence—if adolescents are a priority—the youth need to be a priority in the government’s budget.

4. STREET CHILDREN NEED PROTECTION AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

There is an urgent need for a social policy to protect children from sexual abuse. According to Dimenstein (1996), Brazil has the highest rate of child abuse in Latin America and the second highest in the world, second only to Thailand. The same author noted that 80% of the children and adolescents involved in sex exploitation today were victims of incest. The numbers are alarming and something more needs to be done. It is true that the government has given special attention to the issue, but with one of the best laws for child protection, it is unacceptable that our country ranks second in the world for child abuse. It proves that there is an urgent need to put into practice the protection policies that now exist only on paper. Our country has advanced in the confronting of the issue of sexual exploitation, but there is much still to be done.

We need to conduct research on the situation in the whole country that will allow the actors to set up goals and indicators. There is also a need for defense centers specifically to deal with children who have suffered abuse. Raising awareness that the abuse needs to be denounced is a long process and a big challenge, but it needs to be addressed, along with ways to protect both the victim and the denouncer. Another specific area needs more investment, as well as more articulation among the governmental and nongovernmental spheres at both the national and international levels: to seek solutions to the problem of sexual tourism and child trafficking.

5. STREET CHILDREN NEED TO GET OUT OF CHILD LABOR.

A study on child labor in Brazil by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) found that there are 1.5 million working children and adolescents in the 5–13 age bracket, another 1.5 million in the 14–15 group, and 2.4 million adolescents between 16 and 17 irregularly inserted in the labor market.

Brazil was one of the first countries to establish a program to combat child labor, and it has been recognized as a model for Latin America. The Program for the Eradication of Child Labor (PETI) currently benefits 810,000 children in 2,606 Brazilian municipalities. PETI aims to eliminate all forms of child labor. The program

pays a grant to families with children between seven and 15 who are involved in any type of work. The family, on the other hand, needs to guarantee that children will be removed from work and enrolled in school.

I agree that this is a very program, but it has its deficiencies. The main one, in my opinion (and on this some other organizations agree), is that the government needs to develop a parallel program for the family. The results have proved that if the family has no way to provide for its basic needs and no way to raise its income, the child will still be forced to work to provide for the family. The parents need professionalization, education and orientation to run their own businesses or even participate in a group enterprise so they can provide for the basic needs of the family.

I believe that poverty is not the only problem for child labor. The lack of a good educational system and good public social policies that guarantee children's rights creates a gap that allows opportunists looking for a source of cheap labor to take advantage of kids' need to work. A great part of our society still tolerates child labor, for they believe that it is better for a child to work than to steal or do nothing. Many people in our society still associate a youth's not working with leisure, marginality or even delinquency. There needs to be a strong concretization of what the law says about child labor.

Last week I was talking with a nine-year-old girl who has worked since she was seven to help with her family's income. I was telling her she should be in school or at home, and a woman came up to us and told me the little girl was right, for she was helping her mom and her little brothers. She bought some candy the girl was selling and left very proud that she had done the best for the child.

6. STREET YOUTH NEED JOBS.

There is a need for more job opportunities for youth. They need to be motivated to study with the perspective that by doing so they will be able to find an honest job that will permit them to provide for their needs. A good opportunity for a youth to find a job is through the application of a new law regarding jobs for young people (Law 10.097/2000). The government has an important part to play by helping raise awareness about and fulfilling this law.

A 2005 report by Marina Rosenfeld and Andressa Munik said that on May 2 of this year, the Abrinq Foundation, a Brazilian association of toy producers, launched a public campaign in São Paulo called "Apprentice Law: your company teaches and everyone learns." This was a combined initiative for the rights of children and adolescents between the Abrinq Foundation and the Ethos Institute, an institute of business and corporate social responsibility. The campaign aimed to catch the attention of society for the insertion of adolescents from age 14 to 18 in the labor market, based on the federal law for apprenticeship of teenagers (Law 10.097/2000).

There is a need for the application of the law and incentives for the companies to hire. But one also needs to be conscious that the government will not be able to solve the problem by itself. There is a need of articulation by NGOs and enterprises to meet this great challenge.

7. STREET CHILDREN NEED A GOOD ROLE MODEL OR MENTOR.

The ECA prescribes the following measures in cases of youth crime: a warning, mandatory reparation of damages, community service, assisted liberty (parole), semi-liberty or incarceration in an educational institution. A report of the international NGO Human Rights Watch, with its headquarters in the USA, presented the results of research conducted in the Brazilian institutions for delinquent kids. According to the document, there are too many children for the available space, leading to overcrowded conditions, as well as several cases of guards' committing acts of verbal abuse and physical violence against the inmates. It also mentions the abuse of authority by the educators or agents. It proves the inefficiency of the system. The kids come out worse than when they arrived. Like João, these kids need role models who are different from the police who are able to kill with impunity. It is interesting to ask a street child what they would like to be; a high number of them say they would like to be police officers. Those kids need good references in life other than the gang leader who has power, money and women, but a short life. They need somehow to have their self-esteem raised, but we need to find other ways to help them with this.

These kids are good kids, normal kids who from a young age have had a tough life and need to be affirmed and accepted. Program need to be developed that will reinforce the self-esteem of these youth in different ways. As in the case of João, it is very important that these programs have a holistic point of view, where not only the child's physical and emotional problems, but also the spiritual ones, are ad-

dressed. Where the child will learn that he or she has an important place in life, as a special person made by God.

I would like to mention an excellent project developed by a group of students from a university in Rio de Janeiro to help kids in trouble with the law. The project is called "Assisted Liberty Guide or Mentor." The students realized that what the kids need is a good reference: someone who can talk to them, who can be a mentor and teach them new values and perspective for life. This project for delinquent youth has been implemented by the Second Office of Juveniles and Infants of the municipality of Rio de Janeiro. They are looking for people in society who will donate part of their time to help those kids by being mentors. The child's sentence would be to be counseled by a mentor for a certain period each week. They have asked the Network to help them by presenting the challenge to church leaders, for they also believe in the holistic way of helping those kids.

8. STREET CHILDREN NEED WELL-PREPARED WORKERS AND EDUCATORS.

A great challenge for those who work with street children is to find well-prepared educators who both love the children and have the knowledge to deal with the main issues street children face. Because of the cost, most of the shelters and children's homes hire educators with less education who are able to work for lower salaries. This solves the problem of their sustainability, but raises the problem of lower quality and less meaningful work with the children. It is more than proved that an investment in staff training is an important element for the development of the work and the child attended by the workers.

There is also a need for more investment in hiring interdisciplinary staff, which is required by the law and made necessary by the problems the organizations face day after day. The shelters, both governmental and private, need more investment for this expensive but needed resource.

The network has sought solutions that can minimize the cost of training and provide needed staff through partnership with other organizations who believe in the need for qualified staff for the success of the services offered.

9. STREET CHILDREN NEED FOR A NEW STRATEGY TO BE REACHED.

My experience of running three homes for street children—seeing lives transformed, seeing others lost, being a strong reference to some of the kids to this day, particularly in the case of João, seeing the long way our nation and society still have to go to help and protect children and adolescents instead of severely punishing them—drove me to a new task of pursuing laws to guarantee the rights of children and adolescents in our country. I was challenged by the vision of a network as a way to be a voice and a forum for children, a way of integration of efforts, resources and experiences, and a way to achieve better results as a group than as an isolated individual. After a long time of research and information collection, I challenged a group of organizations to join forces and work together. In 2002 the Network was named Rede Viva-RJ and today more than 35 organizations are associated. They develop projects together, exchange experiences, learn together, support each other in hard situations, for they understand each other's efforts better than any other group, and work toward becoming a strong voice in the defense of the rights of our children and adolescents.

Making use of a network is a new strategy and a great way to achieve better and higher results. After a long time and intense research, some of the weaknesses and strengths of each organization were registered, making possible the creation of network projects in which the group together develops the criteria and pushes to accomplish them, with the facilitation of the coordination and administrative office. The network today has the project to empower the institution, offering qualification to the leaders, the educators and the administrative team, and seeking to promote better and higher quality services offered to the children.

Another project the group developed in partnership with the Bank of Brazil and the Zero Hunger Program of the federal government was the implementation of 21 computer centers. Our organizations offered the space and personnel and the Bank donated used computers. The results have benefited thousands of children from the slums, who did not have access to the Internet and the computer world. An extension project has been put together, in which about twelve of these institutions are seeking to provide professional training in different areas of computer use, to help thousands of youths who have not had much opportunity in life to be qualified and competitive in the market. It will help many of them to get off drugs, to have some source of income and to help with their family income.

"With the collaboration of Rede Viva-RJ, many things become possible. We have a house for girls, and with the courses provided we can help our girls much better.

We also have a day care center here in the community, and we have been able to develop a better quality work through the experiences the network has offered. Through this unity we have been able to help many young people have a better option for life than the life in the drug business.” (Alexandre—Coordinator of the computer center of Youth With a Mission in the community of Borel, Rio de Janeiro)

“I live in a street without a name, in a home without a number, but through the computer center I can talk with the whole world.” (Paulo, 11, from INPAR (Presbyterian Institute Alvaro Reis))

Another important project that is in the research stage is the girls’ project. It is a participative project in which a group of girls has been able to participate in constructing of the strategy that aims to help the girls meet their main needs and rights. They will be educated in different aspects of life; we hope to be able to reduce early pregnancies and sexual diseases, to train girls for professional life and to get them into the labor market. The main difference of this project is that is has been done in a network where different NGOs leaders can discuss together and construct together with the girls as the protagonist, for they know exactly how they would like us to help.

The network also provides a space for a forum on the children’s rights issue and seeks to communicate with government authorities and enterprises, believing that the problem of street children—and any other problem of children at risk—has to be faced by society in general. Each one needs to find his part in this great task, joining hands and reaching out to our children.

The network is also a space for sharing problems, a place where people can find others who face the same kind of problem, a place where one helps the other. For example, we have a situation now in which one of the projects would have to stop its activities for lack of money to pay the rent. The members of the network went to visit the project leader and gave encouragement and money to keep it going, because they shared the idea that the children to be reached and helped are not only those from our own institutions, but that each one has a special passion and wants to protect all the children at risk they can.

“Joeli Barbosa da Silva, born September 11, 1992, came to Adonai Home February 14, 2002, and has been with us up to the present. Like many other girls, Joeli ran away from home because of family maltreatments. She is in the third grade and has been having a good school achievement. She is a very sensitive child who relates very well with those around her. For us in the Adonai Home, the Rede Viva-RJ has been a strategy from God that has helped us in the education and qualification to better care for our children at risk.” (João Figueiredo da Silva—President of Adonai Home, a facility situated in the city of São Gincalo in Rio de Janeiro.) When the Adonai Home came to the Network, it was about to close, but with the mobilization of the others in the group, little by little they have moved to a point at which they are able to meet all the necessary demands to maintain the house for the kids.

I would like to finish my speech with something João said to me three days ago. When I told him I was going to share his life testimony at this event, he told me how important I was to him. I said I felt that what I have done for him was so little and was about nothing, and he told me, “Your nothing is much for those who have nothing.” Let us bring together our nothing and do much for those who think they have nothing. Let us help them to raise the great person, the human being they are.

10. STREET CHILDREN NEED YOU AND ME, FOR TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you so very much for your testimony.
I ask Mr. Sexton if he would proceed.

**STATEMENT OF MR. ANDY SEXTON, INTERNATIONAL
COORDINATOR, CHILDREN AT RISK, OAS!S INTERNATIONAL**

Mr. SEXTON. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, I am honored to be here today. I would like to thank you very much for holding this hearing on street children. I would tell you, Mr. Chairman, that the issue needs a shot of adrenaline. I think it has largely dropped off the radar of the media, donors and governments, so I think this hearing is both timely and important.

I am the International Director for Children at Risk for an NGO called OAS!S. We have projects working with street children in

Zimbabwe, in India, and the prevention of street girls project in Uganda. You have a full copy of my testimony, but I would like to just summarize it because I know the time we have.

My testimony focuses on two issues, the situation of street children in eastern-southern Africa, with particular reference to Zimbabwe and Uganda, and then specific challenges related to current work with street children globally and possible strategic responses.

Africa is young. It is urban, and it is poor. Half of the continent's population is under 15; 37 percent of the population lives in towns and cities; 34 of the world's highly-indebted poor countries are in Africa. The related challenges that these statistics bring are compounded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has already killed some 14 million people globally. We know, as we heard, that there are going to be 18 to 20 million orphans due to HIV in Africa by 2010.

So one of the results of the situation facing Africa is an increasing number of street children. Now we are seeing second- and third-generation street children in some African towns and cities. It is worth noting that street children are a relatively new phenomena in Africa compared to other places in the world. It only really became an issue in the 1980s.

There are estimated to be 10,000 street children in Uganda. In May 2002, however, the Ugandan Government instituted a plan to remove the children from the streets of the capital city, Kampala. Once rounded up, they were to be rehabilitated from a center called the Kamparingisa National Rehabilitation Center.

In the first forcible removal, 145 children were taken, including four teenage mothers. Since then, these roundups have continued approximately every 4 months. While the total of children that have been taken to this place is not available, a figure of 200 have been resettled by one lead NGO, given that responsibility by the government, called Give Me a Chance.

In May 2005, we commissioned some research into the validity and impact of this approach to dealing with street children. The research was conducted by interviews with all the key stakeholders. The findings were scary, really. Although the street children appreciated the food and the schooling and the public applauded a decrease in the number of children on the streets, the facility itself is totally under-resourced, with only 50 percent of the staff that they need, no medical supplies, no running water, no electricity and totally non-functioning toilet facilities. In addition, there are allegations of physical and sexual abuse by the staff. The children are held together with juvenile offenders and adults.

We also found that the government policies actually created a community of children who live underground, hiding from the roundups. Needless to say, these children are ripe for criminal exploitation now. The street children themselves felt that the policy is about hiding them away rather than actually helping them.

This government approach has nothing to do with the causes of the problem, so there are always more children coming to fill the vacuum left by the ones that they remove.

The situation in Zimbabwe is even more extreme. On the 19th of May, 2005, with little or no warning, the government embarked

on a cleanup campaign, a crash operation known as Operation Murambatsvina, or Operation Clear Out the Rubbish. It started in the Zimbabwe capital, Harare, and rapidly evolved into a nationwide demolition and eviction campaign of homes, of businesses and vending sites carried out by the army and the police. Some 700,000 people have been affected. They have lost their homes and their sources of livelihood.

For us as an organization, four of our staff are now homeless. Four of our preschools have been destroyed, and all the street girls that we have been working with have been rounded up and detained, most of them we don't know where they are.

One of these girls—I will just refer to as “G” for obvious security reasons—when the staff met her on the streets a few weeks ago, she spoke at length of her experiences of Operation Murambatsvina. She reported:

“During the first roundup, the police took us to the bush where they beat us and left us. We walked 15 kilometers to get to the main road, and we continued walking until we got a ride to Harare. When we got to town, our legs were swollen. We were rounded up again. I was taken to Caledonia farm. I ran away 2 days later.”

Operation Murambatsvina has changed the whole operating environment in Zimbabwe. In my visit in June 2005, I saw a total state of confusion. Another approach is needed, one that is in line with international legislation, that protects the rights of the child.

In February 2005, a steering committee was formed to look at the possibility of developing a global strategy with street children. The Global Strategy with Street Children Team consists of representatives from organizations working directly with street children.

The first task that we did was to survey 20 other key people in the field to ascertain their experiences around certain issues, and as a result of that feedback and ensuing discussions, a global strategy with street children is emerging. A meeting of 17 experts in the field representing 12 NGOs will be held between September 29 and October 1 of this year.

The strategy being proposed is simple in design. It proposes to develop hubs in 14 regions of the world. These hubs will strengthen, support and connect existing street children's projects. They will motivate and train new projects and workers. They will research and advocate. They will facilitate strategic citywide and countrywide responses and encourage innovative initiatives. This is what we can do.

These teams will be supported by small resourcing teams. It is hoped that, by establishing these teams, work among street children will be improved and expanded, the aim being to reach all of the street children of the world.

In conclusion, current international legislation makes it abundantly clear that the rights of street children are to be protected as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. What is important is how this translates into protecting and assisting

street children in countries like Uganda and Zimbabwe and, as we have heard, in Brazil and the Philippines, and for children like G.

Responses should ensure that the children's best interests are essential. In addition, they should include appropriate input from the children themselves. They should also work with the children, the families and the community in a multi-level approach, and they should be strategic, involving cooperation of key stakeholders. They are not strategic currently. A lot of people are doing a lot of things, but it is not coordinated.

In light of the above, we would like to make the following recommendations to the Congress and the wider international community: In order to better address the issues related to street children, more research and reporting is needed. Since the State Department's annual *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* covers human rights of children, that report should be expanded, I believe, to include information on street children, issues facing them in each country, the numbers of street children per country and government's responses to resolving issues related to street children.

A second recommendation is that the U.S. Government, through USAID and other appropriate agencies, fund research that leads to comprehensive and strategic initiatives that foster cooperation between NGOs and between NGOs and governments.

We also recommend that the Global Strategy with Street Children receive the full public endorsement of this Committee, support of the U.S. Congress and support of the international community.

We recommend that the international community, including the United States, provide financial support to local in-country projects that work with street children, because resourcing these projects is not easy. People are doing the work but not getting the money they need to do it.

We recommend that the U.S. Government strongly press the regime of Robert Mugabe to restore democracy, the rule of law, and basic human rights for all people in Zimbabwe.

Finally, we recommend that the U.S. Government call for a full review of the Ugandan Government's policy on street children, urge the Ugandan Government to immediately suspend its street round-ups and, with all due respect to the leadership of the First Lady of Uganda, encourage the restructuring of the rehabilitation home so it is run by an independent board that operates with transparency and all the necessary resources for the proper rehabilitation of children of the streets.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sexton follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. ANDY SEXTON, INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR,
CHILDREN AT RISK, OAS!S INTERNATIONAL

STREET CHILDREN: THE SITUATION IN EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE NEED FOR
A STRATEGIC GLOBAL RESPONSE.

Mr Chairman, members of the sub-committee, I am honoured to be here today and I would like to thank you for holding this hearing on street children. The issue of street children is a global tragedy and a global opportunity. This hearing comes at a time when the issue of street children seems to have largely dropped off the radar of the media, donors and Governments. This makes the hearing all the more timely and important, so again I thank you.

My name is Andy Sexton. I am the International Director for Children at Risk for OAS!S, an International Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), working in 8

countries. Our work focuses on the urban poor, especially children and youth. I began working with street children in Australia in 1994 and then established street children's projects in three cities in Zimbabwe. In 2003 I joined OASIS and am currently based in Uganda. OASIS has projects working with street children in Zimbabwe and India and we have a project for the prevention of street girls in Uganda.

My testimony will focus on two issues:

1. The situation of street children in East and Southern Africa, with particular reference to Uganda and Zimbabwe
2. Specific challenges related to current work with street children globally and possible strategic responses

1. Background to the Issue of Street Children

1.1 Towards a Definition of Street Children

The term 'street children' is hotly debated. Some say it is negative—that it labels and stigmatises children. Others say it gives them an identity and a sense of belonging. It can include a very wide range of children who: are homeless; work on the streets but sleep at home; either do or do not have family contact; work in open-air markets; live on the streets with their families; live in day or night shelters; spend a lot of time in institutions (e.g. prison); are sex workers. The term 'street children' is used because it is short and widely understood. However, we must acknowledge the problems and wherever possible we should ask the children what they think themselves. In reality, street children defy such convenient generalisations because each child is unique.¹

The *UNICEF* definition of street children makes a distinction between children *on* and children *of* the street.

Children *on* the street are those whose family support base has become increasingly weakened (who) must share in the responsibility for the families' survival by working in the city streets and market places. For these children . . . the home ceases to be the centre for play, culture and daily life. Nevertheless while the street becomes their daytime activity, most of these children return home most nights. While their family relationships may be deteriorating, they are still definitely in place, and these children continue to view life from the point of view of their families.

Children *of* the streets are a much smaller number of children who daily struggle for survival without support, alone. While often called abandoned, they too might also have abandoned their families, tired of insecurity, rejection and aged up with violence (tired of violence in the family) . . . (Their) ties with home have now been broken . . . *de facto* (they) are without families.²

1.1.1 What are the limitations of this definition?

The limitations of this definition are that it isn't broad enough to cover the complexities of the issue. There are many children who "fall between the gaps" in this definition. For example, there are children who come to the streets and live there during the dry or warm seasons, but go home when it is wet or cold. Also there are many children who live with their families on the streets. Child prostitutes, who work the streets at night and not during the day, do not quite fit into this definition either. In addition, some children who would be considered *of* the street have occasional contact with their families, while other children who are *on* the streets don't actually live with a relative they live with someone who is unrelated. It can be argued that children who accompany a physically challenged parent or other adult are a different category again.

1.1.2 Expanding the definition

One of the ways to resolve some of these limitations is to add a category of street children known as *in* the street children.

1. *Children on the street, or children with regular family contact.* Most of these children work on the streets because their families need money to survive. Many of them go to school and return home to their families at the end of the day. Besides working, some children are on the streets to have fun, to pass time or to escape the overcrowded conditions in their homes. Also in this group are children from squatter families and the slums. These children

¹ Consortium on Street Children UK, www.streetchildren.co.uk

² Taçon, P., *A UNICEF response to the needs of abandoned and street children*, unpublished, Geneva, UNICEF, 1985:3,4

have nothing to do in their homes so they frequently roam the streets, returning home only at night or at mealtime. This group of children, not yet deeply entrenched in street life, are more easily reached. They especially need to be targeted by prevention programs.

2. *Children of the street, or children with occasional family contact.* These children work on the street, do not go to school and seldom go home to their families. This group includes children from poverty-stricken families. Some have come to the city from deprived rural areas; others are runaways. Many run away from home because of sexual or physical abuse, parental alcoholism and neglect or mistreatment by relatives. Home has become a place of fear and misery rather than security, love and encouragement. These children, if they are to survive, are faced with the need to find food and shelter daily. They also need to find a sense of belonging among their peers. Soon children come to enjoy their newly found independence, free of adult control. It is vital to get the children in this group off the street before they become addicted to street life.
3. *Children in the street, or children with no family contact.* These children consider the streets their home. Here they seek shelter, food and a sense of belonging among their peers. This group represents children who are detached from their families and are either living on the streets or in shelters. Some are orphans whose parents have been killed in war or have died from illnesses such as AIDS. In addition, other children are abandoned by their parents because they are unable to care for them due to poverty, disease or personal problems. These children are not only victims of physical isolation but are also alone psychologically. In some cases these children have no memory of what home life was like. Working with this group of children is the most difficult. Because they have been badly abused by adults they should have been able to trust, winning their confidence is very difficult.³

1.1.3 Definitions using other factors

There have been other attempts to define street children using concepts other than family connection. They relate to *work, time, behaviour* and *location*.

A possible way of defining the street population is in relation to 'work'. According to this definition, children of the street are those who do not have a 'serious' job, but who wander aimlessly around the streets, taking drugs and living from anti-social or illegal activities.⁴

The length of time a child has been 'on the streets' has frequently been used to distinguish between categories of street-children types. Other definitions have tried to specify the number of hours a child has to spend daily in the streets in order to be considered a street child.⁵

A street child is any individual under the age of majority whose behaviour is predominantly at variance with community norms for behaviour and whose primary support for his/her developmental needs is not the family or family substitute.⁶

Many children play on the streets but are not street children. There is sometimes nowhere else for them to play. Fabio Dallape (who directed the Undugu project in Kenya) has suggested using the word 'avenue' would be a better term than streets. Avenues, shopping malls, beaches, boulevards, railway and bus stations are all places where children are not supposed to be unaccompanied by an adult, and where nobody is supposed to sleep. Some people who work with street children therefore prefer to call them 'children out of place'.⁷

1.1.4 Why is a Definition Useful?

A definition is important for two main reasons:

1. It assists in determining the numbers and types of Street Children
2. It assists in identifying a projects target group

A definition is useful in order for practitioners to decide which children in an area are street children and what types of street children there are. This in turn can help them decide what group of children they will work with and what interventions might be appropriate.

³ Kilbourn, P., (ed), *Street Children, A Guide to Effective Ministry*, MARC, 1997:11,12

⁴ Liebel, 1994:24

⁵ Cosgrove, J., *Towards a working definition of street children*, International Social Work, Vol. 33:185-192, 1990

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Connolly, M., and Ennew, J., (eds), *Children out of place*, special issue of *Childhood*, Vol. 3, 1996

1.2 A Global Tragedy

Given the debate over defining street children, there are conflicting estimates about how many street children there are. However, one thing is clear, there are millions of children living and working on the streets of the world's cities.

- At least 100 million children worldwide are believed to live at least part-time on the streets and work in the 'urban informal sector'.⁸
- 10 million of these are *of* the streets.⁹

Around the world

Latin America		40 million
	Brazil	25 million
Asia		31.2 million
	India	18 million
	Philippines	1.2 million
Africa		10 million
USA	New York	20,000

Child Hope, *Testimony to the House Select Sub-Committee on Hunger*, 1991
 CWS, 1991 Global Calendar, New Society Publishers:
 Philadelphia, 1990
 ONEWORLD, 17 November 1998, cited by UNICEF, November 1998

1.3 Life in the Streets

Clearly, the experience of street children differs throughout the world. For instance, there are the average age of a child in the streets in the Western World is higher than the age of street children in the Developing World.

However there are also many similarities. A child who for whatever reason, ends up being forced from home or runs away, usually ends up in the streets of a town or city. Once there, they soon become part of the mosaic of street life. They usually join a group of children in similar circumstances and become embroiled in a life of petty crime, substance abuse, begging, occasional work, violence and sex. They also experience freedom and a life without rules, except the rules of their gang. Sometimes an adult meets them, as they enter the town or city, who then exploits them for their labour or bodies. They often end up sick, injured, HIV+, pregnant or even dead.

It has been proven again and again that the longer a child is on the streets, the harder it is for them to leave the streets. Also if a long-term street child does leave the streets, the longer they have been in the streets, the stronger the pull to return.

1.4 Causes of Street Children

There are both macro and micro issues that result in Street Children, including:

1. Social catastrophes (HIV/AIDS pandemic, ethnic conflict, trafficking)
2. Political catastrophes (war, corruption, wastage of resources)
3. Natural catastrophes (famine, flood, earthquake)
4. Poverty
5. Rural—urban migration
6. Economic collapse (unemployment leading sometimes to the loss of home, parents, family, education)
7. Family breakdown
8. Alcohol or drug abuse of a family member
9. Child abuse including violence, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect
10. Child labour and sexual exploitation

⁸UNICEF UK Committee, Information Sheet on Street Children, January 1998

⁹Kilbourn, P., (ed), *Children in Crisis: A New Commitment*, MARC, 1996:21

2. *The Situation of Street Children in East and Southern Africa*

Africa is young, urban and poor. Half of the continent's population is under 15. Thirty seven percent of the population lives in towns of cities—the majority living in slums and squatter settlements. The average urban growth rate is estimated to be 5% per annum. Thirty four of the world's *Highly Indebted Poor Countries* are in Africa.¹⁰

The related challenges these statistics bring, are compounded by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It is estimated that more than 43 million people have already perished from the disease. This figure could rise to 200 million in the next 30 years.¹¹ UNICEF estimates that there will be 20 million HIV/AIDS orphans by 2010. According to the Alpha Orphans Generation project, Sub-Saharan Africa had 11 million orphans in 2003.¹²

One of the results of the situation facing Africa is an increasing number of street children. Today we are seeing second and third generation street children in some African towns and cities.

The issue of street children in East and Southern Africa is a relatively new phenomenon when compared with the history of street children in South and Central America and parts of Asia. It only started to become a significant and widespread phenomenon in the 1980s.

The Civil Society Forum for East and Southern Africa on Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Street Children has quantified the numbers of street children in these regions.

Country	Numbers of Street Children	City	Number of Street Children
Ethiopia	150,000	Addis Ababa	60,000
Kenya	250,000	Nairobi	60,000
Mozambique	3,500–4,500		
South Africa	250,000		
Uganda	10,000		
Zambia	75,000		
Zimbabwe	12,000	Harare	5,000

The situations I will describe in more detail below are the two situations I am most familiar with. They are in some ways not typical of the responses in East and Southern Africa. However they represent one approach to addressing the issue of street children.

3. *Current Situation in Uganda*

3.1 *Case study*

**P. is one of a family of 6 children from Northern Uganda, who fled to Kampala with their mother when the situation in the Internally Displaced Peoples (IDP) Camp in Gulu was too much for them to cope with any longer. In constant danger of being abducted, or starving, the family came to find a better life in Uganda's capital.*

They ended up in a place called Kibuye, on the other side of town from Oasis' Bambejja Project. Local people took pity on the family, which includes a baby of less than one year old, and allowed them to temporarily stay in a small wooden shed. The mother was given some bananas to sell, and would walk all day long carrying a basket of bananas looking for customers. Neighbours would loan her saucepans to cook food in the evening.

¹⁰ The Civil Society Forum for East and Southern Africa on Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Street Children, February 2002

¹¹ Chalke, S. and Dixon, P., *Special Report on HIV AIDS*, OASIS, 2004

¹² Per Engebak, UNICEF, *Alpha Orphans Generation Report*, Plus News, August 2004

One day, the mother found her way to the Bambejja Project, having heard about our services, and begged the social worker to take her family in. The social worker agreed to visit her home, not realizing it was over an hour's walk away from the project centre. On seeing the situation, the social worker instantly knew this family was in need of urgent assistance. P., now seven years, was enrolled into Primary Grade 2 at the Bambejja Catch-Up School, and the entire family shortly after were assisted to relocate to a more suitable dwelling closer to Bambejja.

P. could so easily have ended up on the streets begging or having to prostitute herself to survive. She is one of the lucky ones.

3.2 Country Overview

Uganda has a population of between 23–30 million people. It is estimated that 51% of the population is under 18.¹³

Uganda achieved independence from Britain in 1962. Since then it has had a turbulent political history. Idi Amin was responsible for 300,000 deaths during his eight-year dictatorial presidency from 1971 to 1979 and the economy collapsed. One cause of this was the expulsion of the 70,000 person strong Asian community and the nationalisation of British plantations and companies. Human rights abuses continued under the presidency of Milton Obote during 1980 to 1985—it being estimated that a further 100,000 lives were claimed during this time.¹⁴

President Yoweri Museveni came to power in 1986 and has been largely credited with the rapid development of the country since then. The economy averaged growth of more than 6% during the 1990s¹⁵, and is now thought of as one of the most rapidly developing countries in Africa.

As a result of the development, rural communities have flocked to Kampala, in the hope of a better life. Despite advances made, the city is little equipped to deal with a rapidly expanding population and the result is an increase in the population of the slum areas.

The 18-year war in the North of Uganda waged by The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a rebel group operating under Joseph Kony, has also contributed to rural-urban migration and added to the slum problem in towns and cities. It is estimated that since 1986, 20,000–25,000 children as young as 7 years old have been abducted by the LRA to act as sex slaves and child soldiers.¹⁶

Uganda is one of the few African countries where HIV prevalence rates have declined, and it is seen as a rare example of success in a continent facing a severe AIDS crisis. Uganda's policies are credited with having brought the HIV prevalence rate down from around 15% in the early 1990s to 5% in 2001. At the end of 2003, the government and the UN estimate that only 4.1% of adults had the virus. The country is seen as having implemented a well timed and successful public education campaign.¹⁷

However, HIV/AIDS remains a significant challenge. In research that OASIS conducted in 2004, of the 102 girls it was working with at the Bambejja Project,

36% of the girls had no living parent

33% had 1 living parent

31% had both parents living

31% of the girls were AIDS orphans (death of both parents)

44% of girls come from HIV/AIDS affected families (where one or more parents or siblings have the virus)

12% of the girls were not living with a relative

42% of the girls were recorded as having a carer with significant health problems.

16% were originally on the street (none were recorded as currently on the street).

It is estimated that there are 10,000 street children in Uganda. The underlying causes are displacement due to the conflict in Northern Uganda, HIV/AIDS, urban poverty, and family breakdown.

¹³ CSCUK website

¹⁴ Uganda, Lonely Planet Publications, 2004

¹⁵ www.iExplore.com

¹⁶ Refugee Law Project, *Behind the Violence: Causes, Consequences and the Search for Solutions to the War in Northern Uganda*, RLP Working Paper No. 11, February 2004:13

¹⁷ AVERT, www.avert.org

3.3 Street Children in Uganda: The Government's Response

In May 2002, the Ugandan Government instituted a plan to remove children from the streets of Kampala, rehabilitate them at a renovated juvenile remand home and then re-settle them with their families. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) was largely responsible for the formulation of this plan but it concerned the cooperation of the Kampala City Council, the Police and one lead NGO, 'Give Me a Chance'. The plan involved forcibly removing the children through 'round-up' operations, and then trucking them to the Kamparingisa National Rehabilitation Centre (KNRC). It faced legal challenges within the Government but was pushed through after pressure from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ugandan Tourism Board and other sectors of Government interested in "cleaning up" Kampala's streets. The First Lady of Uganda, Mrs Janet Museveni, raised the funds necessary to renovate KNRC.

Up until this point, there were many NGOs working with Kampala's Street Children. Seventeen of these organisations were working together within the framework of the Inter-NGO Forum. This Forum then engaged with the Government over the planned round up strategy. However their proposal of August 1st 2001, which included NGO involvement at every level of the plan, was rejected. This Forum then undertook to form the Kamparingisa Support Team, which committed to going out to KNRC on weekdays to provide various support programmes for the children including counselling, sports, education, drama and art.

Apart from the formation of the Inter-NGO Forum, other achievements had been made before the round-ups were implemented. *Practice Guidelines for Working with Street Children* had been written; a week of NGO to Government advocacy instituted in 2000; Family and Child Protection Units set up within the police force; a National Street Children Committee was established; informal education strategies and foster care schemes developed.

In the first forcible removal, 145 children were taken to KNRC including four teenage mothers. Since 2002, the round-ups have been continuing approximately every four months. While the total number of children that have been taken to KNRC is not available, a figure of 200 resettled was given by the lead NGO Give Me a Chance.

In May 2005, we commissioned some research into the validity and impact of this approach to dealing with the issue of street children. The draft report has been presented to the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (in the Presidents Office) for comment.

The research was conducted via interviews with Government officials, staff at Kamparingisa, children at Kamparingisa, street children, businesses and the general public. The findings reveal that:

1. The children taken to KNRC appreciated having a bed, consistent food and schooling.
2. The general public and businesses reacted positively to the decrease in the numbers of street children. They felt that levels of harassment and criminal activity had dropped as a result.
3. The round-ups and reception at KNRC lacked co-ordination, with the staff at KNRC sometimes unaware that more children would be arriving.
4. KNRC is under staffed by 50% of what is needed.
5. KNRC continues to be a remand facility for juvenile offenders and that the two groups, offenders and street children, are held together.
6. Adults are also picked up in the roundups and held with the children.
7. KNRC lacks electricity, running water and functioning toilet facilities.
8. Necessary medical supplies are not available and food purchased does not always arrive at KNRC.
9. Allegations of corporal punishment and sexual abuse were common amongst children who have run away from KNRC to the streets. One child respondent commented that "KNRC is not a place for children, it has no solutions just digging, slashing grass, hard work, fetching water and beatings".
10. The round ups have sent children 'underground' and there is now a community of children who feel they cannot be seen. They are ripe for criminal exploitation.
11. KNRC was more about hiding the problem of street children than helping the children. This plan does nothing to deal with the causes of the problem (the war in the North of Uganda, abuse in the family, children being orphaned through HIV/AIDS and poverty amongst the Karamajong people in

the east of the country) and so there are always more children filling the vacuum left by the ones removed.

While there are street children in other towns around Uganda, the majority of children are in Kampala. In these other towns NGOs are also at work, probably the best known of which is Child Restoration Outreach working in Mbale, Mbarara and Jinja.

4. Current Situation In Zimbabwe

On 19 May 2005, with little or no warning the Government of Zimbabwe embarked on an operation to 'clean up' its cities. It was a 'crash' operation known as 'Operation Murambatsvina', referred to also as Operation Restore Order. It started in the Zimbabwean capital, Harare, and rapidly evolved into a nationwide demolition and eviction campaign carried out by the police and the army. Popularly referred to as 'Operation Tsunami' because of its speed and ferocity, it resulted in the destruction of homes, businesses and vending sites. It is estimated that some 700,000 people in cities across the country have lost their homes, their source of livelihood, or both.¹⁸

The result of this so called 'clean up' for OASIS has been that four of our staff are homeless, four OASIS pre-schools in high-density suburbs have been destroyed and all the street girls we have been working with, have been rounded-up and detained in an unknown location.

B. is one of the girls who has disappeared. She is 15 and was on the streets because her parents had died from HIV/AIDS, and her Aunt refused to care for her, saying that she was "rude". It was the OASIS Tanaka Project staff's assessment that her Aunt was already overwhelmed with her own problems and used the girl's behaviour as an excuse. B. was due to be in the next intake of girls into the Tanaka Project's Training Program. It is assumed that government forces took her to Caledonia Farm, but when the farm was closed she was relocated to a juvenile remand home. However although OASIS staff have been able to access one of these facilities, she was not amongst the 12 street girls that they found there. Staff have attempted to talk to the Department of Social Welfare in order to find B. and other girls that are still missing, but they have so far been unsuccessful.

G. is another girl with whom OASIS has been working. Although we have been working with her for over a year, she was not ready to leave the streets. When was asked what issues she was struggling with on the streets, G. said, "The main problem on the streets is the Police. They round us up and then if you want to get out of prison they tell you, you must have sex with them first. Last week, they came to our base and we had no blankets then one of the Policeman said to me there were plastics round the back, which we could use as blankets. Then when I went there, he followed me and asked me to have sex with him. When I refused he forced me, he didn't care that I was crying. Its hard because you don't want to sleep with the policeman but if you don't want to remain in jail, you end up sleeping with them".

When the staff met her on the streets a few weeks ago, she spoke at length of her experiences of 'Operation Murambatsvina'. She reported that, "during the first 'round-up', the Police took us to a bush where they beat us up and left us there. We walked 15km to get to the main road we continued walking until we got a ride to Harare. When we got to town, our legs were swollen. We were rounded-up again and I was taken to Caledonia farm. I ran away 2 days later".

Historically the Government's response to street children in Zimbabwe has varied. This is not the first time that 'clean up' operations have taken place. In operations in 1996/1997, children were removed into the bush and left there or were taken to a disused refugee facility beside the Gonarezhou National Park called Chambuta. Many escaped from this place through literally lion infested bush, and returned to the streets.

At one stage, the First Lady of Zimbabwe, Mrs Grace Mugabe, raised money for rehabilitation centres in the main cities of Harare and Bulawayo, but nothing came of these plans. More recently the Department of Social Welfare, Councils and other Stakeholders have been organised into Task Forces on Street Children with funding from UNICEF. This follows a model that I was involved in establishing in July 1997 in Bulawayo.

¹⁸Tibajuka, A. K., UN Envoy on Human Settlement Issues, *Report of the Fact Finding Mission to Zimbabwe, to Assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina*, July 2005.

Operation Murambatsvina has changed the whole operating environment. On my visit in June 2005 to Zimbabwe, I saw a state of total confusion. It could be argued that the downward spiral in Zimbabwe began in 1997 with the awarding of large payouts to veterans of the Zimbabwean Independence Struggle. This was followed by an economically crippling war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Then when the referendum on changes to the Constitution went against the Government and they knew that in forthcoming elections they were in danger of losing power, they embarked on various measures to retain power. These included the vote winning land reform process, infiltration of the Church, silencing of the Independent Press, stacking of the Judiciary, intimidation, violence and election fraud.¹⁹ The results of the policies of the Zimbabwean Government have been economic and social crisis. Zimbabwe has one of the fastest shrinking economies in the world and has been strongly criticised by the International Community for its human rights record.

4.1 The Non-Governmental Response to the Issue of Street Children

In virtually every town and city in Zimbabwe where there have been street children, churches and civil society has responded to assist the children, some with greater impact than others. Across the country there are twelve NGOs assisting street children alongside the Task Forces. I worked with Scripture Union to establish the Thuthuka Street Children's Project in Bulawayo, the Simukai Street Youth Programme in Mutare (in partnership with Family Aids Caring Trust) and the Chiedza Street Children's Project in Masvingo. Each of these projects carried the same values but was constructed differently due to the needs of the children in these cities, the reasons why they were on the streets, and the general context. When I left Zimbabwe we had a 69% success rate of rehabilitating street children and resettling them with their families or in supported accommodation.

Currently many organisations have to focus on locating the children with whom they were working. In my opinion, the main challenges that these projects were facing leading up to this new situation were:

1. Containing the numbers of street children (numbers are increasing due to the worsening situation in Zimbabwe).
2. Funding issues as many donors have left the country.
3. Competition between themselves rather than cooperation leading to a lack of strategic planning across cities and also across the country.
4. A need for increased capacity in the area of psychosocial support and therapy.
5. A decimated government Department of Social Welfare as the Zimbabwean environment forced government staff to take jobs out side the country.
6. Government resistance to granting birth certificates to orphans.

5. Global Opportunity

In February 2005, a steering committee was formed to look at the possibility of developing a global strategy with street children. The Global Strategy with Street Children team consists of representatives from organisations working with street children directly or indirectly. The first task that we completed was to survey 20 other key people in the field to ascertain their experiences around certain issues.

One of the questions asked was "What do you believe are the greatest barrier(s) to collective or coordinated action on street children?" The overwhelming response was *lack of cooperation between agencies and lack of cooperation from governments*. The situation in both Zimbabwe and Uganda clearly demonstrates both problems.

Another question was asked, "In your experience, what are the main challenges that projects working with street children face?" The main responses were to do with *training, support and resources*. My own experiences bear testimony to this.

As a result of this feedback and ensuing discussions, a global strategy with street children is emerging. A meeting of 17 experts in the field, representing 12 NGOs working across the world, will be held between September 29th and October 1st, 2005.

The strategy being proposed is simple in design. It proposes to develop teams in hub cities in 14 regions of the world, who will:

1. Strengthen, support and connect existing street children's projects.
2. Motivate and train new projects and workers.
3. Research and advocate.
4. Facilitate strategic citywide and countrywide responses.

¹⁹ www.zwnews.com

5. Encourage innovative initiatives.

A small/resourcing team will support these Regional Teams. It is hoped that by establishing these teams, work amongst street children will be improved and expanded, the aim being to reach all of the street children of the world in a systematic and strategic manner.

6. Recommendations

Current international legislation makes it abundantly clear that the rights of street children are to be protected, as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. What is important is how this converts into practise. How does this translate into protecting and assisting street children today? Children like those mentioned in this statement. Responses should ensure that the children's best interests are central. In addition they should include appropriate input from the children themselves and be strategic involving cooperation of key stakeholders. In the light of the above we make the following recommendations for the Congress and the wider international community:

1. It is vital that the United States Government and the international community engage with these issues because these children are the most vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and are unprotected by many of their governments. Therefore we recommend that the *Global Strategy with Street Children* receive the full, public endorsement of this committee, support of the US Congress, and support of the international community.
2. There is a desperate need for strategic citywide and countrywide pilot programs, that are well researched and implemented, and that can be duplicated in other nations. Therefore we recommend that the US Government through USAID, and other appropriate agencies, fund research that leads to comprehensive and strategic initiatives that foster cooperation between NGOS, and between NGOS and governments.
3. Many problems associated with assisting street children relate to problems of resourcing, support and coordination. Therefore we recommend that the international community, including the United States, provide financial support for local in-country projects that work with street children.
4. The situation in Zimbabwe affects not just the street children but also the entire population and makes efforts to protect and assist the street children virtually impossible. Therefore we recommend that the US Government strongly press the regime of Robert Mugabe to restore democracy, the rule of law, and basic human rights for all people in Zimbabwe.
5. While the situation in Uganda is not as extreme, democratic ideals, translated into the treatment of street children, are not fully entrenched. Therefore we recommend that the US Government call for a full review of the Ugandan Government's policy on street children, urge the Ugandan Government to immediately suspend its street round-ups, and, with all due respect to the leadership of the First Lady of Uganda, encourage the restructuring of the Kamparingisa Rehabilitation Home so that it is run by an independent board that operates with transparency and all the necessary resources for the proper rehabilitation of children of the streets.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Sexton, thank you so very much for your testimony as well.

Let me begin with you on the global strategy. Could you elaborate on that a little bit more for the Committee, the September 29th to October 1st meeting, who will be participating, how many NGOs, government actors?

Mr. SEXTON. At this stage, it is a bringing together of practitioners, of people who have been working with street children for a long time. And it is not meant to be exclusive, but it is a small team, initially, to look at setting the foundations for a global strategy, to look at debating the issues that it raises.

The idea is, as I mentioned in my report, that we would scale up, multiply the impact of work done among street children by developing regional support hubs, 14 of these, around the world. We would like to start by piloting a few and really to work with the

projects on the ground, provide them the support, provide them the mentorship, very similar to what was being shared by Teresa and what they are doing in Rio, so basically trying to lift that and then also grow new workers. That is the basics of it, as well as to try to encourage strategic countrywide and citywide initiatives, people getting together and cooperating, not competing.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Let me ask you, Father Cullen, you mentioned how the courts have been very helpful in the Philippines in ensuring that at least some of these kids don't go to an adult detention center.

Are the legislature and the Presidency also working in that regard? Have they thought of any criminal justice reform that might at long last separate children from those who would prey on them in the jails?

Father CULLEN. Yes. The courts are now much more cooperative, as we said. They assign them not to adult facility; they assign them to rehabilitation for youth. But the response that we have had now from the Executive leaves much to be desired, and also the Congress has been very slow to respond to our 9-year campaign to pass the juvenile justice bill.

However, since the CNN program, the Senate mobilized themselves, and last week they signed the juvenile justice bill at their level, at the committee level. So it will go on the floor fairly soon. But still, we are appealing to local governments. They are also the ones really responsible for this caring for children in their municipalities, and they don't care about it.

Mr. SMITH. We can get it, but do you have a copy of that juvenile justice bill?

Father CULLEN. Yes, we will have one sent to you right away.

Mr. SMITH. Is that a model that could also be replicated at a regional and local level?

Father CULLEN. That applies to all levels in the Philippines. That law will protect children. It makes it illegal for them ever to be put behind bars.

Mr. SMITH. So the state and local jurisdictions would have to follow that?

Father CULLEN. Of course. That will be national law. We will send you a copy of that.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. You mentioned, as well, the Amerasians. What is the current estimate of Amerasians? Is it 50,000, or is it more?

Father CULLEN. Nationwide, there is something like 50,000. It is only an estimate. We did a survey in 1992 when we organized this class action suit of how many would be eligible, and we were able, with the help of the government's Department of Social Welfare, we estimated 3,500 whom we could identify by name. But ever since then, of course, more children show up. There is more than that. But official figures, we did get 3,500. So they reckon many, many more.

Mr. SMITH. Are these street children?

Father CULLEN. No, these are young people who are fathered by American servicemen and then more or less abandoned.

Mr. SMITH. Is there an estimate as to how many of those children are on the streets?

Father CULLEN. We don't have an estimate, no.

Mr. SMITH. You mentioned your special program. How does that differentiate from the other program?

Father CULLEN. Many of these children, we have helped them to maybe go to high school. We find with the support—we support their mother for many years and send them to school. Then they graduate from high school. We helped them there. Now we have a special computer-based training program for Amerasians specifically with Microsoft Philippines. So they are graduating, and some have jobs. We send others to medical school, nursing aids. They are qualified. So in this way, we have sort of a human development program for Filipino-American children.

Mr. SMITH. I see.

If I could, Ms. Santos, you mentioned the ECA has its official legislation, but 15 years after it was put into law, most of it is still merely words on paper. Has any of that changed since the Lula Government came into power?

Ms. SANTOS. Well, the Lula Government has developed some programs. For instance, they give some money to kids to keep them from working and to encourage them to go to school. But that is limited to a number of kids from 10 to 14 years old. Then after that, they go back to work.

So programs are not policies. So what we think are more policies than programs, because the programs, they help. It is helpful, as I put in my testimony. Some local government programs help Joao's life and family, but for a certain time, for a survival situation or to solve a problem that is happening that moment. But it is not something that will give a solution to the root of the problem. So this is what we have so far, several programs.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. Mr. Payne.

Mr. PAYNE. Let me thank you, each of you, for your testimony, and once again, we really get back to the whole question of trying to eliminate abject poverty. If we can really get a real war on poverty around the world, I think that many of the problems that we see will evaporate and be less grave.

I just wonder, Father Cullen, has your organization ever approached the U.S. military authorities about the Amerasians? And now that there is sort of less U.S. presence there, do you find that there are problems in other bases where there are American soldiers, Guam or Okinawa, maybe even Japan in the old days?

Father CULLEN. Well, I am not really familiar. I know Okinawa has a serious problem because of the huge Marine base there. I have been to Okinawa and worked there with some local NGOs, and I have not done research or work in that area, but they have come also to visit us, and that is how we know there are similar problems there.

The Amerasian problem in the Philippines is really one again of just—it is against poverty. Not so many are actually on the streets, because they did get help from the initiative of the Women's Caucus group who helped them with U.S. aid grant of \$650,000 way back in 1994 or 1995.

We have our own source of funds from fair trade and other sources from that. We inhibited ourselves, since we campaigned for

that lobbying, we inhibited ourselves from receiving any benefit. So that is our situation in dealing with this.

Mr. PAYNE. It is unfortunate, in my opinion, that the U.S. military over the decades, since World War II, has been irresponsible. We feel that there should have been more attention given, even in Europe and Germany. There were a number of children that were fathered by United States GI's who left and abandoned them. In Guam, it got so bad, they wanted the United States military to leave at one time. There were several rapes.

So I do think this whole militarization, we see it in the UN now, we see it where we are asking the UN to be sure that they reign in on combatants who are peacekeepers, supposedly there to bring peace to countries, and are preying on people who have no strength, so-to-speak. But I think that it is unfortunate that we as a world leader did not really try to discipline even our own military. Military people are away, and there are inherent problems in militarization.

That is why I am so opposed to the overly militarized world we find ourselves in. This is a problem that has been bothering me for many, many years, and it doesn't seem we are getting any better so far as militarization is concerned.

I wonder about in Brazil, do you find, Ms. Santos, that the entertainment business or the carnival and so forth, have you seen any pull on women by virtue of that entertainment, the tourism, and I guess even worse, in Thailand? I don't think Brazil can be compared to Thailand at all. But what is your opinion about that whole impact on women?

Ms. SANTOS. Well, in this past year, the first time our country launched a campaign against prostitution during carnival and was really trying to push sex tourism, it is something that is still very strong in our country. We need more awareness, we need to do more research. And even up in the northeast is the main problem. And a lot of airplanes hired for sex and tourism. And we need more laws on that issue, because we—I don't want to compare Brazil with Thailand, but Brazil is the second after Thailand. It is the 10th economy. And I cannot accept that, when we have also law that is a model. And we have so many children being abused. And our society needs to be more conscious of it and there needs to be more money put to stop it, and also more research and more policy, specifically, because a lot of women find also, as an economic opportunity, to leave the country. It happens a lot during the carnival. And we have a lot of abortion after that. And a lot of main problems of child prostitution. It is not only in carnival, it is through the whole year, and thousands and thousands of children. And in the northeast, we have the problem with the Indian girls. It is a different situation because the Indians have a completely different—the native Indians—they have a completely different style of life, and because a lot of community has been destroyed and several children have been sold to some sexual industry. And they have been like slaves there. And some research has been done. But our country really needs to push more into that situation.

Mr. PAYNE. Just finally, there is a large number of Afro-Brazilians in Brazil. And just the country might be almost 50 percent de-

scendants of Africa, perhaps the largest number of African-descent people anywhere in the world outside of Africa.

Have you seen any—they say that you don't have a racial problem in Brazil, it is just class. All of Latin America is class. It just happens that the bottom of the class seems to be all dark people, and the other tops of the class seem to be less. Although a little mixer up there, but by and large, you can see the classes by—it is not racial. I have been told that all my life. We fought racial discrimination in the U.S.A. When I talk to my Latin leaders they may say, we don't have a race problem, it is just class.

Do you have any comments on that whole situation?

Ms. SANTOS. Yeah, we do have racial problems. And the situation on the street children, when they first started building homes and orphanages for children was because after they set the slavery free, because the kids start hanging around, and they were kind of disturbing society. So they had to look for a solution for the Black children.

And then it starts becoming a huge problem. And then, they saw them as they need to clean up things in 1888, and then in the early 1900s they start trying to do something to avoid delinquents because the delinquent children were the Black children to start with.

So in that concept, there were problems. And they didn't want to find a solution for them. And that put them in a home or an orphanage. So that brought—through the years, the problems start arising. And there is a big racial problem until today. It is not because of the—Brazil is considered the melting pot of the nations. It is so mixed that it is not well seen from the outside. But as you try to find jobs, as you try to look for the education in certain place, you will see the reaction of society, again, with the racial problems.

Mr. PAYNE. We raised it with—the Congressional Black Caucus raised it with the President of the country in regard to trying to have some problems seen in Colombia, because this is becoming more and more of a problem in the Latin countries. And we have raised the issue of having some attention drawn and having a Cabinet-level attention drawn to the problem about trying to come up with solutions. And we have been promised by Lula that they will take a look at it, but we are hoping that it can move along more rapidly than what we have seen.

Ms. SANTOS. And one thing that I wanted to talk about that, right now, we are discussing about number of Blacks in school, in the public school in University, and I personally, I think that we should not address it that way, because in my point of view, who is Black and who is White in Brazil when it is a mixed population? So I think that raises more discrimination against the dark people we would say, and there is always, when we had to fill out form, people say, "Are you black, white, yellow?" And so a lot of that brings a lot of discrimination also.

So, it is a big issue in the moment in the country, who is against, who is not. And I really think that people should be seen as one. And, as they wanted to have 20 percent of the space for Black people, but like my niece, I have a niece that is White, I have a niece that is black in color. What they are? One can go to school, the

other one can't. So there is an issue. And I think that we should not consider that and really see them as equal.

Mr. PAYNE. Right. Like I say, we have had a lot of conversation and this whole subject has come up. They do realize that when you go to higher education you find very few people that can be really detected as being specifically from the African heritage. However like I say, when you get into race, I guess because of the many years of not focusing on it because it was always considered just a class thing, I think once they start, even the President admitted once they start looking at it, they are finding that it is more difficult, there is racial discrimination. There is racial discrimination in employment, there are very few percentage of Blacks in higher education. There are very few top of the military. If you go right down the line at the bottom, like I said, in the large population.

Ms. SANTOS. If you see army, you will hardly see any Blacks. But in the army, you will see there is a big discrimination. I don't want to go into that, but you can see a discrimination there.

But it is very true that social level has more discrimination, social level than anything else. There are places in Rio that a low class can never go inside. There are shops that a low class cannot get in. So when you talk about inter-marriage of high social level with someone from low social level, it is a disaster. It brings a lot of problems. So I would say that there are more social level discrimination than race discrimination.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Pitts.

Mr. PITTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Father Cullen, you mentioned the Amerasians. What would you like to see the United States Government do about the Amerasian children around the military bases in the Philippines? Number 2, I was interested, you said death squads were formed in Davao. What gave rise to this in Davao, not in Manila? And are these police or what kind of people?

Father CULLEN. With the death squads, there is always some extrajudicial killing now in General Santos City and in Manila. But it is not as much or as frequent or as regular as in Davao.

Mr. PITTS. Who are the death squads? Are they police?

Father CULLEN. Well, we can't accuse them. I was sued the last time I indicated that there was a responsibility even by the mayor. Although we didn't accuse him, but we did point out that authorities should take account and be held accountable for the number of children who are being killed, as well as adults, many adults. But the finger is pointing and everything points that way, impunity. No? Though everybody is quite scared to say anything about it.

As far as Amerasian children, we are presently receiving, we have our own funds. Education is the way out for most of the Amerasians. With encouragement, support and the education programs, they try very well and succeed, all the kids we have had. Actually it is a charity-based in Munich, Germany, who is supporting some of our children also.

Of course, we have some responsibility. We always believe, have believed, you know, of the U.S. people, authority these children have—they are children of U.S. servicemen to a large extent, and

any help to give them a better life, no? We don't expect that they have a necessarily—applying for to migrate or apply for citizenship. It is not necessarily the answer. They have grown up in a different culture, a different language, but just an opportunity to—for further opportunity for education is usually the best way to go for these young people.

Mr. PITTS. Ms. Santos, the problem of police violence against street children in Brazil, how pervasive is that? Are there localities dealing effectively with that problem?

Ms. SANTOS. The problem of—

Mr. PITTS. Police violence against street children, you know, the death squads.

Ms. SANTOS. Yes. I would like to talk more in general of how society sees the killing of the street children. Unfortunately, because of violence, a lot of people in our society would prefer to see a dead child who can—who is a threat for them than facing a criminal tomorrow.

So, our society needs to understand the rights of the children. Our society needs to understand that they can change and there is a different way to approach violence. And there are some cases that the police, as was presented in 1993, the killing, and this is something that happens. But in a sense, it is encouraged for some people who, as I said, who thinks it is better to clean up the streets and who do not understand rights, the rights of the children.

Mr. PITTS. Thank you. Mr. Sexton, you have given us a number of excellent suggestions here in your testimony. You mentioned citywide and countrywide strategies to address the needs—the issues of street children. Could you elaborate on that just a little bit? What do you mean by strategies?

Ms. SANTOS. I am sorry. Could you—

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Sexton.

Mr. SEXTON. Yes, Congressman Pitts. I think one of the serious disappointments for me has been the fact that there is just too much competition rather than cooperation between organizations working with street children. Therefore, the impact that is possible is greatly reduced and hampered. For example, in Harare, in Zimbabwe, there is some 7, perhaps 14 organizations claiming to work with street children and 7 active. But they weren't working together. Because it becomes a matter of egos. It becomes a matter of competition for resources. And so rather than looking at the whole problem and seeing what they can do together to address the problem, they would rather compete with each other. And the street children know it. So they play one organization off against another.

So they go to one organization for this and then they say, oh, they treated me badly in this organization, et cetera et cetera.

So we need to break that down. We need to start working together on a citywide basis and on a countrywide basis. We need to start sharing information between organizations. When you start working where a child comes from one area, we need to start saying, what organization works in that area? How can we work together to take that child back to where they come from? How can we, as two organizations, work to support that child once they have

been resettled? Those are sorts of really obvious strategies. But they are just not happening currently.

So that is the sort of thing I am meaning that we need citywide and countrywide cooperation between NGOs. But it doesn't just stop there. It needs to be between governments and NGOs as well. I think the Gamby situation highlights the fact that the government is under a lot of pressure from the tourism industry and others, they decide that the best thing to do is just to clean those kids up off the streets, disregarding the wide sort of work that was already being done and the progress that was being made in that city. So there needs to be cooperation, between government and NGOs as well, in order to really address and take this issue on.

Mr. PITTS. With projected increase in sub-Saharan Africa, something like 20 million orphans, this has security implications in relation to the increase in the population of AIDS orphans and street children. Would you not agree?

Mr. SEXTON. I would agree and it was the subject some 3 years ago, 4 years ago, of a conference in Johannesburg run by the Institute for Security Studies, I think it is called. And at that, they were looking at this issue, what implications does this have for the continent, a whole lot of children that are not socialized, that are parentless, that have no values, that are struggling to make ends meet, surviving. They are rife for exploitation, exploitation by criminals, exploitation by governments, and in Zimbabwe in the 2002 elections—and it was referred to by the Chairman earlier—I tried to stop the street children from being exploited as thugs, rounding up people who attend Mr. McGarvey's election campaigns.

So these children were being used as thugs just to bring people together to make sure they attended these rallies. So they are rife for exploitation. This is a security issue in terms of thinking about the whole idea of terrorism, these children are rife for exploitation, unless something is done. And it needs to be taken very seriously, yes.

Mr. PITTS. Thank you very much for your testimony. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. Let me ask just a couple of final questions. Do you have any recommendations for changes in U.S. law, U.S. foreign policy? Again, I asked this earlier, but do you think we are spending enough as a country? As I asked, Lord Alton, is this something that the G-8—when they finally began the end of focus on debt, they embraced the debt issue and continue to do so. Is this something that the G-8 should really now make a center stage issue? Or have they? To the best of my knowledge they haven't.

And then finally, has there been in your view, sufficient focus on this by UN agencies? The Summit for Children was held just recently and I went up and spent some time at the UN. I don't remember seeing much time, if any, devoted to the issue of the street children in the action plan.

Was there information in there that is being acted upon trying to mobilize governments? Has the time come or has it already happened? If it happened, it was like a tree falling in a forest and nobody was around and it wasn't heard, to the best of my knowledge. Perhaps a UN summit that would focus on street children. I was

there in 1989 when the Convention of the Rights of the Child was signed. I actually gave the U.S. position in support of it. We had some reservations about some of the provisions, but George Bush, 41, actually signed it and I gave the presentation in New York in favor of it.

And again, I note that there are some reservations if we ever do ratify it that would be included in it. But by and large it was, as Jim Grant, the head of UNICEF, said, the Magna Carta for children and yet has there been enough emphasis by the convention apparatus, Luis Arbor's group, the UN Commission on Human Rights, do they focus enough, focus any resources on this? Do other UN treaty bodies focus on it the way they should?

It seems to me that it does not get the kind of attention and mobilization focus that it deserves, but if you wanted to perhaps answer that. I wear another hat. I am the OSCE Co-Chairman, I have been on the Helsinki Commission now for about 2 years of my congressional career, 23 years. I always raise the Roma, always raise the issue of street children. But have we done enough at the OSCE, as well? The UN OSCE and other regional bodies, the OAS for example? Ms. Santos you may wish to speak to that.

Has the OAS focused enough on trying to come up with durable solutions for street kids?

Father CULLEN. Well, I can say the Philippine Government was—I testified before the UN Committee on Human Rights in Geneva in October 2003. That was the reporting—supposedly the only report by the Philippine Government, after 13 years under compliance, not with the UN Convention of Human Rights, and also with the CRC, because we presented evidence of torture of children in prison. And the committee then, since 2003, expected a response from the Philippine Government on this issue. As far as I know, they have not yet responded.

And that is—that is where it is stuck. UNICEF, of course, is active in the Philippines, and to their credit they do a lot of work with government agencies in training and in educating them as to the convention and to the laws on trafficking, and so on.

And education is going on, but the action again, sad to say, by practical response to the obligations under UN treaties and convention, lip service, a lot of laws, passing of laws, all of that, with implementation, very weak. Very weak.

Ms. SANTOS. Yes, I could say the situation is the same in Brazil. We have signed a lot of international, make a lot of international commitments. But when the reports need to be presented, we present programs and we present several different things that are—does not serve the situation and the implementation of the policies is something that we need to do. We had very good policy on paper, like I said before, like he was also mentioning. But we need to see action. And we need a lot of investment for that. We need to have more interest. Because one of the things that the children's law in Brazil did that was good was the decentralization of the implementation of the law.

So it depends also on each local government to implement, and if we go to the northeast, a lot of places, even the society, even the people there, are not aware that a law for children exists. And society there, I have a friend that when she went to work in the coun-

tryside, she saw so much maltreatment of children, that she took one child that was almost dying of starvation, took to Manaus, to another city, and she was almost killed by the population of that town because for them, it was more important to preserve the family of the child than to preserve the child.

So in a country where we have such law for 15 years and this, the society in general, still do not know it and, it is still, has not action really to implement it. So like I believe there need to be more enforcement from our government, talk more about it, bring more the media, really educate the people about the children's rights and really implement and force the local government to do it, and force the local government to set up budget to help the children.

Mr. SEXTON. Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could say that I think the issue of street children is being swallowed up with other issues. And I think HIV/AIDS is becoming the prominent issue. Now, street children in the research we have done, you know, 60 percent of the kids that we were working with at one time were HIV positive. So we can't divorce the two. And I think Lord Alton referred to that earlier.

I am not exactly sure why the United Nations doesn't really refer to street children anymore. If we look at their documentation, they refer to all sorts of other things. They talk about education. They talk more about issues. And perhaps they are trying to avoid stigmatization and labels. But we can't avoid it. We have to use some term somewhere. And I think right now we need to raise the profile of the issue of street children because of all the things we have talked about today. It is a global tragedy. You know, it is a crisis waiting to happen.

And you know, to me it is just like a needle on a beach. You know, someone soon is going to step on it. So I really feel we need to step it up. And in terms of what the U.S. Government can do, your first question, I really feel it is a joke among my NGO colleagues that we don't want USAID money. And the reason is because it is so hard to report on it. They make it so hard to get the money, and they make it so difficult to report on it.

So you might have an accountant, but you need a specialized accountant just for USAID money. And we want money. And we need money. But we want a simple system that can—where we can report honestly about how it is used without having to go through the hoops that you know that it has created. So I am saying yes. The U.S. Government can certainly do more in funding grassroots projects, getting behind global strategies, getting behind strategic initiatives and trying to upscale those things in countries. You know USAID could back a global strategy, back a countrywide or citywide strategy, do some pilots around the world to try to and make this happen, back what Rede Viva is doing in Rio, to make these things happen. They can do stuff. They really can.

Ms. SANTOS. One fact, also, is that they realize that to support homes is real expensive. So a lot of people are stopping investing in some homes because we have two problems: The children who are already on the streets and those are who are almost getting to be a street child. So they find out it is, in a sense, worth it to invest, we are going to be with 50,000; you can probably reach out

and educate 2,000 children not to go to the street. And with 50,000, you can help 25 children in one shelter. So the cost is very high. But we still need to find a way to address and to bring a solution for the problem that is already there and still invest in the problem to avoid the problem.

Mr. SMITH. Your thoughts on whether or not a UN summit would be advisable on this?

Mr. SEXTON. Well, I don't know what other people think, but as long as it had some very specific outcomes, you know, we can go to a lot of meetings. And we can waste a lot of time, to be honest. So as long as some very specific outcomes came that were translated into action, yes, I think it would be a very good idea.

Father CULLEN. One of the goals for the UN, we would ask, and maybe the U.S. Government can assist, is the appointment of a UN rapporteur for children in prison. This is one area. And then a rapporteur for street children and children in prison, to really go out there and have the authority and the profile to be able to present and be listened to. You know, this is the highest level we get to be listened to, is by yourselves, and we appreciate that very much. But to get a rapporteur to speak directly to the UN about the condition of street children and these problems, would be of great help.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that. That is a very good idea. One last—I keep saying one last, but then you say something that prompts some additional thoughts.

I was at the UN Human Rights Commission meeting just in March as I go almost every year, but I had a very interesting meeting with Manfred Nowak who is the UN Rapporteur on Torture. The government seems not to be responsive to other inquiries that have been made and in terms of its street children, the information clearly shows these kids are in what can only be described as a tortuous situation.

Father CULLEN. Good point. I think we do need to get the UN rapporteur to come and have a look at this personally, but as far as I know, they have not been in contact with the Philippine scene.

Mr. SMITH. But he needs only to be requested by a body like yourself or me or anyone else. That doesn't mean he will do it, but it means he will take it under advisement. So it is certainly worth a shot.

Father CULLEN. Good idea.

Ms. SANTOS. And I would like to see the child abuse situation being addressed more.

And the report also done in that situation because, being the second in the world, and the 10th economy, I think so is unacceptable. Brazil wants to become the seventh economy. How can it be, when Brazil does not really reinforce the law and stop it?

So I think something more needs to be done in sex exploitation, child abuse, and throughout the whole country.

Mr. SMITH. One point you made in your written testimony is that 80 percent of those involved in the exploitation business—I assume you meant prostitution and/or trafficking—are the victims of incest.

Ms. SANTOS. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. That is a very horrible statistic in reality.

Ms. SANTOS. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. Anybody else like to add anything before we conclude?

Thank you so much for your testimonies, for your recommendations. We will pore over your written statements, and we will follow up, I assure you. And I thank you again. The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:30 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

