

Interventions of the UNODC in Tackling Human Trafficking Issues in Thailand (2014-2017)

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Subject Area: *humanities*

Abstract

Thailand recorded a significant number of human trafficking cases during 2014-2015, leading to its classification as Tier Three (lowest tier) in the United States Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report. This classification subjected Thailand to international pressures. Subsequently, the classification had led the government of Thailand to formulate relevant policies to cope with the trafficking issues in the country. In this case, human trafficking itself is classified a threat to personal security accordingly to the concept of Human Security, which was developed by the UNDP in 1994. This study examines the UNDP 1994 Report's concept of human security and Ian Hurd's International Organization Theory, focusing on the UNODC's program from 2014-2017 to address transnational organized crime, particularly human trafficking. The research suggests that the UNODC as an international organization has made interventions as an actor, forum, and resource in promoting human security in Thailand. In this case, UNODC played the roles by assisting the government of Thailand through programs, which aimed to address human security issues, particularly personal security.

Keywords: *Human Trafficking issues in Thailand; UNODC; Human Security; International Organization*

Introduction

Human trafficking is defined as any act involving the transfer, smuggling, or sale of human beings through forced labor, enslavement, organ removal, or sexual exploitation, affecting both adults and children (Saner et al., 2018). Identified as a transnational organized crime, human trafficking poses a serious threat to human security (Babatunde, 2014). This issue impacts every part of the world and requires specific measures to address it.

Southeast Asia, particularly Thailand, is recognized for its high number of human trafficking cases (Yusran, 2017). Thailand is a known source, transit hub, and destination for human trafficking, especially involving children and women for sexual exploitation and forced labor. Most of the victims are trafficked to various regions, including neighboring countries such as Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, as well as Europe and North America (Jayangakula, 2019).

To manage the issue, the United States Department of State established the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, which became a primary reference for governments worldwide (Ab Hamid et al., 2017). According to the TIP report, Thailand was on the Tier Two Watch List from 2010-2013 (United States Department of State, 2013). Subsequently, the TIP report downgraded Thailand to Tier Three, the lowest tier, in 2014-2015. This tier indicates that Thailand had a high number of human trafficking cases and made no significant efforts to combat the issue. Consequently, Thailand faced international pressure to address human trafficking (Mutaqin, 2018). The 2014 TIP report's statement on Thailand's regulation of human trafficking led Ambassador Luis CdeBaca, head of the United States Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, to advise Thailand to make significant efforts to overcome the issue. Additionally, there was no extensive official complicity from the Thai government that limited their enforcement against sex trafficking and forced labor (Sneed, 2014).

In response, Thailand's Foreign Minister, Sihasak Phuangketkeow, issued a statement expressing dissatisfaction with the Tier Three ranking and outlining efforts to combat human trafficking. He proclaimed that Thailand had made this issue a top priority. Additionally, Thailand is part of all international conventions and is committed to meeting its obligations, intending to do more (Ghosh, 2014). The international pressure from the United States Department of State on Thailand's Foreign Minister led the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to get involved. Jeremy Douglas, the Regional Representative of UNODC, responded to the international pressure on Thailand after it was placed in Tier Three in 2014-2015. He urged Thailand to make cohesive efforts and collaborate with authorities from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand (UNODC, 2016).

On 16 November 2013, Thailand ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), aiming to prevent, suppress, and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children. Under the provisions of UNODC, the Kingdom of Thailand is committed to combating human trafficking by penalizing traffickers, assisting and safeguarding trafficked victims, and encouraging collaboration among stakeholders (Cheeprasop & Wahab, 2018).

Following Thailand's downgrade to Tier Three and the international pressure on human trafficking, the Royal Thai Government implemented wide-ranging efforts in collaboration with various parties (Howe, 2019). Conversely, the UNODC plays a crucial role in supporting nations with the implementation of international norms and principles into domestic regulations and practices (Murray, 2019).

Literature Review

Scholars such as Saner et al. (2018) and (Aronowitz, 2009) discuss that no country can tackle human trafficking without the involvement of other entities. Saner et al. (2018) indicate that measuring and monitoring human trafficking require collaboration, as it is difficult to collect the data. Through policy and comparative analysis, their study found that tackling human trafficking requires cooperation with many entities. On the other hand, Aronowitz (2009) explains that human trafficking is a transnational crime requiring multiple entities to address it. From the perspective of criminal

justice theory, the studies found that human trafficking is difficult to determine and requires long-term prevention measures combined with effective law enforcement.

Moreover, Yuliantiningsih and Barkhuizen (2021) and Sihotang and Wiriya (2021) discuss that Thailand's advancement in the fishing and tourism industries has become a vulnerable source of human trafficking. Another study by Yuliantiningsih and Barkhuizen (2021) examines the pressure on Thailand to eradicate human trafficking in the fishing sector. Through a normative juridical and statute approach to analyze the issue, this study found that it is necessary to enhance enforcement and cooperation to eliminate human trafficking under the UNTOC Protocols.

Sihotang and Wiriya (2021) examine how Thailand's strategic location and advances in the tourism industry could lead the country to become a source of human trafficking, particularly for children and female prostitution. Through the lens of human rights, the study concludes that poverty and low education are contributing factors to human trafficking. Thus, Thailand must strengthen its instruments in combating human trafficking.

Additionally, Cheeprasop and Wahab (2018), as well as Muangtham (2016), argue that Thailand started to implement domestic and international efforts to address human trafficking, especially after being placed in Tier Three (lowest tier), coupled with international pressure. Cheeprasop and Wahab (2018) highlight Thailand's efforts in strengthening international cooperation and their Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act B.E. 2551 (2008). Their studies suggest that the Thai government should strengthen its efforts using an analytical approach.

Subsequently, Muangtham (2016) examines Thailand's efforts in accordance with UNTOC protocols as international instruments and the legal basis on human trafficking following ratification in 2013. From a human rights perspective, the study discovered that the Thai government must improve protocol consistency and enforcement.

The case of Thailand highlights the intervention of international organizations in addressing child trafficking (Rahmadanti & Rusdiyanta, 2019; Marpaung & Tjarsono, 2017). Rahmadanti and Rusdiyanta (2019) examine the role of UNICEF in protecting children from sex trafficking in Thailand. From a liberalism approach, this study confirmed that UNICEF has fulfilled its role in protecting children from prostitution in Thailand by implementing its Child Trafficking Programs. Furthermore, Marpaung & Tjarsono (2017) discusses the role of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in protecting children from trafficking and child labor in Thailand. The pluralist perspective on non-state actors in international relations concluded that the ILO has fulfilled its role in protecting child labor in Thailand.

Another literature reviews by Deda et al. (2022) and Jeremiah (2019) explore the intervention of international organizations, particularly the UNODC, in tackling human trafficking in several

countries. Deda et al. (2022) focus on the intervention by the UNODC on human trafficking issues in India, particularly bride trafficking, revealing that the role of the UNODC has been relatively effective. On the contrary, Jeremiah (2019) examines the effect of the UNODC in Nigeria, highlighting its promotion of better migration practices and capacity building in tackling human trafficking.

The existing literature emphasizes that a country needs to build cooperation with state and non-state actors to address human trafficking issues effectively. Additional literature underscores the importance of law enforcement and strengthening legal instruments to combat human trafficking. Some studies elaborate on factors contributing to human trafficking in Thailand, such as poverty and low education, and the efforts of the Thai government to tackle these issues. Other studies highlight Thailand's compliance with international norms to address human trafficking. Several studies also describe the effectiveness of interventions by international organizations, such as the UNODC, UNICEF, and ILO, in addressing human trafficking, including child trafficking, in various countries, particularly in Thailand.

However, there is room to develop study on the intervention of international organization to assist a country to address human trafficking by referencing a concept that emphasizes the necessity to overcome the issue. The discussion about Human Security concept, which was developed by the UNDP in 1994, has a significance as the reference for national government and international government to formulate actions in tackling human trafficking issues. Aside of Human Security concept, the study also involves International Organization theory by Ian Hurd to analyze the roles of the UNODC in tackling human trafficking issues in Thailand. In this case, elaboration of Human Security concept will provide comprehensive understanding about the importance of tackling human trafficking issues by international community to secure human welfare. In order to support the analysis, International Organization theory suggests a range of behaviors that can reflect the characteristics of the UNODC as an international organization in implementing human security concept.

Therefore, this study aims to answer the question: "To what extent has the UNODC assisted Thailand in coping with human trafficking issues during 2014-2017 through the lenses of Human Security concept?" This study focuses on the significant period following Thailand's ratification of the UNTOC protocols in 2013-2014, the high tension of human trafficking in Thailand, its downgrade to Tier Three by the United States Department Report, and the response of the UNODC as the UNTOC guardian to assist Thailand in combating human trafficking.

Human Security Concept

After the Cold War, the concept of security underwent a redefinition. The strengthening of non-military issues in international relations shifted the understanding of security beyond military and war contexts (Howe, 2019). In general, human security prioritizes individuals, maintaining basic freedoms and protection against external threats. Known as an approach to security issues, human security includes components such as freedom from fear and freedom from want. Additionally, the idea of human security highlights the interconnection of threats and responses to these challenges. Human security requires the cooperation of numerous actors to enable people and communities to respond to threats. Protection and enforcement are required in accordance with the human security concept (UNDP, 1994).

The human security concept, issued by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in its 1994 report, proposes security for individuals rather than territories. The concept of human security is expanded into seven dimensions, namely economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security. Each dimension is explained as follows:

1. Economic security: Addressing issues such as poverty, inadequate income, and unemployment.
2. Food security: Tackling hunger, malnutrition, food shortages, and lack of access to food.
3. Health security: Mitigating threats that can disrupt health, such as disease outbreaks, and ensuring access to health services. The goal is to prevent human deaths, especially those caused by disease.
4. Environmental security: Dealing with pollution, deforestation, lack of natural resources, and natural disasters.
5. Personal security: Protecting against physical assault, abuse, drug use, human trafficking, and child labor.
6. Community security: Preventing coercive traditional practices or harsh treatment of women, discrimination against ethnic, religious, or specific groups, rebellion, and armed conflict.
7. Political security: Guarding against political pressure, human rights violations, military dictatorships, torture, and injustice (UNDP, 1994).

The idea of human security aims to transform traditional narratives of security, which often focus on politics, military, and economy. In other words, threats in human security are not limited to these issues; rather, threats are viewed from the perspective of human beings (Tadjbakhsh, 2005).

Based on the definitions of human security concepts above, this research analyzes the case of human trafficking in Thailand through the perspective of the 1994 UNDP Report and its human

security concept. The discussion provides an overview of the UNODC as an international organization carrying out its function to promote human security in Thailand to tackle human trafficking. Additionally, the 1994 UNDP Report classifies human trafficking as a threat to personal security and a violation of basic human rights.

International Organization Theory

According to Archer (2001), an international organization is a formal, sustainable unitary structure established based on a mutual agreement between members of the organization, including both state and non-state actors, to achieve a common interest. Furthermore, Ian Hurd explains that the establishment of international organizations is formed by agreements among nations rather than individuals, with the goal of binding governments under communal obligations. He adds that international organizations serve different roles as an actor, a forum, and a resource. Each is explained as follows:

1. Actor: The organization can be constituted under international law as an independent entity, separate from the states, and recognized for its capacity to take action in the international community.
2. Forum: The organization provides a place and time for members and partners to plan conferences, schedules, and meetings, whether for recommendations on conflict matters, humanitarian violations, collaboration, etc.
3. Resource: The organization offers political resources and tools used by governments to achieve both local and international goals.

Governments utilize the outcomes of international organizations to support their stance, and vice versa. International organizations' outputs may include statements, declarations, or resolutions (Hurd, 2014). Hurd's perspective on the role of international organizations mentions that an international organization can be seen as an actor, forum, and resource. As an actor, the UNODC, as one of the United Nations agencies, has the authority as guardian of UNTOC protocols to assist Thailand in strengthening prevention and enforcement. As a forum, the UNODC arranges meetings for UNTOC Protocols guidance to discuss the enforcement of transnational crimes, particularly human trafficking. As a resource, the UNODC utilizes its projects to support Thailand's goals and its mission to tackle human trafficking in the global community, particularly in Thailand.

Therefore, this study combines two approaches to understand the role of the UNODC in tackling human trafficking in Thailand from 2014-2017. The first approach is the human security concept from the 1994 UNDP Report on personal security, highlighting how the UNODC promotes human security in addressing human trafficking issues in Thailand. The second approach is Hurd's

perspective, emphasizing how the UNODC's assistance in tackling human trafficking issues in Thailand highlights the international organization as an actor, forum, and resource.

Methodology

The study develops the analysis based on qualitative method, in view of the fact that objectives of this research emphasizes the interpretation on experience and roles of the actors, including government of Thailand, UNODC, and other non-state actors during the implementation of UNODC program, rather than numerical data. The information were derived from primary sources, covering reports released by UNODC, as well as government of Thailand in order to get first-hand evidence or information. In order to ensure credibility of the information, this study generated the reports directly from the official websites of UNODC and government of Thailand.

Aside of the primary sources, the study also explored secondary data from academic articles, books, and reports that have been produced by sources rather than UNODC and government of Thailand. Those secondary sources are significant to obtain information related to the causes of human trafficking in Thailand, as well the efforts of government of Thailand to comply with international norms to cope with human trafficking issues.

Result and Discussion

Human Trafficking in Thailand

Human trafficking is a serious crime that threatens human security. Between 2010 and 2012, victims of human trafficking from 152 different nationalities were recorded in 124 countries worldwide (UNODC, 2014). Thailand, a Southeast Asian country, has become not only a popular destination for travelers but also known for a high number of human trafficking cases, particularly forced labor and sex trafficking (United States Department of State, 2017). Labor trafficking victims are exploited in agriculture, the fishing industry, forced to beg on the streets, and related businesses.

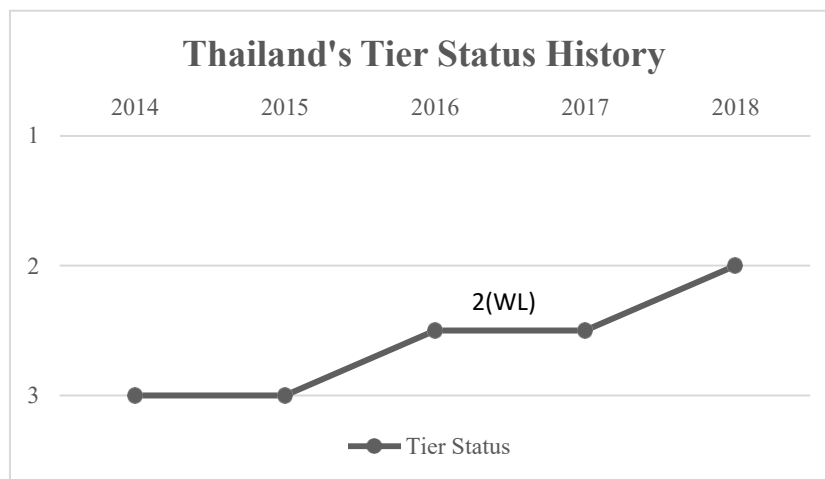
Figure 1 Number of Victims of Human Trafficking in Thailand, 2014-2017



Source: Ministry of Social Development and Human Security; Thai Anti-Human Trafficking Action

The number of human trafficking victims in Thailand requires significant attention due to the increasing number each year. In 2014, 595 people were identified (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 2015). The number peaked in 2016 at 824 people (Thai Anti-Human Trafficking Action, 2019). However, the number decreased in 2017 to 455 due to interventions from international organizations (Thai Anti-Human Trafficking Action, 2019). The high number of human trafficking cases in Thailand placed it in the Tier 3 category in the TIP report in 2014.

Figure 2 Thailand's Tier Status History, 2014-2018



Source: United States Department of State

The diagram above shows that Thailand was in Tier 3, the lowest rank, from 2014 to 2015. Through the ratification and significant cooperation with UNODC as the guardian of UNTOC Protocols, Thailand managed to climb to the Tier 2 Watch List from 2016 to 2017. Furthermore, Thailand officially achieved Tier 2 status in 2018 (United States Department of State, 2018).

There are various factors that cause Thailand to have a high incidence of human trafficking, including economic and educational factors. At the economic level, fundamental issues such as poverty and unemployment lead to human trafficking. Moreover, victims of trafficking often have a low education level, making them vulnerable and easily deceived about their rights and the risks of being laborers (Davy, 2014). The UNODC highlights that human trafficking occurs when people are recruited, transported, transferred, housed, or received through coercion, abduction, fraud, or deception for exploitation (UNODC, n.d.). Consequently, exploited individuals may face forced labor, sexual harassment, slavery, and other violations. The UNODC's definition emphasizes that human trafficking is a significant threat to individuals, aligning with the UNDP Report (1994), which identifies it as a threat to personal security.

Overview of the UNODC and Its Activities in Thailand in Tackling Human Trafficking in 2014-2017

Human security focuses on preserving individual fundamental rights to protect them from external threats. The concept of human security also emphasizes the relationship between threats and responses to these problems. To respond to threats in line with human security principles, protection and enforcement are required, necessitating collaboration among many actors. Both state and non-state entities play crucial roles in creating strategies to protect people from current and future threats. Personal security threats include but are not limited to physical assault, abuse, and crimes against life (UNDP, 1994).

The UNODC, a United Nations agency, has a mandate to prevent and eradicate illegal drugs and international crime. Established in 1997, the UNODC was formed through a merger between the United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP) and the Center for International Crime Prevention (UNODC, n.d.). The UNODC operates in all regions of the world through an extensive network and its protocols, particularly UNTOC Protocols, aiming to promote human security and justice for all individuals by making the world safer (UNODC, 2021).

The background of the UNODC in Thailand demonstrates its long history of presence since 1971, when the Crop Replacement Project necessitated a permanent presence in Thailand. The United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) elevated it to the status of a Field Office in 1986. Furthermore, the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UN/ODCCP) expanded the mandate of the Regional Centre across the Pacific in 1998. The office was renamed in 2002 as the UNODC Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, overseeing activities across East Asia and the Pacific (UNODC, 2009).

UNODC's Programs to Cope with Human Trafficking Issues in Thailand

To tackle human trafficking issues in Thailand, the UNODC established various programs classified as capacity building, forums, and research activities, which will be elaborated in this section.

1. Capacity Building through UNODC Global E-Learning Program

In every country, law enforcement is at the forefront of efforts to combat organized crime. The human security concept suggests diverse actors' involvement to help empower individuals and communities to provide solutions against threats to their security (UNDP, 1994). The UNODC encourages the development and deployment of various programs, including e-learning training for officials who frequently require training or awareness enhancement (UNODC, 2016).

The UNODC provides knowledge transfer and training to strengthen law enforcement through its Global eLearning Programs launched between 2014 and 2016. This training aims to improve the basic enforcement knowledge and abilities of numerous authorities to detect transnational crimes at the region's porous borders, particularly in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, including Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam (UNODC, 2014).

On 12 December 2014, the UNODC "Global eLearning Program" and the United States Embassy in Bangkok handed over two complete eLearning mobile units and training content on Human Rights and Border Control to the Police Education Bureau of the Royal Thai Police. The program provides training on the

eLearning platform to build capacity in addressing human trafficking and human rights. The Royal Thai Police adopted the UNODC Global eLearning to train new police cadets and frontline officers to confront transnational organized crime, particularly human trafficking (UNODC, 2016).

The UNODC has proven its role as an international organization by showing its interest in human trafficking issues through the Global eLearning program for Thai officials at the forefront of international migration. This demonstrates the UNODC's capability in capacity building for Thailand, especially in knowledge and training through the eLearning program.

2. UNODC Forum: Seminar on UNOTC's Protocols Guidance for Thailand

The UNODC, as an international organization, serves to eradicate international crime for the sake of human well-being and promote human security. The UNODC contributes to the development of evidence-based information and raises awareness about human trafficking, particularly as the custodian of the UNTOC and its protocols, by providing information and guidance to its members through forums and conferences (Murray, 2019).

On November 17, 2014, to address the risks and root causes of human trafficking, the UNODC held a forum focused on prevention, protection, and enforcement. In this case, the UNODC and the United Nations Action for Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons (UN-ACT) hosted a seminar to address Thailand's commitments under UNTOC protocols. The seminar presented information and guidance on how to use UNTOC protocols, such as prosecuting and seizing criminal networks involved in human trafficking (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand, 2014).

The UNODC, as the guardian of UNTOC protocols, has an obligation to assist Thailand by providing information and guidance according to the protocols. Furthermore, Thailand has shown its commitment to eradicating human trafficking by ratifying the UNTOC protocols in 2013. Therefore, the UNODC has demonstrated its capability as an international organization in organizing the forum, aiming to build knowledge and provide guidance for Thailand to eradicate human trafficking.

3. Research Between Thailand Institute of Justice (TIJ) – UNODC on Countering Human Trafficking

The UNODC was given a mission by the General Assembly in 2010 to collect data and report on human trafficking. Based on this mission, UNODC research is essential in identifying regional and global organized crime patterns, forecasting future developments, and strengthening states' ability to respond actively. It aims to improve information exchange between enforcement agencies, customs, and border control authorities in various countries (UNODC, 2018).

In this context, the Thailand Institute of Justice (TIJ) and UNODC launched the Joint Project to Counter Human Trafficking on January 11, 2016, to address the risks and root causes of human trafficking. The human security concept focuses on research for better international migration. The research aims to foster cross-border cooperation through evidence-based knowledge exchange to understand trafficking from Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar to Thailand, as well as to identify gaps in law enforcement (UNODC, 2016).

Mr. Benjamin Smith, the UNODC Regional Coordinator for Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling, pointed out that the main challenge in preventing and combating human trafficking is the lack of complete and accurate data (UNODC, 2016). The launch of the report on August 10, 2017, titled "Trafficking in Persons from Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar to Thailand," was the first collaborative report of its kind to investigate cross-border human trafficking. It aims to optimize the benefits of international migration and to better understand border management for Thailand and its neighbors (UNODC, 2017). Therefore, the UNODC has become a valuable resource for research, particularly for Thailand, to provide better information in border management and offer a better understanding of documentation.

The UNODC's mandate, protocols, programs, and forum in the context of human trafficking in Thailand have been fulfilled by promoting human security through strengthening the knowledge and skills of law enforcement agencies, as well as enhancing the availability of data and information to identify human trafficking in the region through collaborations. The Global eLearning program resulted in strong enforcement for officials. From the seminar on UNTOC protocols prepared by UNODC, Thailand has gained a better understanding and awareness of human trafficking and regulations for tackling the issue. The joint research project between UNODC and TIJ provided Thailand with valuable information on cross-border international migration, helping to close gaps in enforcement.

The three programs focus on human security, particularly personal security as outlined in the UNDP 1994 Report. These programs offer resolutions and solutions to eradicate human trafficking in Thailand by providing global e-learning, seminars, and research-based information that identifies vulnerable locations of human trafficking.

The Roles of UNODC in Coping with Human Trafficking Issues in Thailand through the Lenses of International Organization Theory

Thailand was classified as Tier 3 in 2014-2015, indicating a significant amount of human trafficking with no substantial efforts to address it. This classification led to international pressure on Thailand to combat the issue. Human trafficking in Thailand dominated headlines, highlighting the complexity of the problem for the Royal Thai government (UNODC, 2016).

In managing the issue, the UNODC established cooperation with the Royal Thai Government. As a guardian of Thailand's commitment under UNTOC Protocols, the UNODC aimed to develop a new and coherent strategy to combat human trafficking from 2014 to 2017. The actions taken by the UNODC as an international organization fit into the three roles of international organization theory by Ian Hurd: actor, forum, and resource.

1. The UNODC as an Actor

International organizations are regarded as international actors when they can be recognized as separate entities from states and have the capacity to take action in the international community (Hurd, 2014). The UNODC, founded in 1997 by merging the UNDCP and the Center for International Crime Prevention, was established by the United Nations Secretary-General to address the challenges of drug control and transnational

crime in all its forms (UNODC, 2009). The UNODC serves as an autonomous body that was founded without the involvement of any specific state. Thus, the UNODC becomes an international actor aiming to address the interconnected concerns of drug control, crime, and transnational crime.

Thailand manages human trafficking issues through collaboration with the UNODC to achieve its objectives. To assist its members, the UNODC launched Global eLearning Programs in 2014 to improve law enforcement responses to global human security challenges. The program covers the Greater Mekong Sub-region (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam) and is intended to provide authorities with basic enforcement training to improve their knowledge and abilities to detect transnational crimes at the region's porous borders (UNODC, 2014).

In 2014, the UNODC and the United States Embassy in Bangkok handed over the Global eLearning Program to the Royal Thai Police Educational Bureau (RTP PEB), comprising two complete eLearning mobile units and training content focused on Human Rights and Border Control (UNODC, 2014). The program continued until 2015, with an estimated 600 officers receiving training in Thailand's southern regions on identifying human rights, human trafficking, and migrant smuggling. According to PEB Commissioner Pol. Lt. Gen Promtorn Parkart, the UNODC eLearning programs are effective, concise, and quick to execute, receiving positive feedback from Thailand (UNODC, 2015). Due to the growing interest and impact of eLearning, the Royal Thai Police adopted UNODC eLearning in 2016 to train new police cadets and frontline personnel across the country and its borders. The RTP PEB training campaign has reached 2,250 certified users through Mobile Training Units and established six training centers in Ubon Ratchathani, Udon Thani, Songkhla, Yala, Lampang, and Surat Thani (UNODC, 2016).

This demonstrates that UNODC has effectively bolstered law enforcement by providing training to frontline personnel in Thailand to prevent human trafficking. The role of UNODC as an actor requires social acknowledgment and the capacity to implement programs like eLearning. The successful training of Thai officers and the indication of the program's effectiveness prove that the UNODC has fulfilled its role as an actor in the international community.

2. The UNODC as a Forum

International organizations are additionally situated in space and time where members organize meetings, conferences, and schedules (Hurd, 2014). The UNODC, as an international organization dedicated to eradicating international crime for well-being, contributes to formulating evidence-based knowledge and raising awareness about human trafficking, people smuggling, corruption, and other forms of transnational organized crime. As the guardian of the UNTOC and its protocols, the UNODC promotes global compliance with these instruments to provide effective assistance in combating crimes (UNODC, n.d.).

For instance, Thailand has ratified the UNTOC protocols, and the UNODC has an obligation to assist Thailand in applying the protocols as a legal basis for their domestic assessments to prevent human trafficking. The UNODC organized a forum based on knowledge and recommendations for Thailand. The UNODC and the UN-ACT organized a seminar for the Royal Thai Government on November 17, 2014, to provide information and guidance on Thailand's obligations under UNTOC protocols. The meeting offered guidance

on how the UNTOC and its protocols might be used to combat transnational organized crime, particularly human trafficking, and to enhance collaboration with other UNODC members. The program also provided suggestions and best practices for dealing with transnational and organized crime issues, such as prosecuting and seizing criminal networks (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand, 2014).

In this regard, the UNODC initiatives serve as a forum to assist their members, such as Thailand. The forum aimed to develop information on the use and practical strategies for responding to challenges and implementing them in a coordinated manner according to UNTOC protocols. Measures include, but are not limited to, providing information and guidance for preventing and combating human trafficking, as well as raising awareness.

3. The UNODC as a Resource

International organizations also serve as political resources for governments to achieve both national and international goals. Governments utilize the outcomes of international organizations to support their positions and vice versa. Statements, declarations, and resolutions are examples of outputs from international organizations (Hurd, 2014). The UNODC, as an international organization, was given a mission by the General Assembly in 2010 to collect data and report on human trafficking. This demonstrates the UNODC's capacity to respond reactively and proactively in facilitating information exchange between various countries. Additionally, the UNODC has become a prominent resource for addressing human trafficking issues (UNODC, 2018).

In this context, the UNODC and TIJ created a joint project to combat human trafficking in 2016. The goal is to foster evidence-based knowledge, facilitate knowledge exchange, and provide access to information on human trafficking, as well as identify gaps in law enforcement for better cross-border management. Data and information are sometimes incomplete as government data on trafficking and associated statistics are rarely made public. Therefore, the intention of the UNODC was to fill these gaps and generate more research (UNODC, 2018).

In 2017, the UNODC and TIJ released a report titled "Trafficking in Persons from Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar to Thailand," which aimed to be useful beyond the four participating countries. According to Dr. Kittipong Kittayarak, Executive Director of TIJ, the TIJ – UNODC Joint Project to Counter Human Trafficking initiative has provided better knowledge of cross-border cooperation and will positively impact understanding the human trafficking situation in Thailand. The initiative also fosters the development of data and research on crime and justice concerns (UNODC, 2017).

Therefore, the TIJ and UNODC Joint Project to Counter Human Trafficking serves as a statement and solution for Thailand. The project, initiated by the UNODC and Thailand, aimed at cross-border cooperation and management related to human trafficking issues in Thailand and its neighboring countries. Based on the findings, the project has received positive responses and produced outputs that have helped Thailand achieve its goals in tackling human trafficking. This aligns with Ian Hurd's international organization theory, suggesting that the UNODC has fulfilled its role as a resource among member states in addressing human trafficking.

Conclusion

Human trafficking has been a critical issue for decades, with increasing numbers worldwide, especially in Southeast Asia, specifically Thailand. The high incidence of human trafficking in Thailand led to its classification as Tier 3 by the United States Department Report in 2014-2015. In response, the UNODC created various programs and projects to assist Thailand.

Through the Human Security Concept and International Organization Theory, this study answers the research question of how the UNODC conducts programs to assist Thailand in confronting human trafficking issues. The Human Security Concept explains that human trafficking occurs in a transnational community and is classified as a personal security threat. The UNDP Report in 1994 views human trafficking as a threat to individuals. The involvement of the UNODC through programs, forums, and projects has assisted Thailand in promoting human security.

The role of International Organizations theory addresses how, during the process of cooperation, an international organization can function as an actor, a forum, and a resource in collaboration with national government. The key aspects of these roles are: 1) As an actor, the UNODC operates as an independent entity with its own capacity. In this case, the UNODC, as a non-state actor, cooperates with Thailand to tackle human trafficking through the UNODC Global eLearning Program; 2) As a forum, the UNODC organizes seminars on the UNTOC protocols, providing information and guidance; 3) As a resource, the UNODC supports Thailand in handling human trafficking issues through research that identifies gaps and improves border management information.

Based on the above explanation of the Human Security concept from the UNDP Report (1994), the UNODC has fulfilled its intention to promote human security, particularly personal security, by assisting Thailand in tackling human trafficking. Furthermore, Ian Hurd's international organization theory demonstrates that the UNODC fits its roles as an actor, forum, and resource. The UNODC's programs and forums have enhanced capacity building and provided better border management information for Thailand. However, the interventions of UNODC have limitations on those areas, as the UNODC program in tackling human trafficking in Thailand had not yet involved strategies in solving the contributing factors to the issues, namely poverty and low education level. In this case, UNODC and other international organizations may develop strategies to cope with the contributing factors to human trafficking issues.

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