

Ministry of Justice

State of Israel

Dept. Legislation and
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Israel's New Comprehensive Trafficking Legislation

I. Introduction: A New Comprehensive Trafficking Law

On October 19th 2006 Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, passed a new comprehensive trafficking law entitled Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (Legislative Amendments) Law, 5766 – 2006. The law came into force on October 29th. The new legislation reflects an attitude whereby combating trafficking in persons requires the integration of a series of tools and actors. It also places emphasis on the primacy of victim protection and on the dignity of the human personality.

The law criminalizes various forms of conduct which amount to trafficking or allied crimes, creates procedural frameworks to facilitate deterrence, provides various protections for victims, and includes provisions to encourage international cooperation.

The new legislation establishes an offence of **trafficking in human beings for a wide array of exploitative purposes: removal of an organ, giving birth to a child and taking away the said child, subjecting a person to slavery, subjecting him to forced labor, subjecting him to an act of prostitution, subjecting him to participation in a pornographic publication or exhibition, committing a sexual offence against him.**

As regards trafficking for the purpose of slavery or forced labor, the law provides an additional panoply of crimes to address gradations in exploitation. This reflects the attitude that exploitation, even when it does not amount to trafficking or slavery, may still create a climate friendly to the development of such severe forms of exploitation. As such, the creation of a series of crimes serves a preventative purpose.

Even the process by which the law was passed reflects an awareness of the importance of cooperation between different actors in combating trafficking. The law consolidates two bills: a government bill and a bill proposed by a member of Knesset,¹ MK Zehava Galon. The passage of the final version required cooperation between members of the government and Knesset. This cooperation gave rise to a better law than either body could have arrived at independently. In addition, the consolidated law was deliberated upon with the active participation of N.G.O. representatives who contributed, both from the standpoint of world view and that of experience.

The following sections will deal with the new law's tools in combating trafficking for the purpose of slavery or forced labor.

II. Criminalizing a Series of Exploitative Behavior

The law establishes a gradation of criminal offences tailored to meet gradations in exploitative behavior. This reflects the view that all exploitation must be combated, even when it does not amount to trafficking or slavery, in order to create a climate unfriendly to the development of such severe forms of criminal behavior.

As regards trafficking for the purpose of slavery or forced labor, the following series of crimes has been established: **trafficking in human beings for the purpose of slavery or forced labor** (section 377A(a) of the Penal Law), **holding a person under conditions of slavery** (section 375A of the Penal Law), **forced labor** (section 376 of the Penal Law), and **exploitation of vulnerable populations** (section 431 of the Penal Law). This last crime was in force before the law, but its punishment was heightened from one year's imprisonment to 3 years of imprisonment. In addition, the abduction offence has been broadened to include two new offences: **abduction for the purpose of slavery or forced labor** and **conveying a person beyond the boundaries of a state** (sections 374A and 370 of the Penal Law) and a new offence

¹ The Knesset is Israel's Parliament.

created of **causing a person to leave a state for the purposes of prostitution or slavery** (section 376A of the Penal Law).

These criminal offences exist by the side of various regulatory offences intended to protect foreign workers and for example, the Foreign Workers Law, 5751 – 1991 and the Employment Service Law, 5719 – 1959. However, their inclusion in the Penal Law accords them a higher level of criminality and better expresses society's moral condemnation. The following is a concise analysis of the main crimes included in the new law and pertinent to trafficking for the purpose of slavery and forced labor.:

1. **Trafficking in Persons** (Section 377A(a) Penal Law)

Before the new law came into force, the only trafficking offence was for the purpose of prostitution. The new law includes trafficking for a wide array of unworthy purposes, including slavery and forced labor. The crime is attended with a maximal punishment of 16 years imprisonment and 20 years imprisonment if it is committed against a minor.

The crime is composed of two main elements: a **transaction** in a person, for one of several **exploitative purposes**, including subjecting a person to slavery or forced labor. The definition of transaction in a person is instructive:

""transaction in a person" means selling or buying a person or carrying out another transaction in a person, whether or not for consideration."

It is immediately apparent that the elements of the crime differ from those espoused in the main trafficking Protocol.² The Protocol defines trafficking by means of three elements: certain actions involved in moving a human being from one place to another (and for example, recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt), by nefarious means (such as threats or use of force, coercion, or fraud) for the purpose of exploitation (which includes at a minimum forced labour or services , slavery or

² PROTOCOL TO PREVENT, SUPPRESS AND PUNISH TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN, SUPPLEMENTING THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME.

practices similar to slavery or servitude). Only in the case of trafficking of children is there no requirement of nefarious means.

In contrast, the Israeli law chooses to define the hard core of trafficking, as a **transaction in a person**, as distinguished from a **transaction with a person**. This emphasizes the objectification of the person, which is the essence of trafficking, as does the placement of the section in the chapter of the Penal Law which deals with violations of human freedom. The Israeli law, like the Protocol, also requires that there be an exploitative purpose and for example, slavery or forced labor, but it does not require that foul means be used. **Trafficking may transpire even if no threat, violence or abuse of power occurs. This definition facilitates the proving of the offence, as does the statement that no consideration is required, nor a transaction of a particular kind.** The law explicitly states that a middleman in a trafficking transaction is to be considered an accomplice.

The law also facilitates convictions by stating two possible connections between the transaction and the exploitative conditions: either the trafficker must perform the acts for the exploitative purpose or in so acting he must place the person in danger of one of the exploitative conditions.

In addition, it should be noted, that the Supreme Court Interpretation of "buying and selling", as these terms appeared in the former offence of "trafficking for the purpose of prostitution, was broad and included any transfer of rights in a human being. This mode of interpretation should facilitate convictions, even if it is difficult to prove the nature of the transaction.

The legislative technique adopted by the Law is to define the offence in broad terms, rather than specify a series of concrete actions which constitute it. This technique was consciously chosen, under the assumption that too many words often creates classifications which allow evasion and miss the essence of the offence. On the other hand, when the hard core of the offence is defined, a wide array of circumstances which merit inclusion, are more likely to fit.

The Israeli law and the Protocol have a common ground in that the consent of the victim is irrelevant to the crime. Unlike the Protocol, which deals only in transnational trafficking, the Israeli law also covers internal trafficking.

2. **Holding a Person under Conditions of Slavery** (section 375A of the Penal Law)

Before the new law, Israel did not have a slavery offence. Now, it is a crime with a maximal punishment of 16 years of imprisonment and 20 years if committed against a minor.

The elements of the offence require that a person be held under conditions of slavery for the purposes of work or services, including sex services. Slavery is defined as follows:

""slavery" means a situation under which powers generally exercised towards property are exercised over a person; in this matter, substantive control over the life of a person or denial of his liberty shall be deemed use of powers as stated."

This definition attempts to focus upon the hard kernel of slavery, which is acting towards a person as if towards property, thus destroying his separate legal personality and his basic autonomy.³ The first part of the definition is taken from the Slavery Convention of 1926, whereas the second part was added in order to clarify that slavery may take place, even if there is no passing of property rights in the person. This was necessary in view of the fact that modern slavery focuses on control as distinguished from ownership.

As in the trafficking offence, it is not necessary to prove that foul means were used to enslave the person. Nor is his consent relevant.

³ Prosecutor v. Dragoljub Kunarac et al, before the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia dealing with the crime against humanity of "enslavement" – first instance decision 22 February 2001 and appeal 12 June 2002.

The legislative technique is similar to that of the trafficking offence in that a broad definition is used in order to catch the full range of circumstances which may amount to slavery. It was felt that this was a case wherein it was doubtful if detail would clarify, as much as it would tend to exclude circumstances which should be included.

Clearly, slavery and trafficking for the purpose of slavery are similar, in that both crimes strike at a person's most basic freedoms and objectify him. Still, in trafficking, this is done by means of a **transaction in a person**, whereas under slavery, the **conditions** under which the person is held constitute the crime.

In some sense the two crimes can be seen as a continuum, with slavery acting as the realization of trafficking, if the transaction is undertaken in order to enslave the person. **This allows a whole range of behavior to be dealt with by the criminal law, without leaving gaps which are not covered.** Thus, in cases where the evidence does not prove a transaction, but the living and working conditions are inhuman, a charge of slavery may be entered, whereas in cases where the evidence is limited to a transaction, the trafficking crime may be used.

3. New Abduction Offences Allied to Trafficking (sections 374A and 370 of the Penal Law)

The new law creates two new abduction offences which serve to cover behavior which is close to trafficking and slavery, but may not fall squarely into the elements of those crimes:

1. **Aggravated abduction offence** - (section 374A) which requires that the abduction be perpetrated in order to achieve the aims enumerated in the trafficking crime (including slavery and forced labor). The maximal sentence is 20 years imprisonment. This section was added in order to tailor abduction to a world rife with trafficking.

It should be noted that abduction does not require the use of force, but may occur if the perpetrator threatens or entices the victim to leave the place in which he is by means of fraud (section 369 of the Penal Law). Thus this crime fills in gaps left by the

trafficking offence. **Even if a transaction cannot be proven, as is required by the trafficking crime, a perpetrator who causes a person to move from one place to another by fraudulent means, may still be convicted of abduction.**

Interestingly, this crime more resembles the definition of trafficking in the Trafficking Protocol than the trafficking crime itself, as defined in Israeli law. Like the definition in the Protocol, it requires the moving of a person from one place to another by nefarious means for one of the purposes enumerated in the trafficking offence.

2. In addition, the law creates a new offence of "**Conveying a Person Beyond the Boundaries of a State**" (section 370) - which prohibits conveying a person beyond the boundaries of the state in which he resides. This provision reflects a reality by which people are abducted beyond national boundaries in order to "feed" the international "trafficking industry". The maximal sentence is 10 years imprisonment.

As in the abduction offence previously described, **this offence may be used even when there is no evidence of a transaction**, as required by the trafficking in persons offence.

4. **Causing a Person to Leave a State for Purposes of Prostitution or Slavery** (section 376B of the Penal Law)

Like the new abduction offence, this new offence fills in the gaps left by the trafficking offence. It penalizes "**Anyone who causes another person to leave the State in which he lives for purposes of engaging the person in prostitution or holding that person under conditions of slavery.**" The maximal sentence is ten years imprisonment.

Thus, even if a transaction in a person cannot be proven, as required by the trafficking offence, a perpetrator who entices another person to move across borders in order to hold him under conditions of slavery is still liable to criminal sanctions.

5. **Forced Labor** (section 376 of the Penal Law)

Before the law was enacted, the Penal Law included an offence of forced labor, but it was inadequate to deal with modern cases of severe exploitation, as can be seen by the maximal sentence, which was one year's imprisonment.

The new law redesigned this offence and strengthened it, as can be seen by the maximal sentence, which is 7 year's imprisonment. The section penalizes "**Anyone who unlawfully forces a person to work, by using force or other means of pressure or by threat of one of these, or by consent elicited by fraud, whether or not for consideration...**"

This crime is tailored to cover situations of lesser exploitation than slavery or trafficking, which have maximal sentences of 16 years imprisonment. In addition, while those crimes deal in denial of basic freedoms, so that they do not require an element of force, pressure, threats or fraud, "forced labor" does, because it deals with less severe situations which can still be considered as labor, rather than slavery.

Still, there is common ground between the three crimes in that here too, it is irrelevant if consideration has been paid. This reflects a recognition of the fact that payment of consideration alone cannot absolve from blame, as forced labor too, is a violation of the victim's freedom.

The crime does not require overt or threatened violence; "**other means of pressure**" opens the door to milder means. This term appears in other sections of the Penal Law and has been interpreted to include exploitation of severe economic hardship or an implicit threat to withhold a worker's permit.

6. Exploitation of Vulnerable Populations – (section 431 of the Penal Law): Heightened Maximal Sentence

Section 431 penalizes he who exploits the distress, the bodily or mental weakness, the lack of experience or recklessness of a person in order to demand or receive something which is not owing or to demand or receive something at a price which is unreasonably higher than the norm or to pay a price unreasonably lower than the norm for a product or service.

This section existed in the Penal Law before the enactment of the law, but its maximal sentence was one year's imprisonment. The new law enacted a more severe maximal sentence of 3 years in order to reflect the severity of exploitation encountered today, and in particular in the realm of foreign workers. It should be noted, that this section has been used in the past to indict persons who exploited foreign workers.

This is a crime of lesser severity than trafficking, slavery and forced labor. Here, the protected value is not a person's basic freedom, but rather his vulnerability to exploitation. As such, this crime is tailored to fit cases attended by less grievous harm.

These six crimes are intended to cover the range of criminal behaviors related to exploitation of laborers, without leaving gaps. The most severe behavior will be prosecuted under the trafficking, slavery or abduction crimes. The next gradation is causing a person to leave his state for purposes of slavery, followed by forced labor and finally exploitation of vulnerable populations.

In addition, there exists a seventh crime which penalizes behavior often used as a tool to bolster trafficking or slavery:

7. Withholding of Passport (section 376A of the Penal Law)

Before the law was enacted, the Penal Law included a section penalizing "**anyone who withholds, unlawfully, a passport, travel document or identity document of another person.**" The maximal sentence was one year's imprisonment.

The new law enacted a more severe maximal sentence of **3 years imprisonment** and creates a yet more **severe crime of withholding of a passport under aggravating circumstances** attended by a yet more severe maximal sentence of **5 years imprisonment**. The aggravating circumstances come into play if the crime has been committed in order to achieve one of the purposes enumerated in the trafficking crime (including slavery and forced labor).

The more severe sentences and aggravating circumstances were enacted in order to tailor this crime to the world of trafficking in which withholding such documents often serves as a tool to allow traffickers, enslavers and perpetrators of forced labor to exert pressure upon their victims so that they cannot flee.

III. A Message to the Courts – Minimum Sentences and a Rule to Award Compensation to Victims (sections 377B and 377C of the Penal Law)

The new law sends a message to courts in two respects. It mandates minimal sentences for trafficking and slavery offences (one quarter of the maximal sentence unless there are special circumstances)⁴ and enacts a rule that courts should award compensation to victims of trafficking and slavery offences. If a court does not award such compensation, it must give the reasons for this omission.

This limitation of judicial discretion is rare in the Israeli legal climate. It sends a clear message to the judiciary that these are serious crimes which merit serious sentences and that victims of such crimes suffer harm which should be compensated. In this way, the law attempts to guide the courts and ensure that these crimes are adequately punished and compensated.

IV. Economic Tools in the Battle against Trafficking and Slavery

The new law recognizes that trafficking and slavery are committed in order to reap economic rewards and that therefore, the battle against them must strike at the roots of these profits. The law provides two kinds of tools:

1. Broad Forfeiture Provisions (section 377D of the Penal Law)

The law enacts broad forfeiture provisions which allow courts to rule that property connected to trafficking and slavery offences should be forfeited. It includes the following provisions:

⁴ In the Israeli legal system, this does not mean that the minimal sentence must be incarceration; it can also be a suspended sentence, though the law mandates that not all the sentence can be suspended.

- a. The property which can be forfeited is broad and includes property amassed from the profits accruing from movable and immovable property, money and rights which are connected to the crime.
- b. The connection between the property and the trafficking and slavery offence is broadly set and may include: that the crime was committed with aid of the property, that the property served to allow the commission of the crime, that it was intended to be remuneration for the commission of the crime, that it was obtained directly or indirectly as remuneration for the commission of the crime, or was obtained as a result of the commission of the crime.
- c. The law imposes an obligation upon courts who convict perpetrators of trafficking and slavery crimes to order forfeiture, as a rule, unless they reach the conclusion, for special reasons, that this should not be done.
- d. The law allows courts to issue temporary orders and to order forfeiture in a civil proceeding, under special circumstances, even if no criminal proceeding was held.

2. **Money Laundering** (amendment of the Prohibition of Money Laundering Law, 5760-2000)

The law provides that the new crimes of trafficking in persons, kidnapping for the purposes enumerated in the trafficking section, slavery, causing a person to leave a state for prostitution or slavery – are crimes of origin for the purpose of the Money Laundering law. This means that perpetrators who have money laundered in the context of these crimes, may be prosecuted under this economic law, as well as the substantive criminal laws violated, thus allowing a coordinated attack which strikes at the basis of their ill gotten gains.

It should be noted that the crime of forced labor is also a crime of origin, but as it existed before the new law (though in attenuated form), it was already considered a crime of origin and therefore there was no need to legislate in order to include it.

V. Special Forfeiture Fund (section 377E of the Penal Law)

As a rule, in the Israeli legal system, proceeds of crime which are forfeited are transferred to the State. Though there are exceptions to this rule, they are rare.

The new law diverges from this rule and establishes a special fund to which all forfeited property and fines imposed in connection to **trafficking and slavery offences**, should be transferred. The fund must allocate this property for the following purposes:

1. rehabilitation, treatment and protection of victims of these offences. **Each year, no less than one half of the Fund's assets must be allocated to this end.**
2. prevention of the commission of such offences.
3. carrying out the functions of law enforcement authorities in enforcing the provisions of the law in regard to these offences.
4. payment of compensation (whole or partial) to individual victims who have been awarded such compensation by means of court judgments (whether in civil or criminal cases) and have established that they have no reasonable possibility of enforcing the judgment.

These purposes reflect the various aspects of the battle against trafficking, as established by international conventions: ⁵ **protection, prosecution and prevention**. Thus, the Fund is intended to be a tool to encourage the waging of this battle on all fronts.

This provision is an important precedent, in its emphasis upon the protection of victims, above and beyond the other purposes of the Fund. This can be seen in the obligatory allocation of at least half of the yearly assets to the protection of victims and in the arrangement allowing for compensation of individual victims by the Fund, under certain circumstances.

⁵ See for example, the citation in footnote 1.

VI. Tools to Foster the International Battle against Trafficking: Extraterritorial Jurisdiction and Legal Assistance between States

The new law forges two tools to encourage the international battle against trafficking and slavery:

1. **Extraterritorial Jurisdiction** (amended section 15 of the Penal Law)

As a rule, Israeli courts have jurisdiction to try an Israeli citizen who has committed a crime abroad, on condition that the act is a crime, both in the state in which it was committed and in Israel (double criminality). Traditionally, there have been few exceptions to this rule (trafficking for the purpose of prostitution, prostitution offences involving minors and bigamy offences).

The new law broadens the class of cases in which an Israeli court has **jurisdiction to try an Israeli citizen for crimes committed abroad, even if the act was not a crime in the state in which it was committed**. These now include three new crimes enacted by the law: trafficking in persons, conveying a person beyond the boundaries of a state and causing a person to leave a state for the purpose of prostitution or slavery.

This provision promotes the international battle against these crimes; Israeli citizens who commit them can be tried by an Israeli court, without regard to the legal status of their actions abroad. This prevents the Israeli citizen from sheltering under foreign legal systems which do not have adequate criminal provisions to cover these crimes.

2. **Legal Assistance between States** (amendment to Legal Assistance between States Law, 5758 - 1998)

The new law authorizes Israeli courts to **enforce forfeiture orders of foreign courts or administrative bodies** regarding property in Israel connected to the crimes of **trafficking in persons and slavery**. It also authorizes the Minister of Justice to request enforcement of a forfeiture order given by an Israeli court in regard to these crimes.

This amendment encourages cooperation between Israel and other nations in the economic battle against these offenses.

VII. Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Persons and Allied Crimes

The new law includes a series of protections for victims of trafficking and allied crimes:

1. **Special Forfeiture Fund** (section 377E of the Penal Law)

The special forfeiture fund, described on page 12 of this document, provides for the protection of trafficking and slavery victims in general and on an individual basis, under certain circumstances.

2. **Duty to Report** (amendment of section 368D of the Penal Law)

Section 368D of the Penal Law obligates a member of the public to report to the Police or the State Welfare Functionary if he harbors a suspicion that a crime has been committed recently against a minor or a member of a vulnerable population by a person responsible for him. A broader obligation is imposed upon certain professionals who tend to come into contact with such populations: to report even if the crime was not recently committed. These professionals include doctors, nurses, education employees, social workers, welfare workers, police, psychologists, criminologists, para – medical personnel, directors or staff in homes or institutions in which reside minors or members of vulnerable populations. **Violation of these obligations is a criminal offence.**

The new law added the crime of **trafficking of persons** as one regarding which this obligation to report applies. This amendment is intended to provide protection for the victims of trafficking by engaging the public as a whole, and professionals who may come into contact with them, to report their plight, thus allowing them to be helped.

3. **Court Testimony not in the Presence of the Accused** (amendment of Procedure (Interrogation of Witnesses) Law)

Before the law came into force, courts were authorized to hear the testimony of a complainant, not in the presence of the accused, as regards sexual offences or trafficking for the purpose of prostitution – on condition that certain procedural safeguards were upheld.

The law applies this arrangement to complainants in regard to **trafficking for pornography and trafficking for the commission of a sexual offence**. This provision attempts to protect such complainants who often have special problems in facing accused persons who have invaded their autonomy in such extreme ways.

4. **Legal Aid for Victims of Trafficking and Slavery**

Before the law was enacted, free legal aid was given to all victims of trafficking for the purpose of prostitution. This aid pertains to civil suits arising from the trafficking or allied offences or in regard to their status as illegal entrants under the Entry to Israel Law. The assistance is accorded to all such victims unconditionally, no matter what their financial situation.

The law broadens this provision and mandates legal aid to all victims of trafficking in persons and slavery until September 15, 2008. The provision is temporary in order to allow the government to evaluate the costs of such aid during this trial period.

5. **Preliminary Testimony** (amendment to section 117(b) of the Criminal Procedure Law [Consolidated Version], 5742 - 1982)

Before the law was enacted, courts were obligated, as a rule, to decide on requests for preliminary testimony ⁶ two weeks from the submission of the request and to hear the testimony, no later than two months from the date of the ruling – as regards criminal cases of trafficking for the purpose of prostitution.

⁶ Preliminary testimony is a procedure which allows hearing the testimony of a witness before the actual trial begins.

The new law broadens this provision to include **all offences of trafficking in persons**. This arrangement provides protection of victims by shortening the period during which they may be threatened or pressured by criminals and by allowing them to return to their countries of origin within a reasonable time, should they so desire.

6. Court Proceedings: In Camera Proceedings and Non Release of Details about Minors (amendment to the Courts Law [Consolidated Version], 5744 - 1984)

The new law authorizes courts to hear the trafficking cases in camera, in order to protect the interests of a victim of trafficking who may experience emotional hardship in testifying in public.

In addition, the law forbids releasing details about a minor who is a victim of trafficking in persons, (including his name, his picture, his residence or other details which may identify him), without the permission of the court. This is intended to provide special protection to a minor who has undergone serious trauma.

7. Protections Accorded to Victims of Crime (amendment to the Rights of Victims of an Offence Law, 5761 - 2001)

The law accords to all victims of trafficking, slavery, and the aggravated kidnapping offence (for the purposes enumerated in the trafficking section) - special rights in the context of court proceedings. These rights are accorded to victims of especially severe crimes. Among the rights are: the right to obtain information about the prison or detention status of the criminal, the obligation of the court to expedite the proceedings within a reasonable time, forbidding the interrogation of such a victim about their sexual past (as a rule), the right to be accompanied by a supportive person during police interrogation, the right to express an opinion before the Parole Board, the right to express an opinion regarding amnesty for the criminal.

VIII. Conclusion

As can be seen, the new comprehensive trafficking law provides enforcement authorities with a tool kit to assist in combating trafficking in persons and allied crimes:

1. It creates a cluster of crimes, which, at least on the face of it, can cover most criminal actions involving trafficking and slavery.
2. It sends a message to courts to sentence crimes of trafficking and slavery severely and to compensate their victims as a rule.
3. It provides economic tools to combat trafficking: broad forfeiture provisions and money laundering crimes.
4. It establishes a special forfeiture fund whose assets are to be allocated to promote the fight against trafficking and slavery in the realms of prosecution, prevention and protection.
5. It provides tools to promote the international battle against trafficking: extraterritorial jurisdiction in regard to Israeli citizens who commit these crimes abroad and authorization to courts to enforce foreign forfeiture orders.
6. It makes available a series of protection for victims of trafficking and allied crimes, including a **special forfeiture fund** which allocates assets for the protection of victims as a whole and individual victims, **protections in court proceedings** (in camera proceedings, non release of details about minors, rights to receive information and express opinions at various junctures of the criminal process, the opportunity to testify not in the presence of the accused, expedition of preliminary testimony), **legal aid**, and **imposes a duty on the public and certain professionals to report trafficking crimes**.

The challenge we now face is to enforce this law and implement its provisions by putting into place mechanisms which will promote identification of victims, active encouragement of testimony on their part, information sharing between various government agencies and training of government representatives who will take part in enforcement and contact with victims.

Several steps have been taken to embark on this road:

1. A Committee of Directors General of relevant government ministries has been appointed in order to make policy decisions concerning the battle against trafficking, including trafficking for slavery and forced labor.
2. A Government Coordinator has been appointed to promote cooperation between government agencies and between them and non governmental bodies in the battle against all forms of trafficking.
3. An inter ministerial committee has been appointed with a mandate to forge a national plan to combat trafficking for slavery and forced labor and slavery. This committee has met several times and is finalizing its recommendations. Representatives of N.G.O.s are consulted and participate in part of the meetings. The committee's recommendations will be submitted to the Committee of Directors General for approval.
4. Training initiatives have commenced to understand the phenomenon of trafficking for slavery and forced labor and slavery.

As to the law itself, beyond its specific provisions, it is important in that it delineates phenomena and creates separate crimes, thus raising awareness and allowing the judicial and bureaucratic bodies to step out of old classifications and see various forms of exploitation as violations of human rights, rather than just regulatory offences.

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