

# humanities for sale



INTERNATIONAL COURSE  
ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
**2024**

Human Trafficking in Africa,  
Latin America and  
the Caribbean

NOVEMBER 11 TO 15 FROM 9 AM TO 1 PM



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## Basis

This course aims to study human trafficking in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean by examining its historical roots, its current dimensions and the public policies designed to combat it. It also seeks to reflect on the challenges involved in designing and implementing effective initiatives to eradicate this crime by discussing the economic, political and cultural aspects that make it possible in our societies. It also invites us to examine the institutional discourses and practices that should underpin the development of anti-trafficking policies within and beyond the boundaries of nation states.

Human trafficking is a modern name for an age-old practice: slavery. However, from that distant past to the present day, much has changed. While in ancient times it was a legal practice encouraged by societies whose economic expansion was based on the invasion, occupation and conquest of foreign territories, since the 19th century abolition processes have been underway in every region of the world. Today, the international community understands that the prohibition of slavery is a peremptory norm of international law that does not allow for any agreement to the contrary. This means that no country can legalise slavery because it would be an affront to humanity. Why is that? Because trafficking in human beings is a denial of all human rights: the right to liberty, integrity and security of the person; the right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; the right to freedom of movement; the right to health and education, among others. In addition, under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, trafficking in human beings may, in certain circumstances, constitute a crime against humanity or a war crime. This has not prevented the resurgence of this practice in the world, which has reached dramatic levels of magnitude and systematization.

Due to its clandestine nature, we do not have precise data on the number of victims of this crime. However, the "Global Estimates on Modern Slavery" of the International Labor Organization (2022), shows that between the years 2017 and 2021, around 50 million people were victims of trafficking. This figure means that 1 in every 150 people in the world is in this situation. Although the reasons are varied, the weight of the action and interests of organized crime at a global level is inescapable in the significant increase in human trafficking. In this way, a kind of perverse selectivity is produced, which is rooted in widespread discriminatory practices that are supported, actively or by omission, by various political and social actors. Women and young men, adolescents, boys and girls can be victims of this crime, which takes many different forms.

Human trafficking is dynamic because it is constantly changing, thus frustrating the efforts of the security forces to prevent it. Responses to these problems are also evolving rapidly. States must take appropriate measures to prevent human rights violations, investigate thoroughly, with the means at their disposal, violations committed within their jurisdiction in order to identify those responsible, impose appropriate sanctions and ensure adequate reparation to the victims (Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Judgment of 29 July 1988, Velázquez Rodríguez Case, in Series C: Decisions and Judgments, no. 4, paras. 166 and 174). The international community gave an important impetus to the eradication of trafficking in 2000 with the adoption of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention. Strengthening international cooperation has been critical to the success of most anti-trafficking efforts.



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Based on UNESCO's global priorities - such as Africa and gender equality - and the organization's objectives, especially the promotion of intercultural dialogue and the fostering of a culture of peace and non-violence, this 8th International Course aims to contribute to this horizon by addressing the examination of human trafficking in the light of a set of topics relevant to a deeper understanding of this complex phenomenon.

Organized by the International Center for the Promotion of Human Rights under the auspices of UNESCO, based in Buenos Aires city, Argentina, the course will focus on the phenomenon of human trafficking, analyzing the diverse and innovative strategies that have been developed in response to paradigmatic cases of this crime. The topics in this course revolve around the conceptualization of trafficking in terms of the multiplicity of practices, subjects and victims that it involves. They are interested in historicizing its existence, reflecting on the importance of gender, age, race and ethnicity in its development, and analyzing the deployment of state initiatives, civil society organizations and supranational agencies to combat it and protect its potential victims. These themes will be explored during 5 (five) consecutive days through synchronous sessions with the participation of specialists from different regions and scientific disciplines, and with a selection of specific bibliography. In addition, there will be asynchronous activities articulated around fictional films, documentaries and the consultation of websites that contribute to the problem.

In short, this course aims to critically reflect on human trafficking in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, identifying its main dimensions, margins and political-economic underpinnings, as well as possible tools and strategies to combat it effectively and with respect for human rights.



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