



2 December 2014 - Today, 21 million men, women and children are trapped in slavery all over the world. 4.5 million of these are victims of forced sexual exploitation, while 26% of today's slaves are younger than 18.

Forced labour and child labour are closely linked as the victims of forced labour are often the most vulnerable in society –migrants trapped in debt bondage, sweatshop or farm workers kept there by illegal tactics and paid little or nothing, women and girls being forced into prostitution or children being forced to work at a very young age.

Moreover, forced labour and child labour occur in the same geographical areas, in many of the same industries (agriculture, construction, domestic work or manufacturing) and are mainly caused by poverty and discrimination. [Global estimates](#) by the International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)) show that 85 million children currently work under hazardous conditions and that 22.000 children a year are killed in relation to their work.

Grounds of optimism

"Twenty-five years after the adoption of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, boys and girls are still working in appalling conditions. Men, separated from their families, are still being locked in clandestine factories, working in situations of bonded labour with negligible wages and remote chances of ever repaying their debts", says UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message on the [International Day of International Day for the Abolition of Slavery](#) .

Despite the alarming figures there are grounds of optimism. The life-long campaigner against child-bonded labour, Kailash Satyarthi, was elected this year's [co-winner of the Nobel Peace Prize](#) , helping to raise awareness of the issue.

End Slavery Now!

The recent [End Child Slavery week](#) has also focused global attention on this continuing abuse of human rights, while ILO has teamed up with prominent artists, athletes and advocates in its new campaign to [End Slavery Now](#) , promoting fundamental rights through art.

Finally, major global religious leaders have agreed to sign a shared [Faith Leaders' Universal Declaration Against Slavery](#) , at a ceremony in Vatican City today on 2 December 2014. The signing of the Declaration brings together all faiths to eradicate modern slavery and human trafficking around the globe.

Facts & figures on forced labour

- Almost **21 million** people are **victims of forced labour** – 11.4 million women and girls and 9.5 million men and boys.

- Almost **19 million victims** are **exploited by private individuals or enterprises** and over **2 million by the state or rebel groups**

- **68%** work of those exploited work in **agriculture, construction, domestic work or manufacturing.**

- Of those exploited by individuals or enterprises, **4.5 million** are victims of **forced sexual exploitation**

- **Migrant workers and indigenous people** are particularly vulnerable to forced labour.

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Millions of children still trapped in slavery

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