

261 HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SMUGGLING IN SPORTS: CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD

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Human trafficking and smuggling have become a big business worldwide. In the illegal trade, men and women are being defrauded, manipulated, kidnapped and lured into the situation, often regarded as modern day slavery, through various means, including sports events. The incidence of human trafficking and smuggling in sports events has raised serious concerns in Africa as criminal gangs now use sports events as cover up to carry out their activities, luring boys and girls to various countries with promises of better life for the victims. Unfortunately, in actual fact, these victims are subjected to conditions of hopelessness and situations that debase their humanity. In this paper, some case studies were presented. It also discussed the relationship and distinction between human trafficking and smuggling, the causes and mode of operation. The challenges to combating the menace, among which are paucity of reliable data and research document, strong organised criminal gang networks, lack of genuine political will, the paradox of action and conspiracy of silence among government officials, etc. Recommendations towards tackling the menace of human trafficking and smuggling in sports were put forward.