

or function delegated by this delegation of authority.

This delegation of authority does not amend, supersede, or affect the validity of any other delegation of authority dealing with submission of reports to the Congress. This delegation of authority shall be published in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: November 3, 2020.

**Michael R. Pompeo**,  
Secretary of State.

[FR Doc. 2020-26540 Filed 12-1-20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-27- P

## DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 11271]

### Request for Information for the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report

**ACTION:** Request for information for the 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of State (“the Department”) requests written information to assist in reporting on the degree to which the United States and foreign governments meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons (“minimum standards”) that are prescribed by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (“TVPA”). This information will assist in the preparation of the Trafficking in Persons Report (“TIP Report”) that the Department submits annually to the U.S. Congress on governments’ concrete actions to meet the minimum standards. Foreign governments that do not meet the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so may be subject to restrictions on nonhumanitarian, nontrade-related foreign assistance from the United States, as defined by the TVPA. Submissions must be made in writing to the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the Department of State by February 1, 2021. Please refer to the *Addresses*, *Scope of Interest*, and *Information Sought* sections of this Notice for additional instructions on submission requirements.

**DATES:** Submissions must be received by 5 p.m. on February 1, 2021.

**ADDRESSES:** Written submissions and supporting documentation may be submitted by the following method:

- *Email:* [tipreport@state.gov](mailto:tipreport@state.gov) for submissions related to foreign governments and [tipreportUS@state.gov](mailto:tipreportUS@state.gov) for submissions related to the United States.

*Scope of Interest:* The Department requests information relevant to

assessing the United States’ and foreign governments’ concrete actions to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons during the reporting period (April 1, 2020–March 31, 2021). The minimum standards are listed in the *Background* section. Submissions must include information relevant to efforts to meet the minimum standards and should include, but need not be limited to, answering the questions in the *Information Sought* section. Submissions need not include answers to all the questions; only those questions for which the submitter has direct professional experience should be answered, and that experience should be noted. For any critique or deficiency described, please provide a recommendation to remedy it. Note the country or countries that are the focus of the submission.

Submissions may include written narratives that answer the questions presented in this Notice, research, studies, statistics, fieldwork, training materials, evaluations, assessments, and other relevant evidence of local, state/provincial, and federal/central government efforts. To the extent possible, precise dates and numbers of officials or citizens affected should be included.

Written narratives providing factual information should provide citations of sources, and copies of and links to the source material should be provided. Please send electronic copies of the entire submission, including source material. If primary sources are used, such as research studies, interviews, direct observations, or other sources of quantitative or qualitative data, provide details on the research or data-gathering methodology and any supporting documentation. The Department only includes in the TIP Report information related to trafficking in persons as defined by the TVPA; it does not include, and is therefore not seeking, information on prostitution, migrant smuggling, visa fraud, or child abuse, unless such crimes also involve the elements of sex trafficking or forced labor.

*Confidentiality:* Please provide the name, phone number, and email address of a single point of contact for any submission. It is Department practice not to identify in the TIP Report information concerning sources to safeguard those sources. Please note, however, that any information submitted to the Department may be releasable pursuant to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act or other applicable law. Submissions related to the United States will be shared with

U.S. government agencies, as will submissions relevant to efforts by other U.S. government agencies.

*Response:* This is a request for information only; there will be no response to submissions.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### 1. Background

*Definitions:* The TVPA defines “severe forms of trafficking in persons” as:

- **Sex trafficking:** The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act that is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.
- **Forced labor** (also known as labor trafficking): The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion, for the purposes of involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.
- **Child soldiering:** Child soldiering is a form of human trafficking when a government armed group, (including police or other security force), paramilitary organization, rebel group, or other non-state armed group unlawfully recruits or uses children—through force, fraud, or coercion—as combatants or in other support roles, including as cooks, porters, guards, messengers, medics, guards, servants, spies, or sex slaves.

*The TIP Report:* The TIP Report is the most comprehensive worldwide report on governments’ efforts to combat trafficking in persons. It represents an annually updated, global look at the nature and scope of trafficking in persons and the broad range of government actions to confront and eliminate it. The U.S. government uses the TIP Report to inform diplomacy, to encourage partnership in creating and implementing laws and policies to combat trafficking, and to target resources on prevention, protection, and prosecution programs. Worldwide, international organizations, foreign governments, and nongovernmental organizations use the TIP Report as a tool to examine where resources are most needed. Prosecuting traffickers, protecting victims, and preventing trafficking are the ultimate goals of the TIP Report and of the U.S. government’s anti-trafficking policy.

The Department prepares the TIP Report with information from across the U.S. government, foreign government officials, nongovernmental and international organizations, survivors of trafficking in persons, published

reports, and research trips to every region. The TIP Report focuses on concrete actions that governments take to fight trafficking in persons, including prosecutions, convictions, and sentences for traffickers, as well as victim identification and protection measures and prevention efforts. Each TIP Report narrative also includes prioritized recommendations for each country. These recommendations are used to assist the Department in measuring governments' progress from one year to the next and determining whether governments meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons or are making significant efforts to do so.

The TVPA creates a four-tier ranking system. Tier placement is based principally on the extent of concrete government action to combat trafficking. The Department first evaluates whether the government fully meets the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. Governments that do so are placed on Tier 1. For other governments, the Department considers the extent of such efforts. Governments that are making significant efforts to meet the minimum standards are placed on Tier 2. Governments that do not fully meet the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so are placed on Tier 3. Finally, the Department considers Special Watch List criteria and, when applicable, places countries on Tier 2 Watch List. For more information, the 2020 TIP Report can be found at [www.state.gov/reports/2020-trafficking-in-persons-report/](http://www.state.gov/reports/2020-trafficking-in-persons-report/).

Since the inception of the TIP Report in 2001, the number of countries included and ranked has more than doubled; the 2020 TIP Report included 188 countries and territories. Around the world, the TIP Report and the promising practices reflected therein have inspired legislation, national action plans, policy implementation, program funding, protection mechanisms that complement prosecution efforts, and a stronger global understanding of this crime.

Since 2003, the primary reporting on the United States' anti-trafficking activities has been through the annual Attorney General's Report to Congress and Assessment of U.S. Government Activities to Combat Human Trafficking ("AG Report") mandated by section 105 of the TVPA (22 U.S.C. 7103(d)(7)). Since 2010, the TIP Report, through a collaborative interagency process, has included an assessment of U.S. government anti-trafficking efforts in light of the minimum standards to

eliminate trafficking in persons set forth by the TVPA.

## II. Minimum Standards for the Elimination of Trafficking in Persons

The TVPA sets forth the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons as follows:

(1) The government of the country should prohibit severe forms of trafficking in persons and punish acts of such trafficking.

(2) For the knowing commission of any act of sex trafficking involving force, fraud, coercion, or in which the victim of sex trafficking is a child incapable of giving meaningful consent, or of trafficking which includes rape or kidnapping or which causes a death, the government of the country should prescribe punishment commensurate with that for grave crimes, such as forcible sexual assault.

(3) For the knowing commission of any act of a severe form of trafficking in persons, the government of the country should prescribe punishment that is sufficiently stringent to deter and that adequately reflects the heinous nature of the offense.

(4) The government of the country should make serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons.

The following factors should be considered as indicia of serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons:

(1) Whether the government of the country vigorously investigates and prosecutes acts of severe forms of trafficking in persons, and convicts and sentences persons responsible for such acts, that take place wholly or partly within the territory of the country, including, as appropriate, requiring incarceration of individuals convicted of such acts. For purposes of the preceding sentence, suspended or significantly reduced sentences for convictions of principal actors in cases of severe forms of trafficking in persons shall be considered, on a case-by-case basis, whether to be considered as an indicator of serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons. After reasonable requests from the Department of State for data regarding investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences, a government which does not provide such data, consistent with the capacity of such government to obtain such data, shall be presumed not to have vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted, or sentenced such acts. During the periods prior to the annual report submitted on June 1, 2004, and on June 1, 2005, and the

periods afterwards until September 30 of each such year, the Secretary of State may disregard the presumption contained in the preceding sentence if the government has provided some data to the Department of State regarding such acts and the Secretary has determined that the government is making a good faith effort to collect such data.

(2) Whether the government of the country protects victims of severe forms of trafficking in persons and encourages their assistance in the investigation and prosecution of such trafficking, including provisions for legal alternatives to their removal to countries in which they would face retribution or hardship, and ensures that victims are not inappropriately incarcerated, fined, or otherwise penalized solely for unlawful acts as a direct result of being trafficked, including by providing training to law enforcement and immigration officials regarding the identification and treatment of trafficking victims using approaches that focus on the needs of the victims.

(3) Whether the government of the country has adopted measures to prevent severe forms of trafficking in persons, such as measures to inform and educate the public, including potential victims, about the causes and consequences of severe forms of trafficking in persons, measures to establish the identity of local populations, including birth registration, citizenship, and nationality, measures to ensure that its nationals who are deployed abroad as part of a diplomatic, peacekeeping, or other similar mission do not engage in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons or exploit victims of such trafficking, a transparent system for remediating or punishing such public officials as a deterrent, measures to prevent the use of forced labor or child labor in violation of international standards, effective bilateral, multilateral, or regional information sharing and cooperation arrangements with other countries, and effective policies or laws regulating foreign labor recruiters and holding them civilly and criminally liable for fraudulent recruiting.

(4) Whether the government of the country cooperates with other governments in the investigation and prosecution of severe forms of trafficking in persons and has entered into bilateral, multilateral, or regional law enforcement cooperation and coordination arrangements with other countries.

(5) Whether the government of the country extradites persons charged with

acts of severe forms of trafficking in persons on substantially the same terms and to substantially the same extent as persons charged with other serious crimes (or, to the extent such extradition would be inconsistent with the laws of such country or with international agreements to which the country is a party, whether the government is taking all appropriate measures to modify or replace such laws and treaties so as to permit such extradition).

(6) Whether the government of the country monitors immigration and emigration patterns for evidence of severe forms of trafficking in persons and whether law enforcement agencies of the country respond to any such evidence in a manner that is consistent with the vigorous investigation and prosecution of acts of such trafficking, as well as with the protection of human rights of victims and the internationally recognized human right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's own country.

(7) Whether the government of the country vigorously investigates, prosecutes, convicts, and sentences public officials, including diplomats and soldiers, who participate in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons, including nationals of the country who are deployed abroad as part of a diplomatic, peacekeeping, or other similar mission who engage in or facilitate severe forms of trafficking in persons or exploit victims of such trafficking, and takes all appropriate measures against officials who condone such trafficking. A government's failure to appropriately address public allegations against such public officials, especially once such officials have returned to their home countries, shall be considered inaction under these criteria. After reasonable requests from the Department of State for data regarding such investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentences, a government which does not provide such data consistent with its resources shall be presumed not to have vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted, or sentenced such acts. During the periods prior to the annual report submitted on June 1, 2004, and June 1, 2005, and the periods afterwards until September 30 of each such year, the Secretary of State may disregard the presumption contained in the preceding sentence if the government has provided some data to the Department of State regarding such acts and the Secretary has determined that the government is making a good faith effort to collect such data.

(8) Whether the percentage of victims of severe forms of trafficking in the

country that are non-citizens of such countries is insignificant.

(9) Whether the government has entered into effective, transparent partnerships, cooperative arrangements, or agreements that have resulted in concrete and measurable outcomes with

(A) domestic civil society organizations, private sector entities, or international nongovernmental organizations, or into multilateral or regional arrangements or agreements, to assist the government's efforts to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and punish traffickers; or

(B) the United States toward agreed goals and objectives in the collective fight against trafficking.

(10) Whether the government of the country, consistent with the capacity of such government, systematically monitors its efforts to satisfy the criteria described in paragraphs (1) through (8) and makes available publicly a periodic assessment of such efforts.

(11) Whether the government of the country achieves appreciable progress in eliminating severe forms of trafficking when compared to the assessment in the previous year.

(12) Whether the government of the country has made serious and sustained efforts to reduce the demand for

(A) commercial sex acts; and

(B) participation in international sex tourism by nationals of the country.

### III. Information Sought Relevant to the Minimum Standards

Submissions should include, but need not be limited to, answers to relevant questions below for which the submitter has direct professional experience. Citations to source material should also be provided. Note the country or countries that are the focus of the submission. Please see the *Scope of Interest* section above for detailed information regarding submission requirements.

#### Trafficking Profile

1. Describe the country's trafficking situation, including the forms of trafficking that occur, industries and sectors in which traffickers exploit victims, countries/regions in which traffickers recruit victims, locations and regions in which trafficking occurs, and recruitment methods. What groups are at particular risk of human trafficking? Are citizens of the country identified as victims of human trafficking abroad? Does child sex tourism occur in the country or involve its nationals abroad, and if so, in which countries? Have trafficking methods and trends changed in the past 12 months, including as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?

2. What was the extent of official complicity in trafficking crimes? Were officials—including police, immigration officials, diplomats, peacekeepers, military personnel—government contractors, or government grantees directly or indirectly facilitating or enabling trafficking in persons? Did they operate as traffickers, enable traffickers, or take actions that may facilitate trafficking (including accepting bribes to allow undocumented border crossings or suspending active investigations of suspected traffickers, etc.)?

3. Was there a government policy or pattern of human trafficking, such as in government-funded or -affiliated services or programs within the country or abroad? Did government policies, regulations, or agreements relating to migration, labor, trade, and investment facilitate vulnerabilities to, or incidence of, forced labor or sex trafficking? Were there examples of trafficking occurring in state institutions (e.g., prisons, orphanages or child foster homes, institutions for mentally or physically disabled persons, camps, compounds, or outposts)? If so, what measures did the government take to end such practices?

4. What proactive measures did the government take to prevent official complicity in trafficking in persons crimes? How did the government respond to reports of complicity that arose during the reporting period, including investigations, prosecutions, convictions, and sentencing of complicit officials? Were these efforts sufficient?

5. Is there evidence that nationals of the country deployed abroad as part of a diplomatic, peacekeeping, or other similar mission have engaged in or facilitated trafficking, including in domestic servitude? Has the government vigorously investigated, prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced nationals engaged in these activities?

#### Overview

6. What were the government's major accomplishments in addressing human trafficking since April 1, 2020? In what significant ways have the government's efforts to combat trafficking in persons changed in the past year? How have new laws, regulations, policies, or implementation strategies (e.g., substantive criminal laws and procedures, mechanisms for civil remedies, and victim-witness security, generally and in relation to court proceedings) affected its anti-trafficking response?

7. Over the past year, what were the greatest deficiencies in the government's anti-trafficking efforts? What were the limitations on the government's ability

to address human trafficking problems in practice?

8. If the government had a national action plan to address trafficking, how was it implemented in practice? Were NGOs and other relevant civil society stakeholders consulted in the development and implementation of the plan? Did the government fund, partially fund, or not fund the plan?

9. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the government's efforts to coordinate, execute, and monitor its anti-trafficking response, if at all? How have anti-trafficking officials, units, and coordinating bodies continued to operate and adapt?

10. Have investigative agencies and courts adapted to impacts from COVID-19? If so, how? Do police, prosecutors, and courts continue to process trafficking cases and/or has the volume of these cases changed? What has been the impact on officials' ability to collect evidence, including victim testimony?

11. Please provide additional information and/or recommendations to improve the government's anti-trafficking efforts overall.

12. Please highlight effective strategies and practices that other governments could consider adopting.

#### *Prosecution*

13. Please provide observations regarding the implementation of existing laws, policies and procedures. Are there gaps in anti-trafficking legislation that could be amended to improve the government's response? Are there any government policies that have undermined or otherwise negatively affected anti-trafficking efforts within that country?

14. Do government officials understand the nature of all forms of trafficking? If not, please provide examples of misconceptions or misunderstandings. Did the government effectively provide or support anti-trafficking trainings for officials? If not, how could they be improved?

15. Please provide observations on overall anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts and the efforts of police and prosecutors to pursue trafficking cases. Were any trafficking cases investigated and/or prosecuted, and were any traffickers convicted during the reporting period—including under trafficking-specific laws and non-trafficking laws? Is the government equally vigorous in pursuing forced labor and sex trafficking, internal and transnational trafficking, and crimes that involve its own nationals or foreign citizens? If not, why?

16. Please note any efforts to investigate and prosecute suspects for

knowingly soliciting or patronizing a sex trafficking victim to perform a commercial sex act. Does law enforcement pursue trafficking cases that would hold accountable corporations for forced labor in supply chains within the country?

17. Do judges appear appropriately knowledgeable and sensitized to trafficking cases? Do they implement and encourage trauma-informed practices in their courts?

18. What sentences have courts imposed upon traffickers? Are these sentences generally strict enough to reflect the serious nature of the crime, and are they comparable to sentences for other similar crimes, such as rape and kidnapping? How common are fines, suspended sentences, and prison time of less than one year for convicted traffickers?

#### *Protection*

19. Did the government make a coordinated, proactive effort to identify victims of all forms of trafficking? If the government had any written procedures for screening for trafficking, were those procedures sufficient and implemented effectively by officials? What steps do officials take if a potential case of human trafficking is identified? Are those steps sufficient? Did officials effectively coordinate among one another and with relevant nongovernmental organizations to conduct screenings and refer victims to care? Is there any trafficking screening conducted before deportation or when detaining migrants, including unaccompanied minors? Are interpreters available for screening foreign victims? If commercial sex is legalized or decriminalized, how did health officials, labor inspectors, or police identify trafficking victims among persons involved in commercial sex? If commercial sex is illegal, did the government proactively identify trafficking victims during raids or other encounters with commercial sex establishments? How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the government's victim identification and referral efforts, if at all?

20. Does the government operate a hotline for potential victims? If so, what are the hours of operation? What languages could it accommodate? Were victims identified and cases referred to law enforcement as a result of calls to the hotline? What did the government do to publicize the hotline? Did it remain in operation during the COVID-19 pandemic?

21. What victim services are available and provided (legal, medical, food, shelter, interpretation, mental health

care, employment, training, etc.)? Who provides these services? If nongovernment organizations provide the services, does the government support their work either financially or otherwise? Are these service providers required to be trained on human trafficking and victim identification? How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected government and NGO efforts to provide shelter, medical, and psychosocial care to victims?

22. What was the overall quality of victim care? How could victim services be improved? Was government funding for trafficking victim protection and assistance adequate? Are there gaps in access to victim services? Are services available regardless of geographic location within the country? Are services victim-centered and trauma-informed?

23. Are services provided adequately to victims of both labor and sex trafficking? Adults and children, including men and boys? Citizens and noncitizens of all ethnic backgrounds or nationalities? LGBTI persons? Persons with disabilities? Were such benefits linked to whether a victim assisted law enforcement or participated in a trial, or whether a trafficker was convicted? Could victims choose independently whether to enter a shelter, and could they leave at will if residing in a shelter? Could adult victims leave shelter premises unchaperoned? Could victims seek employment and work while receiving assistance?

24. Do service providers and law enforcement work together cooperatively, for instance to share information about trafficking trends or to plan for services after a raid? What is the level of cooperation, communication, and trust between service providers and law enforcement?

25. Were there means by which victims could obtain restitution from defendants in criminal cases or file civil suits against traffickers for damages, and did this happen in practice? Did prosecutors request and/or courts order restitution in all cases where it was required, and if not, why?

26. How did the government encourage victims to assist in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking? How did the government protect victims during the trial process? If a victim was a witness in a court case, was the victim permitted to obtain employment, move freely about the country, or leave the country pending trial proceedings? How did the government work to ensure victims were not re-traumatized during participation in trial proceedings? Could victims provide testimony via video or

written statements? Were victims' identities kept confidential as part of such proceedings? In what ways could the government support increased participation of victims in prosecutions against their traffickers?

27. Did the government provide, through a formal policy or otherwise, temporary or permanent residency status, or other relief from deportation, for foreign victims of human trafficking who may face retribution or hardship in the countries to which they would be deported? Were foreign victims given the opportunity to seek legal employment while in this temporary or permanent residency? Were such benefits linked to whether a victim assisted law enforcement, participated in a trial or whether there was a successful prosecution? Does the government repatriate victims who wish to return home or assist with third country resettlement? Are victims awaiting repatriation or third country resettlement offered services? Are victims indeed repatriated, or are they deported? Did the government extend additional immigration relief to victims who would otherwise be deported or repatriated to countries with a high risk of COVID-19 infection or who could not return to their home countries due to travel restrictions?

28. Does the government effectively assist its nationals exploited abroad? Does the government work to ensure victims receive adequate assistance and support for their repatriation while in destination countries? Does the government provide adequate assistance to repatriated victims after their return to their countries of origin, and if so, what forms of assistance?

29. Does the government arrest, detain, imprison, or otherwise punish trafficking victims (whether or not identified as such by authorities) for unlawful acts their traffickers compelled them to commit (forgery of documents, illegal immigration, unauthorized employment, prostitution, theft, or drug production or transport, etc.)? If so, do these victims disproportionately represent a certain gender, race, ethnicity, or other group or particular type of trafficking? Does law enforcement screen for trafficking victims when detaining or arresting individuals engaged in commercial sex or individuals that may be at particular risk of human trafficking?

#### *Prevention*

30. What efforts has the government made to prevent human trafficking? Please describe any government-funded anti-trafficking information or education campaigns or training, whether aimed at

the public or at specific sectors or stakeholders/actors. Did these campaigns or trainings target potential trafficking victims, potential first responders or other trusted authorities, known trafficking sectors or vulnerabilities, and/or the demand for human trafficking (e.g., buyers of commercial sex or goods produced with forced labor)? Does the government provide financial support to nongovernment organizations working to promote public awareness?

31. How did the government regulate, oversee, and screen for trafficking indicators in the labor recruitment process, including for both licensed and unlicensed recruitment and placement agencies, individual recruiters, sub-brokerages, and microfinance lending operations? Did it maintain labor attachés abroad and were they trained on human trafficking indicators? How effective were these efforts in preventing abuse?

32. What did the government do to regulate recruitment practices that are known to contribute to trafficking in persons? Specifically, did the government prohibit (in any context) charging workers recruitment fees? Also indicate if the government prohibited the recruitment of workers through knowingly fraudulent job offers (including misrepresenting wages, working conditions, location, or nature of the job), contract switching, and confiscating or otherwise denying workers access to their identity documents. If there are laws or regulations on recruitment, did the government effectively enforce them?

33. What steps did the government take to minimize the trafficking risks faced by migrant workers departing from or arriving in the country and to raise awareness among potential labor migrants about the risks of human trafficking, legal limits on recruitment fees, or their rights while abroad? Did the government coordinate with other governments (e.g., via bilateral agreements with migrant labor sending or receiving countries) on safe and responsible recruitment that included prevention measures to target known trafficking indicators? To what extent were these implemented? Are workers (both nationals of the country and foreign nationals) in all industries (e.g., domestic work, agriculture, etc.) equally and sufficiently protected under existing labor laws?

34. What did the government do to ensure that its policies, regulations, and agreements relating to migration, labor, trade, and investment did not facilitate trafficking?

35. How did the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic affect the ability of migrant workers to continue earning an income, to enter and exit the country, and to maintain their immigration status? What steps did the government take to mitigate the increased risk of human trafficking some migrant workers may have faced due to the pandemic (job creation or placement for out-of-work labor migrants, extension of immigration relief, etc.)?

36. If the government has entered into bilateral, multilateral, or regional anti-trafficking information-sharing and cooperation arrangements, are they effective and have they resulted in concrete and measurable outcomes? If not, why?

37. Did the government provide assistance to other governments in combating trafficking in persons through trainings or other assistance programs?

38. What measures has the government taken to reduce the participation by nationals of the country in international and domestic child sex tourism?

39. Did the government take sufficient measures to establish the identity of local populations, including birth registration and issuance of documentation, citizenship, and nationality?

#### *Child Soldiering*

40. Did government officials engage in, support, or otherwise facilitate the unlawful recruitment or use of children in the government's armed forces, police, or other security forces? [NOTE: This can include combat roles as well as support roles, but please be specific in this regard if possible.] Did the government provide support to any armed groups that recruited and/or used child soldiers in combat or support roles? What was the extent of the support (e.g., in-kind, financial, training, etc.)? Describe the conditions of military detention of child soldiers and/or children accused of association with armed groups, including: (1) The typical length of time the children are held; (2) access to legal aid and rehabilitation services; (3) the conditions of the detention facility including food, sanitation, crowding, etc. and whether children are segregated from adults and by gender; (4) allegations of suspected sexual exploitation while in detention, including of female child soldiers; and (5) allegations children and/or child soldiers are used for labor, intelligence gathering, or to screen other detained persons.

41. Please provide observations regarding government efforts to address the issue of unlawful recruitment or use of children by governmental armed groups and/or non-state armed groups. Describe the government's efforts to disarm and demobilize child soldiers, to provide protection services and reintegrate former child soldiers, and to monitor the wellbeing of such children after reintegration. Does the government have any children held in military detention due to their suspected roles as child soldiers? Do international monitoring organizations (e.g., UN, ICRC, HRW) have unhindered access to interview these detained children and/or child soldiers and monitor the conditions of their detention? Describe the conditions of military detention of child soldiers and/or children accused of association with armed groups. Does the government have and/or use any hand-over procedures to transfer these children to civilian authorities?

**Catherine E. Kay,**

*Deputy Director, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, Department of State.*

[FR Doc. 2020-26576 Filed 12-1-20; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4710-17-P**

## **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

[Docket No. FD 36458]

### **West Virginia State Rail Authority—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—The Elk River Railroad, Inc.**

West Virginia State Rail Authority (WVRA), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to acquire from The Elk River Railroad, Inc. (TERRI) and operate approximately 18.0 miles of rail line extending from milepost 0.0 at Dundon and milepost 18.0 at Widen, in Clay County, W. Va. (the Line).<sup>1</sup>

WVRA states that it has executed a Purchase and Sale Agreement with TERRI to purchase the Line, plus connecting spur and side tracks, if any, appurtenant property and assets, and underlying real estate and right-of-way. WVRA states that, after consummation, it will own and operate the Line as a common carrier and will assume all common carrier rights and obligations with respect thereto.

<sup>1</sup> The verified notice states that the Line is known as the Buffalo Creek & Gauley Railroad. TERRI was recently granted after-the-fact authority to merge with The Buffalo Creek Railroad Company, which previously owned the Line. See *Elk River R.R.—Merger Exemption—Buffalo Creek R.R.*, FD 36434 (STB served Nov. 6, 2020).

WVRA certifies that the proposed acquisition and operation of the Line does not involve a provision or agreement that may limit future interchange with a third-party connecting carrier. WVRA further certifies that its projected annual revenues as a result of this transaction will not exceed the maximum revenue of a Class III rail carrier and will not exceed \$5 million.

The transaction may be consummated on or after December 16, 2020, the effective date of the exemption (30 days after the verified notice was filed).

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the effectiveness of the exemption. Petitions for stay must be filed no later than December 9, 2020 (at least seven days before the exemption becomes effective).

All pleadings, referring to Docket No. FD 36458, should be filed with the Surface Transportation Board via e-filing on the Board's website. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on WVRA's representative, Lucinda K. Butler, Executive Director, West Virginia State Rail Authority, 120 Water Plant Drive, Moorefield, WV 26836.

According to WVRA, this action is categorically excluded from environmental review under 49 CFR 1105.6(c) and from historic reporting requirements under 49 CFR 1105.8(b).

Board decisions and notices are available at [www.stb.gov](http://www.stb.gov).

Decided: November 25, 2020.

By the Board, Scott M. Zimmerman, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.

**Kenyatta Clay,**

*Clearance Clerk.*

[FR Doc. 2020-26574 Filed 12-1-20; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4915-01-P**

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY**

### **Internal Revenue Service**

#### **Publication of the Tier 2 Tax Rates**

**AGENCY:** Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Treasury.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Publication of the tier 2 tax rates for calendar year 2021 as required by section 3241(d) of the Internal Revenue Code. Tier 2 taxes on railroad employees, employers, and employee representatives are one source of

funding for benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act.

**DATES:** The tier 2 tax rates for calendar year 2021 apply to compensation paid in calendar year 2021.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kathleen Edmondson, CC:EEE:EOET:ET1, Internal Revenue Service, 1111 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20224, Telephone Number (202) 317-6798 (not a toll-free number).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: TIER 2 TAX RATES:** The tier 2 tax rate for 2021 under section 3201(b) on employees is 4.9 percent of compensation. The tier 2 tax rate for 2021 under section 3221(b) on employers is 13.1 percent of compensation. The tier 2 tax rate for 2021 under section 3211(b) on employee representatives is 13.1 percent of compensation.

Dated: November 20, 2020.

**Rachel D. Levy,**

*Associate Chief Counsel (Employee Benefits, Exempt Organizations and Employment Taxes).*

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**BILLING CODE 4830-01-P**

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY**

### **Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Request for Transfer of Property Seized/Forfeited by a Treasury Forfeiture Fund Participating Agency**

**AGENCY:** Departmental Offices, Department of the Treasury.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of the Treasury, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other federal agencies to comment on the proposed information collections listed below, in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

**DATES:** Written comments must be received on or before February 1, 2021.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments regarding the burden estimate, or any other aspect of the information collection, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to Treasury PRA Clearance Officer, 1750 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 8100, Washington, DC 20220, or email at [PRA@treasury.gov](mailto:PRA@treasury.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Copies of the submissions may be obtained from Spencer W. Clark by emailing [PRA@treasury.gov](mailto:PRA@treasury.gov), calling (202) 927-5331, or viewing the entire