

Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

March 2010 Vol. 8 No. 3
This issue highlights efforts by faith groups
and state or national governments to fight
human trafficking

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- Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union USA

Suggestions for practical action,
pg. 7

Christian-Based Websites Fight Human Trafficking

'Pornography Harms'

"Pornography is a neglected pandemic. It will remain so until knowledge of its destructive forces is widely understood and disseminated. Since the advent of the Internet, pornography has flooded homes, businesses, public libraries, and even schools. The results have been devastating to the social fabric of America." stated Patrick Trueman, founder of the website, *'Pornography Harms'*.

Trueman, former chief of the U.S. Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, explained that the site contains research, news articles and opinion pieces demonstrating the harm from pornography. It provides help to researchers at all academic levels, to the press, and to the concerned public.

Addiction to pornography is now common among men, women, and even many children, bringing life-long consequences. Pornography use is a significant factor in divorce; a contributing cause of the spread of prostitution and the sexual trafficking of adults and children.

'Sexting' on cell phones may well be a consequence of viewing Internet pornography for long periods by children, resulting in diminishment of their natural inhibitions against such activity.

"Pornography is altering minds, destroying taboos, and reordering society," Trueman said.

'Justice Response'

In January 2010 the Association of Vineyard Churches launched *"Justice Response,"* a new website developed by the Vineyard Anti-Slavery Team (VAST). The website provides an introduction to the many aspects of human trafficking, along with practical resources pastors and lay leaders can use with congregations. There are resources for sermons and small groups, as well as guides for purchasing fair-trade products and for mapping trafficking hotspots in local communities.

The Vineyard movement has a consistent history of challenging its members to care for the poor and the marginalized. VAST aims to link the Vineyard into the existing stream of modern-day abolitionists and anti-slavery organizations. A VAST member commented, *"I hope Vineyard will fight for justice on behalf of those who cannot fight for themselves. This website will hopefully be a valuable tool in preparing our churches for that fight."*

Some Vineyard communities have begun uncovering human trafficking within their own cities. The Central Maryland Vineyard Church community encountered the issue of human trafficking in the Ukraine, when they discovered that girls from the Ukrainian orphanages their church supported were being trafficked directly into Baltimore.

They began to understand that trafficking was not just an international phenomenon that happened *"out*

VAST website cont. pg. 2



Awareness

Fair Trade Update

Fair Trade Resource Network Website

The FTRN website (www.FTRN.org) serves as a resource of information and involvement. Different from other Fair Trade (FT) sites, the FTRN website offers FT movement news updates, a North American FT Events Calendar, the world's largest catalog of FT research papers, and FT job listings.

New Fair Trade Booklet

The New Conscious Consumer: Expanding Economic Justice Through Fair Trade gives a comprehensive overview of N. American Fair Trade in 34 pages. The new booklet explains various FT models, success stories, facts and figures, a brief history, key challenges and opportunities.

The educational tool also includes a free Power Point presentation. The booklet sells for \$2 per bulk copy and \$3.95 per single copy.

'Pen Pals' Bond through Fair Trade and Advocacy

Three-hundred sixty students, aged 13-16 years old, began exchanging letters and photos in a program called *Youth United Across Borders*. Participants in the U.S., paired with partners in Guatemala, India, Kenya, Palestinian Territories, and Swaziland, composed letters to editors, local government officials and President Obama about Fair Trade. The youths created exhibits to share their experiences with their home communities. Sample letters and photos are on the FTRN website. *Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade Fund* supported this program.



Chocolate Maker Commits to All 'Fair Trade' Cocoa

Green & Black's announced plans to produce all its chocolate as Fair Trade by the end of 2010. With sales in the U.S. and around the world, the company projects additional Fair Trade premiums to be \$485,000 each year over the next ten years for Dominican Republic farmers.

First Melons Fair Trade Certified

A producer coop, COODAP (*Cooperativa de Desenvolvimento Agroindustrial Potiguar*) from Mossoro in northern Brazil, became the first producers of Fair Trade Certified melons in the world. The melons are currently available in the United Kingdom. The co-operative, which has 20 members, plans to use the Fair Trade premium of 10 cents per kilo for a digital station to facilitate Internet access.

'Fair Trade Futures' Conference

FTRN has a key role with 10 partners in organizing North America's largest FT meeting, set for September 10-12, 2010, in Boston. FTRN is now accepting scholarship applications from students in North America and from FT producers overseas. Scholarships will pay for conference registration fees. Early-bird registration rates are open until March 31. Students, Fair Trade organizations, and the public can get 30-40% off registration for this historic conference. See the FTRN website for details (pg. 7).

Archbishop Oscar Romero Human Rights Awardee

The Human Rights Committee of the University of Dayton established the *Archbishop Oscar Romero Human Rights Award* in 1998. The award commemorates the ministry and martyrdom of the slain Salvadoran Archbishop and honors an individual or organization whose work has contributed significantly to the promotion of the inherent dignity of all persons and the alleviation of the suffering of the human family, consistent with the spirit of Christian humanism that animates the University of Dayton.

The recipient of the *2010 Archbishop Oscar Romero Human Rights Award* is the *Office of Migration and Refugee Services of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (MRS-USCCB)*. MRS is recognized for their efforts in creating a world where migrants, refugees, and trafficked persons are treated with dignity, respect, welcome and belonging. Bishop John Wester, chair of the USCCB on Migration, and Ambassador Johnny Young, the executive director of MRS, accepted the award on behalf of the organization.

VAST Website *cont. from pg. 1 there* somewhere. The MD church is a founding member of the *Maryland Human Trafficking Taskforce* and provides awareness and local assistance to law enforcement with anti-trafficking raids.

The U.S. advocacy director for Love146 said, *"Sharing resources and creating bridges between faith communities and activist communities is exactly the kind of collaborative spirit that will enable us to end modern-day slavery in our lifetime."* (<http://justhumantraffick.blogspot.com/2010/01/association-of-vineyard-churches.html>)



Awareness

Ohio Lacks Adequate Laws Against Human Trafficking

Ohio's weak laws on human trafficking, its growing demand for cheap labor, and its proximity to the Canadian border are key contributors to the illegal activity, according to a Report by the *Trafficking in Persons Study Commission*.

"Ohio is not only a destination place for foreign-born trafficking victims, but it's also a recruitment place," said Celia Williamson, associate professor at University of Toledo, who led the research.

Formed last year by the Ohio attorney general, the Commission found that hundreds more in the state are at risk of being forced into sex trafficking or to work against their will in fields, restaurants, sweatshops, or construction sites.

From 1990 to 2000, Ohio's foreign-born population increased 30% and the state has a growing pool of legal and illegal immigrants, who draw victims or hide victims. These networks are highly organized with brothels fronting as legitimate businesses.

Toronto's airport is an arrival destination for international victims who are trafficked in Canada and transported to other cities, helping make Toledo, about 55 miles southwest of Windsor, Ontario, rank fourth in the U.S. in terms of arrests, investigations, and rescue of domestic child-sex victims, the Report said. Only Miami, Portland OR, and Las Vegas had more.

Ohio does not have a stand-alone human trafficking law. Instead, it al-

lows prosecutors to attach a human trafficking specification to related crimes that increase prison sentences — just as penalties are more severe if a crime involves a firearm.

According to the Report, 42 states with strict human trafficking laws can bring serious charges. Offenders in Delaware, Montana, New Mexico, and New York may face up to 100 years in prison, for example.

The Report said that besides weak state laws in Ohio, law enforcement agencies often don't recognize human trafficking when responding to reports of illegal activity. For example, Ohio is quick to label prostituted children as delinquents and to incarcerate them, rarely looking further at the adults involved, Williamson said.

(http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2010/02/11/ohio_report_cites_human_trafficking/)

Fewer Street Prostitutes after Norwegian Ban

The number of street prostitutes has decreased noticeably in Oslo a year after Norway banned the purchase of sexual favors, according to estimates published in January 2010. The Oslo-based *Pro Centre*, a publicly funded social service center that works with male and female prostitutes, estimates there was a 50% drop between 2008 and 2009 — the first year the ban was in force.

The number of prostitutes who work indoors, from flats or hotels, was down 16%. Many are linked up with clients via the Internet or newspaper advertisements. Most prostitutes are foreign nationals, including people from Nigeria and Eastern Europe.

A *Pro Centre* spokesperson said the decline in street prostitutes was not the same as a decline in demand, since each prostitute might actually have more customers. More research is needed. (<http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/305242,fewer-street-prostitutes-after-norwegian-ban.html>)

England Studies Nordic Law

Delegates at the 2010 *Unison Women's Conference* voted unanimously to support the decriminalization of prostitutes and criminalization of the buyers of sex. They backed the so-called *Nordic model*, which also includes practical and financial support to give prostituted women the confidence and job skills needed to change course.

The approach has been successfully adopted by Sweden, Norway and Iceland — countries that top the global charts in terms of gender equality. The Conference welcomed government legislation to criminalize the buying of sex contained in the *Policing and Crime Bill*, labeling it an important step towards tackling sex trafficking and prostitution. The law is due to take effect on April 1, 2010.

Delegates stressed the need for even tighter legislation before the *2012 London Olympics*. Other countries had increases in sex trafficking and prostitution during major sports events.

A *Conference* speaker stressed that decriminalizing prostitution would not protect women from violence. International research shows that prostituted persons, who endure high levels of daily sexual activity, sustain long-term physical and psychological injuries, similar to victims of torture.

A Suffolk police delegate said police had started targeting buyers more rigorously since the murder of five prostitutes in Ipswich in late 2006. "They now have a much more sympathetic and protective attitude towards prostitutes in the area." The shift has been successful in deterring demand.

(<http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/index.php/news/content/view/full/87110>)



Awareness

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Effort to Improve CA State Laws Against Human Trafficking

California Against Slavery is gathering signatures for a CA state ballot initiative to strengthen human trafficking laws. The initiative would: deter traffickers through stiffer criminal penalties, aid district attorneys in prosecuting human trafficking offenses, increase protection for human trafficking victims, and mandate human trafficking training for law enforcement officers.

The *California Against Slavery* initiative is endorsed by organizations combating human trafficking, eg., *Breaking Chains*, *Captive Daughters*, *Courage to be You*, *International Justice Mission (IJM)*, *Lotus Outreach*, *MISSEY*, *Oasis USA*, *Polaris Project*, *Shared Hope*, and *Stop Child Trafficking Now*.

A human trafficking offense is currently punishable by a state prison sentence of three to five years for trafficking of an adult or four to eight years for trafficking of a minor. The initiative would increase sentences to six to 16 years for trafficking of an adult and up to 15 years to life for trafficking of a minor. The initiative would further protect minors by allowing district attorneys to prove a charge of sex trafficking of a minor without a showing of force. All human trafficking punishments would also include a fine of up to \$500,000. The initiative would require law enforcement officers to undergo two hours of training on the issue of human trafficking to increase awareness of the issue and to train officers to better recognize its victims.

Trafficking victims would receive more protection in the criminal justice system under the initiative. Evidence of sexual activity stemming from the trafficking offense would not be admissible for use against the victims to prove their criminal liability for that conduct or to attack their credibility or character. Victims also would have more time to file civil lawsuits against traffickers.

California Against Slavery aims to collect 600,000 signatures by March 31, 2010, to place the initiative on the November 2010 ballot. Visit <http://www.CaliforniaAgainstSlavery.org> to print and sign the petition, read the full-text of the initiative, or learn more about *California Against Slavery*. (<http://www.i-newswire.com/california-ballot-initiative-strengthens/23068>)

Oregon State Law to Raise Awareness

The Oregon Legislature approved final passage of Bill 3623, aimed at increasing awareness of human trafficking and helping victims, often sexually-exploited youth. The bill will allow the *Polaris Project*, a nonprofit that fights human trafficking, to include stickers bearing the national hotline number in the Oregon *Liquor Control Commission's* routine mailings to restaurants, bars and grocery stores. The stickers can be posted to alert people about where to seek help.

During a one-night, nationwide sting in 2009, police picked up seven underage girls involved in the sex trade and six adult pimps in Portland, more than in any other of the 29 targeted cities, except Seattle. (http://www.oregonlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2010/02/oregon_senate_passes_bill_to_f.html)

Christians Push for Reform of Australian Laws

Tasmania will consider reforming laws against prostitution to increase sanctions against customers, including up to six months jail, but to treat prostitutes as victims of crime. Leaders of both major parties have given promises to the *Australian Christian Lobby* to consider adopting the Swedish model of controlling prostitution. The position supports a recent review of the 2005 laws that suggested the government examine other models.

The Swedish system shifts the penalties to the client rather than the sex worker. It is being promoted around Australia by the Christian lobby as a means of tackling human trafficking.

Australian pro-prostitution groups oppose the Swedish system, arguing it makes prostitution more dangerous. They warn that clients fearful of the law will demand sex in less secure environments, such as car parks or customers' homes.

The Liberal Party had previously moved legislative amendments to increase penalties for the perpetrators, i.e., the users of the sex industry.

The Christian lobby is pushing the Swedish model since it proved the most effective in reducing prostitution.



Advocacy

Oregon Catholics Propose Patron Saint for Trafficked Victims & Slaves

Brian Willis and several local Oregon church leaders are petitioning the Vatican that *St. Josephine Bakhita* is the ideal patron to help the cause of trafficking victims and that her feastday - Feb. 8th - should become an annual day of prayer for victims of modern-day slavery. “*St. Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese slave-turned-nun, is the ideal saint for people whose labor and bodies are being exploited*”, said Willis, who founded *Global Health Promise* in 2007 to protect women and their children from the impact of trafficking, prostitution and sexual exploitation. *Global Health Promise* establishes shelters for children in Nepal and set up a drop-in center at a downtown chapel in Portland. Willis also works with *End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT)*, a group dedicated to combating sexual exploitation and trafficking of youth.

Portland’s Auxiliary Bishop Kenneth Steiner is familiar with St. Josephine. He has corresponded for years with an OR State Penitentiary death row inmate, who decided to spend what time he has left spreading word about Josephine and her powerful story of liberation. “*She really is a person of hope for today. She realized her real master was Jesus and that she was deeply loved by God,*” Steiner commented.

St. Josephine Bakhita



Born in 1869 in the Darfur region of southern Sudan, St. Josephine was kidnapped at age 7, sold into slavery and given the name ‘*Bakhita*’, which ironically means ‘*fortunate*’. She was re-sold several times and was handled brutally. In 1883, the Italian consul in Khartoum bought her. Unlike her former owners, he did not use the lash and treated her with respect. Two years later, the consul took Bakhita to Italy and gave her to his friend, who put her to work as a babysitter for a daughter. The young slave accompanied the daughter to boarding school in Venice, run by the religious order of *Canossian Daughters of Charity*.

It was there that Bakhita came to know about God, whom “*she had experienced in her heart without knowing who God was*” since she was a child. “*Seeing the sun, the moon and the stars, I said to myself: who could be the Master of these beautiful things? And I felt a great desire to see and know God and to pay God homage,*” she wrote in her autobiography. She was baptized and confirmed into the Catholic Church in 1890, taking the name ‘*Josephine*’. When the family planned to move back to Africa and wanted to take Josephine with them, she refused to go. During an ensuing court case, the Canossian sisters and the patriarch of Venice intervened on Josephine’s behalf. The judge concluded that since slavery was illegal in Italy, Josephine was free.

She entered the Canossian Sisters in 1893 and made her profession three years later. In 1902, she was transferred to the city of Schio, near Verona, where she assisted her religious community through cooking, sewing, embroidery and welcoming visitors at the door. She soon became well loved by the local citizens and the children attending the sisters’ school. She said, “*Be good, love the Lord, pray for those who do not know Him. What a great grace it is to know God!*”

As she grew older she experienced long, painful years of sickness. But she continued to witness to faith, goodness and Christian hope. After flash-

Bakhita cont. pg. 7

‘Among the Bravest & Boldest’

Somaly Mam was born in a small Cambodian village and sold into sexual slavery by her grandfather when she was just twelve years old. Imprisoned in a series of brothels for the next decade, she endured the brutality of human trafficking — serial rape, torture, hunger, and squalor — until she managed to escape with the help of a French humanitarian worker.

Mam wrote an inspiring memoir, ‘*The Road of Lost Innocence*’. *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof calls her “*a heroine from the brothels*” and “*one of the bravest and boldest*” among those fighting an unspeakable evil. Working through the *Somaly Mam Foundation*, she has dedicated her life to helping other young girls escape from prostitution, negotiating freedom for over 4,000 of these former sex slaves.

The *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)* describes human trafficking as the fastest growing organized crime in the world. It is estimated that four million women, young girls and boys are kidnapped and sold into sexual slavery every year, generating over \$4 billion in illicit income for the brothel owners and kidnappers.



Advocacy

Prevention through Awareness

E. Benjamin Skinner, author of *A Crime So Monstrous: Face-to-Face with Modern-Day Slavery* spoke at the *Institute of Politics* lecture in February at Harvard's John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum. He observed that the annual budget to fight modern day slavery is the equivalent to what is spent in a single day to combat trafficking in the U.S. illegal drugs and asked, "What is more important -- a 15-year-old selling pot on the street corner or a 15-year-old being sold on the street corner?"

Stopping trafficking at the source is also a matter of awareness said Ambassador Luis deBaca, head of the U.S. State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Besides protection of victims and prosecution of traffickers, "There is the third "P — Prevention," said deBaca, "which remains 'an afterthought' to most nations. Real prevention means more than policy pronouncements, public awareness advertising campaigns, or interesting documentaries," he said. "It means stopping human trafficking at the source, in part by understanding the demands behind forced labor and commercial sex. Just as people are now aware of their carbon footprint, they should be aware of their 'modern-slavery footprint.' That means taking a critical look at the goods and services they buy. The prevention — P," said deBaca, "is where every American can play a role." (<http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2010/02/slavery-in-2010/>)



National Hotline Saved a Trafficked Woman

A woman, who was kept in pimp-controlled prostitution since age 15, called the *National Human Trafficking Resource Center* (NHTRC) hotline (See pg. 7) while her trafficker was away. For years, the pimp had forced her to work in prostitution on the street and through chat lines, moving her frequently from state to state.

She had attempted to leave her situation before, but her pimp found her, physically abused her, and forcibly moved her to another state. When she called the NHTRC hotline, she did not know how long her pimp would be gone and was anxious to leave her situation immediately. The woman feared the potential repercussions of involving law enforcement but was more fearful of what would happen if her pimp returned.

NHTRC staff connected her with a law enforcement officer within 15 minutes. The Call Specialist then remained on the line with her until the officer arrived at her location and she was safely removed. She was put in contact with local service providers to access resources and services to foster her recovery. (*Polaris Project*)

'Choice' Hotels Agree to Fight Child Trafficking

After receiving over 4200 letters from *Change.org* members, *Choice Hotels* decided to take action to prevent commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) of children in their hotels. Their decision came after a letter-writing campaign through *Change.org* and months of discussion with the child protection organization, ECPAT (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking).

Change.org members began contacting *Choice Hotels*, parent company of *Comfort Inn*, shortly after five-year-old Shaniya Davis was sold into prostitution and taken to a *Comfort Inn* in North Carolina. As a result of their commitment to protect children like Shaniya Davis and respond to concerns of customers like *Change.org* members, *Choice Hotels* agreed to the following actions:

- Teach key staff, during their week-long training given to all new franchisees, how to recognize child prostitution and take appropriate steps with help from ECPAT-USA.
- Develop training materials on child prostitution prevention that will be published on the *Choice University* website, available to most employees.
- Develop training materials that can be downloaded from the *Choice University* website for individual hotels to share with their employees, who do not normally see the website itself.

ECPAT and *Choice Hotels* also discussed the possibility of *Choice Hotels*' website mentioning its support for *The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism*. Carol Smolenski, Executive Director of ECPAT-USA said, "We are thrilled to have the commitment of *Choice Hotels* to train their new franchisees about the CSE of children."



Toll-Free 24/7 Hotline
National Human Trafficking
Resource Center
1.888.3737.888

Action

Events & Contests Launched for World Fair Trade Day 2010

Participate in the largest **World Fair Trade Day event - May 1-15, 2010**. Invite friends, coworkers and neighbors to make their homes 'Fair Trade' homes! Hundreds of thousands of people in more than 80 countries worldwide will pause to celebrate the meaning of Fair Trade.

In N. America, there will be 'Fair Trade My Home' contests to win Fair Trade (FT) prizes for showing funny, beautiful and deep ways of using FT goods at home. Competitions are tailored to both individuals and organizations, in various photo and pledge contests. A 'This Home is a Fair Trade Home' sign is available for participants to download and display.

The *Fair Trade Research Network* (FTRN) will provide free event planning tools for organizers and promotional 8.5 x 11 inch flyers, which have space in which to write local event details, and two postcards, one featuring a producer and the other featuring FT products. Recipients pay shipping & handling for flyers, postcards and stickers. When organizers post an event on the FTRN website Events Calendar, they may request free products with the same form.

Get together with friends, faith-based groups, schools, businesses and neighbors to share new ways of bringing *Fair Trade* into homes. Around the country, events such as festivals, fashion shows, speeches, food- and drink-tastings, film showings, sports games, spa nights and concerts will be planned to give people ideas and products to use at home. Start to brainstorm about what you can do this year. Download the free *Event Planning Guide* for creative ideas, inspiration (even FT recipes!) and resources from the FTRN website.

Promote Your Small Business on World Fair Trade Day

FTRN has created a low-cost way for small and local businesses to get a link on the FTRN website, links in 2 newsletters, a customized and free *Proud Partner* sign, and free WFTD posters and postcards, all shipped for free. The *Partner* level costs \$100 plus 10% of sales on WFTD. Become a *Partner* by emailing wftday@ftrn.org. Visit [WFTD 2010](http://WFTD2010.com) to learn more.

Prevent Human Trafficking — Support Fair Trade

Everyone faces challenging times and has to make difficult economic choices. Billions of people in the world, who live on less than \$2 a day, are forced to make even riskier choices as they deal with severe economic challenges. Now it is more important than ever to support their economic empowerment.

The **Fair Trade Resource Network** (FTRN) provides hope and opportunity to farmers and artisans in the developing world. Almost all Fair Trade (FT) businesses, nonprofits, activists and producers recognize that building awareness of Fair Trade in the U.S. is a critical step in providing hope and alternatives to millions. FTRN is the one U.S. organization focused exclusively on promoting FT education. A tax-deductible donation to FTRN helps meet this goal.

Informative Web Sites:

(Each contains information
related to human trafficking)

'**Pornography Harms**'

<http://www.pornharms.com/>

'**Justice Response**'

[http://www.vineyardusa.org/site/
task-forces/justice-response](http://www.vineyardusa.org/site/task-forces/justice-response)

Fair Trade Resource Network

<http://www.FTRN.org>

Saint Josephine Bakhita

[http://www.afrol.com/archive/
josephine_bakhita.htm](http://www.afrol.com/archive/josephine_bakhita.htm)

Bakhita *cont. from pg. 5*

backs when she imagined she was still wrapped in the chains of slavery, she died in 1947 at the Canossian convent in Schio. Her last words were in praise of Mary, mother of Jesus.

The first steps toward her beatification began in 1959. She was beatified in 1992 and canonized in 2000. During his homily at her canonization Mass in St. Peter's Square, Pope John Paul II said that in St. Josephine Bakhita, "*We find a shining advocate of genuine emancipation. The history of her life inspires not passive acceptance, but the firm resolve to work effectively to free girls and women from oppression and violence and return to them the full exercise of their rights.*"

Stop Trafficking! is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

Use the following web address to access back issues of *Stop Trafficking!* <http://www.stopenslavement.org/index.html>

To contribute information, or make requests to be on the mailing list, please contact: jeansds2010@yahoo.com

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