

# The Exodus Road Signs Open Letter with More Than 50 Nonprofits Condemning the Russian Invasion of Ukraine

*The nonprofits express several concerns in the open letter including the increased risk of human trafficking for Ukrainian women and children fleeing the war.*

COLORADO SPRINGS, CO, UNITED STATES, March 18, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Joining with 50 other anti-trafficking organizations, Colorado nonprofit The Exodus Road signed an [open letter](#) condemning the invasion of Ukraine launched by Russia. Posted on March 16, the letter outlines several issues with the invasion and specifically points out the increased danger of human trafficking that the war is causing. The letter also calls for an immediate withdrawal of Russian troops and for neighboring nations to enact precautions to help protect Ukrainians fleeing their country.

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*Laura Parker, the CEO and Co-founder of The Exodus Road*

The open letter states: “In addition to being an act of aggression, a crime under international law and a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter, the invasion will exacerbate the human trafficking of civilians in Ukraine

and those fleeing from the country.” Several [reports](#) already present concerning data showing that Ukrainian women and children are being targeted by traffickers.

Initiated by the anti-trafficking nonprofit Hope for Justice, the open letter features signatures from several leading nonprofits in the counter-trafficking space. Along with The Exodus Road, nonprofits include the National Center on Sexual Exploitation (NCOSE), Unseen, Shared Hope, Justice & Care, The Freedom Fund, ECPAT and others from across the U.S., the U.K. and Europe.

“Traffickers prey on vulnerable people,” Laura Parker, CEO of the Exodus Road, said. “Refugees have just lost their homes and livelihoods and, being forced to flee at a moment’s notice, they oftentimes lose touch with family and friends in the process. Then, while having to trust strangers from neighboring countries, these individuals, especially unaccompanied minors and women, are at risk for deceptive offers from traffickers.”

In addition to condemning the invasion, the open letter also calls on neighboring countries and the international community to enact measures to help protect the refugees. The letter calls on the countries of asylum to train frontline groups working with refugees on the signs of potential trafficking; to implement systems that allow safe and legal routes for refugees; and, to enforce perpetrator accountability through criminal and civil proceedings, among other initiatives.



The current refugee crisis is being called the fastest-growing refugee crisis in Europe since WWII, with a recent estimate of 3 million Ukrainians displaced, CNBC states. Several reports have emerged from Poland already citing instances in which Ukrainian refugees accepted rides from strangers they thought were trying to help. However, when they arrived at their location, they were told they owed a debt and had to pay it off by working for the driver. While many aid workers are flooding to border areas with assistance, fleeing refugees don't know who to trust, and traffickers are trying to capitalize on their situations.

In Poland, signs have been posted at refugee shelters warning the incoming Ukrainians of human trafficking ploys and how to protect themselves, according to U.S. News & World Report. Przemysl, a city along the border of Ukraine in Poland, launched a phone app to help track trusted drivers providing transportation for refugees.

To learn more about the Ukraine crisis, human trafficking and signs of potential trafficking, you can read The Exodus Road's extensive article covering the issue [here](#). To read the open letter and see the participating organizations, click this link: <https://hopeforjustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Open-Letter-from-the-Anti-Trafficking-Community-Ukraine-15th-March-2022-4.30pm-with-logos.pdf>.

### About The Exodus Road

The Exodus Road is a global nonprofit disrupting the darkness of modern-day slavery by partnering with law enforcement to fight human-trafficking crime, equipping communities to protect the vulnerable and empowering survivors as they walk into freedom. Working side-by-side with local staff, NGO partners and law enforcement around the world, The Exodus Road fights to liberate trafficked individuals, arrest traffickers and provide restorative care for survivors. Since its founding in 2012, the organization has assisted police in the rescue of more

than 1560 survivors and the arrests of 870 offenders; numbers that grow almost daily. The Exodus Road's approach to freedom incorporates prevention and training efforts (TraffickWatch Academy), intervention (Search + Rescue) and aftercare (Beyond Rescue).

In September 2021, The Exodus Road launched TraffickWatch Academy: U.S., a free, online, multimedia training module that unpacks the complexities of human trafficking and educates viewers with methods for identifying signs of trafficking and how to intervene. The organization is also launching a similar training throughout Brazil designed specifically for law enforcement partners. In November, the nonprofit opened Freedom Home in Thailand to house survivors of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The Exodus Road combats human trafficking in the U.S., Thailand, the Philippines, India, Brazil and in another Latin American country, undisclosed for security reasons.

For additional information or to make a donation to help stop trafficking, please visit The Exodus Road's website at <https://theexodusroad.com/>, and check them out on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

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