

On Monday 8 December 2014 the HRLA Young Lawyers' Committee organised the latest in our human rights lecture series on Article 4 of the Convention, the Prohibition on Slavery and Forced Labour. This lecture was held at the headquarters of Anti-Slavery International the world's oldest international human rights organisation which recently celebrated its 175th anniversary.



The distinguished panel included the Director of Anti-Slavery International, Dr Aidan McQuade, Parosha Chandran of 1 Pump Court Chambers, and Alison Gurden of 1 Gray's Inn Square. The topic of the discussion was particularly relevant given that official government statistics released in early December 2014 estimate that there are between 10,000-13,000 victims of slavery in the UK. Dr McQuade, whose achievements as Director of Anti-Slavery International include holding Niger to account in an international court for failing to protect its citizens from slavery, stressed the political and legal factors that can lead to trafficking and forced labour. Ms Chandran spoke about the European treaties relevant to the fight against trafficking and provided some insight into the workings of the Modern Slavery Bill. Ms Gurden shared her experiences as a Trustee of Migrant Help and reminded the audience that education has little to do with trafficking; victims can be from any social group ranging from workers in nail salons to footballers and doctors working in the NHS.

The lively, wide-ranging discussion also covered issues such as the position of manual labourers in the Gulf states, the *dalit* untouchables in India, and whether there should be an appeal right built into the National Referral Mechanism (the framework for identifying victims of human trafficking) which allows individuals to appeal the decision to refuse to recognise them as a victim.

The Human Rights Lecture Series will continue in March 2015 when we hold a lecture on Article 5 of the Convention. Further details will be published on <http://www.hrla.org.uk>