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**Illegal organ extraction is the second leading human trafficking offense in Costa Rica**

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Zachary Dyer

July 17--Sexual exploitation and organ extraction are the top two human trafficking offenses reported by the Costa Rican Immigration Administration, according to several news sources.

Immigration officials reported nine cases of sexual exploitation and seven instances of organ trafficking so far this year, according to the Spanish-language online daily crhoy.com.

Sandra Chaves, director of the administration's Human Trafficking Unit, told the news website that there has been an increase in atypical human trafficking cases, including organ extraction, over previous years.

Even willing "donors" can find themselves the victims of organized crime.

"There are some people who are tricked into giving up their organs in exchange for economic compensation who are then abandoned," explained Immigration Administration Director Kathya Rodriguez, according to the daily La Nacion.

Both news sources pointed out that that Costa Ricans are also caught in these illicit networks.

In June, Judicial Investigation Police placed Dr. Francisco Jose Mora, who was the head of nephrology at the Calderon Guardia Hospital in San Jose, under preventative detention for allegedly running an international organ trafficking operation with ties to Israel.

A 2013 U.S. State Department report on human trafficking in Costa Rica had mixed reviews for the country's performance tackling the problem.

The report said that Costa Rica does not meet the "minimum standards" for stopping human trafficking but makes "significant efforts" to comply.

While Rodriguez told La Nacion that trafficking victims received special protection from the government and access to services, the State Department criticized the lack of government support for trafficking victims.

The report notes that the government relies on nongovernmental organizations and religious groups to shelter trafficking victims and that support services for this group is almost nonexistent outside the capital, San Jose.

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