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The Omani Centre for Human Rights



Labour exploitation in Oman

Thoughts on the World Day against

Trafficking in Persons (30 July)



According to the United Nations, human trafficking, or trafficking in persons, is a crime that exploits women, children and men for numerous purposes including forced labour and sex.



International
Labour
Organization

**The International Labour Organisation
puts the number of victims of forced
labour at 21 million worldwide**

The background of the image shows the United Nations Secretariat Building, a tall, modern skyscraper with a grid-like facade, set against a clear blue sky. In the foreground, a row of various national flags is displayed on tall poles, partially obscuring the base of the building. A large yellow rectangular box is superimposed over the center of the image, containing text.

In 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, which:

- | urged governments to take coordinated and consistent measures to defeat this scourge;**
- | called for integrating the fight against human trafficking into the UN's broader programmes; and**
- | established the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for victims of trafficking.**



**In 2013, Member States designated
30 July each year as a World Day
against Trafficking in Persons.**


In Oman:

of 2008, and a National Committee for Combating 126 Trafficking in Persons was established. However, it is clear from cases monitored by the Omani Centre for Human Rights and others publicised by other NGOs that a great deal of exploitation of domestic workers and migrant labourers goes on in Oman, and that the Omani laws are powerless to protect such individuals .from exploitation and trafficking

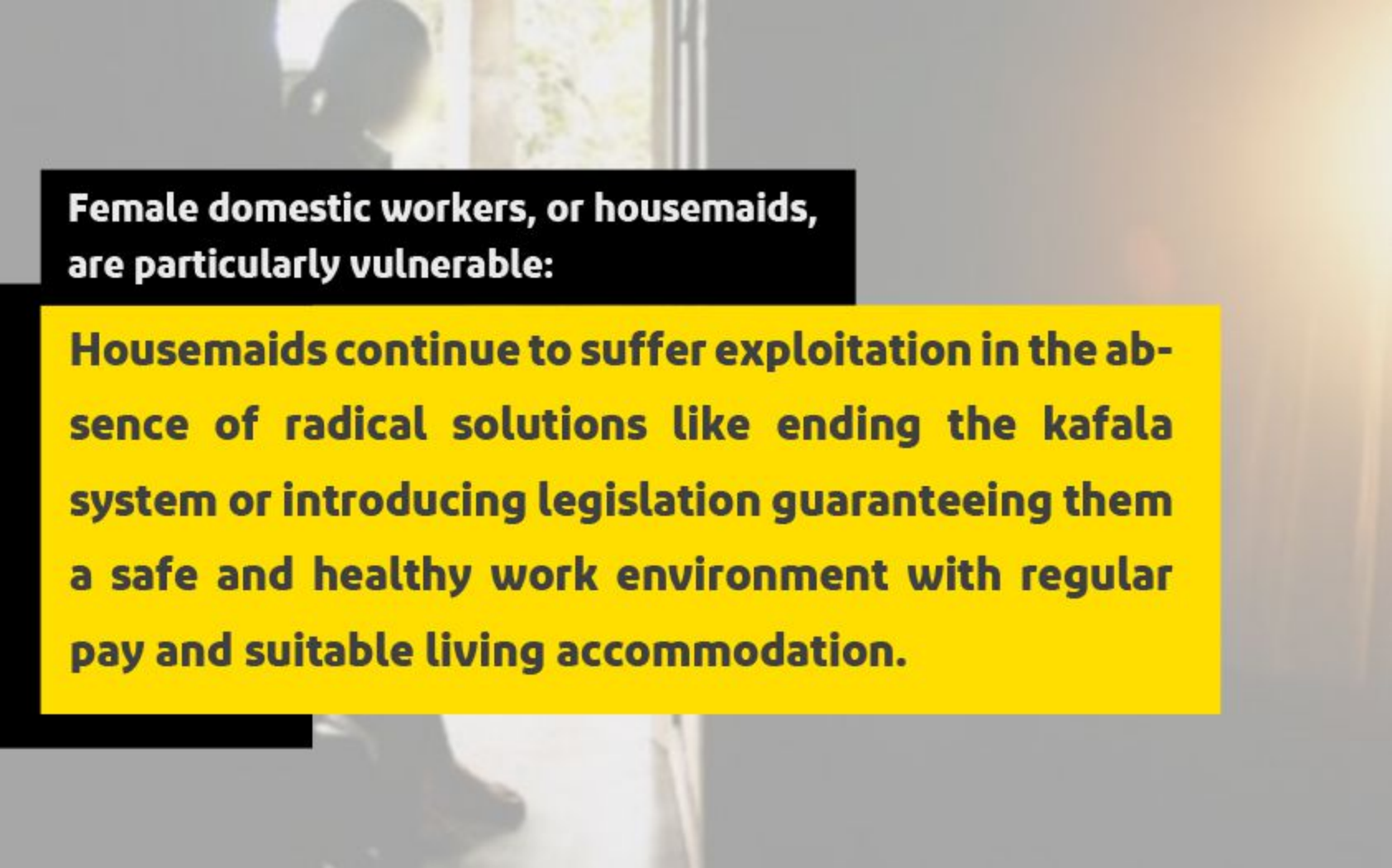


In Oman:

Oman has signed the two Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child that protect children from involvement in armed conflict and from exploitation for the purposes of prostitution and pornography. A Omani Law Combating Trafficking in Persons was promulgated by Royal Decree No.

The background image shows a construction site with several workers wearing blue hard hats and high-visibility yellow vests. They are standing on a dirt or gravel surface. In the background, there are blurred structures and a red container. A large yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text.

The kafala sponsorship system remains one of the biggest problems faced by migrant workers of various nationalities, rendering them liable to exploitation over pay or being forced to work long hours with little or no overtime pay.




Female domestic workers, or housemaids, are particularly vulnerable:

Housemaids continue to suffer exploitation in the absence of radical solutions like ending the kafala system or introducing legislation guaranteeing them a safe and healthy work environment with regular pay and suitable living accommodation.

A hand is holding a dark-colored passport and a white boarding pass. The boarding pass has some text, including "Name" and "Boarding". The passport has "PORT" visible on its cover. A yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text.

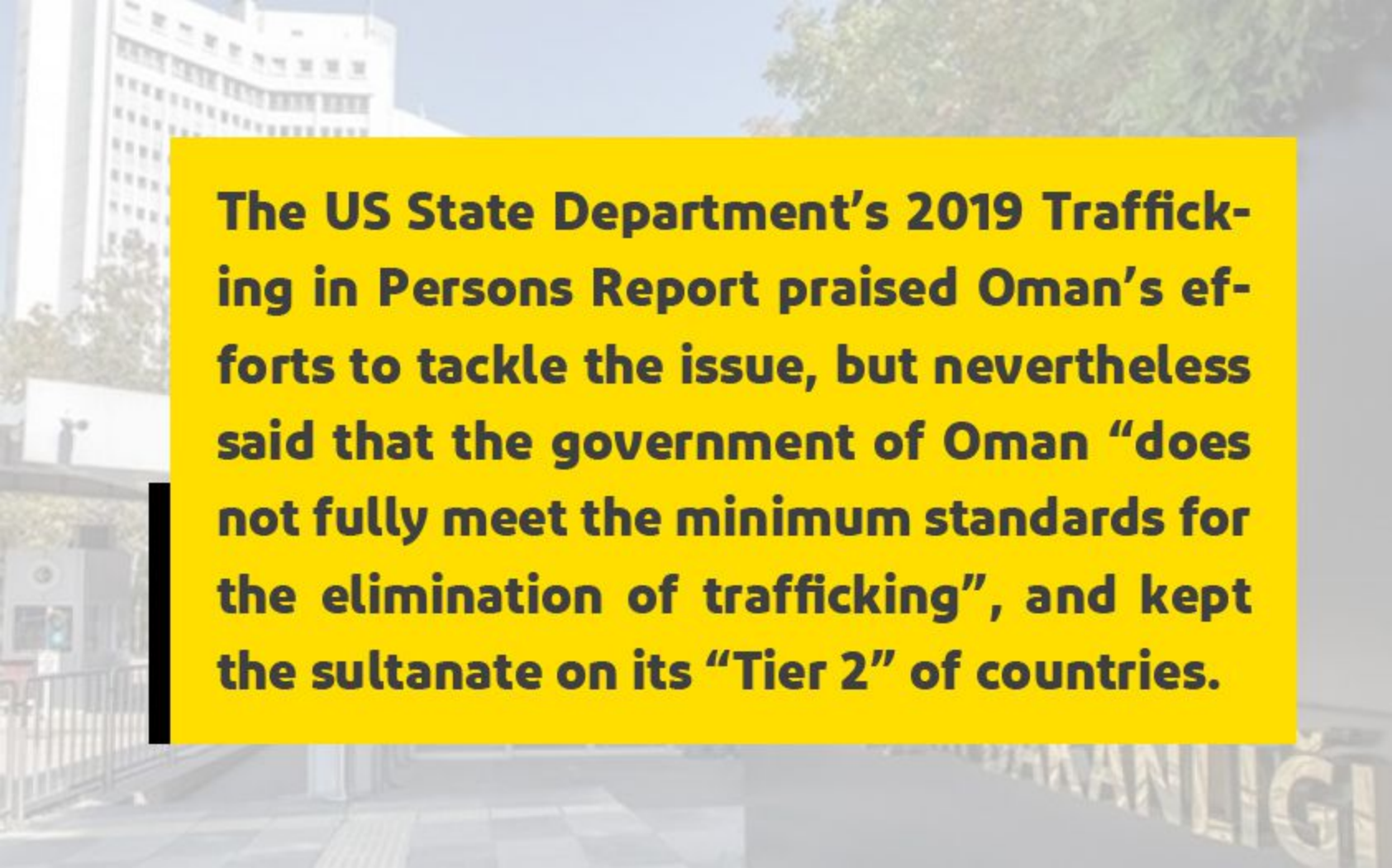
Most housemaids have their personal documents taken away from them.

A hand is held up in a 'stop' gesture, with the palm facing forward. The hand is positioned in the center-right of the frame. A bright yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the hand, containing text. The background is a blurred image of a person's face, suggesting a focus on the human element of the message.

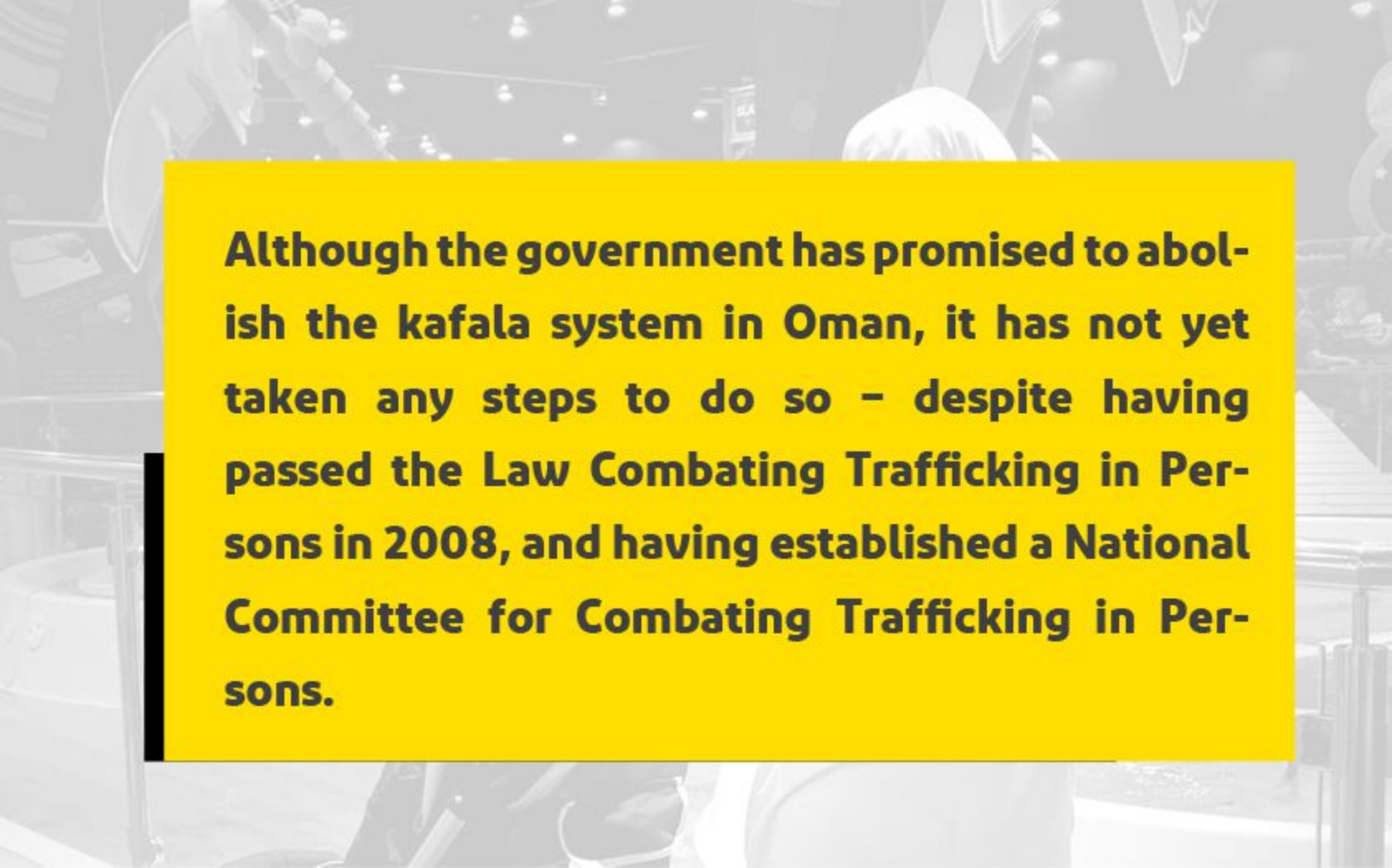
**Some suffer sexual harassment
and domestic violence, and are
denied time off from work.**



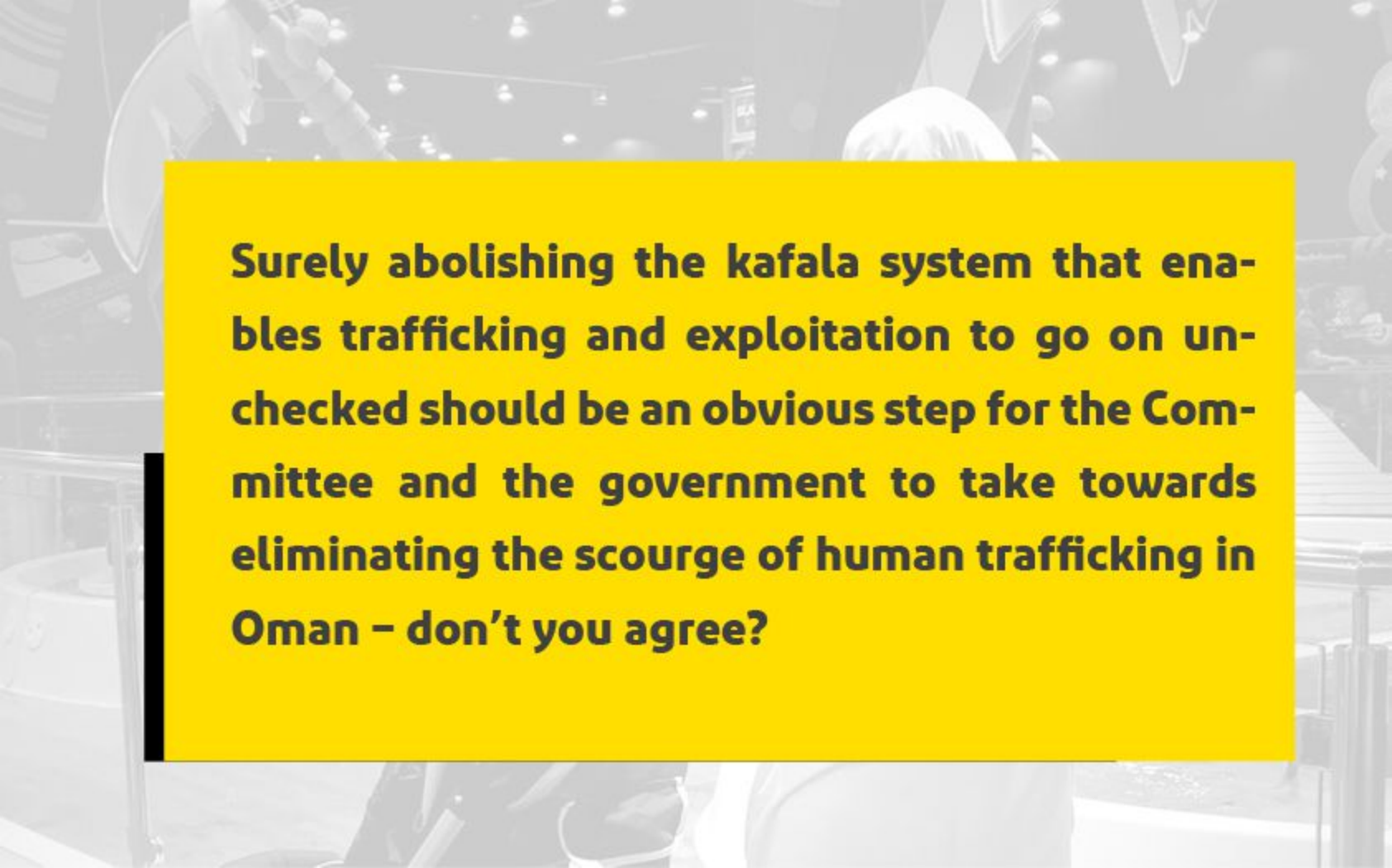
The government in Oman has not yet provided a telephone hotline for victims to report abuse and lodge complaints, while labour recruitment bureaus are free to carry on transferring ownership of maids from one sponsor to another.



The US State Department's 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report praised Oman's efforts to tackle the issue, but nevertheless said that the government of Oman "does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking", and kept the sultanate on its "Tier 2" of countries.



Although the government has promised to abolish the kafala system in Oman, it has not yet taken any steps to do so - despite having passed the Law Combating Trafficking in Persons in 2008, and having established a National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Persons.



Surely abolishing the kafala system that enables trafficking and exploitation to go on unchecked should be an obvious step for the Committee and the government to take towards eliminating the scourge of human trafficking in Oman – don't you agree?

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