

*June 11, 2014*



**AGAINST TRAFFICKING** - Sopaznik is the president and co-founder of the Alliance Against Modern Slavery. On June 14, the organization, based out of York University's Harriet Tubman Institute, will host Slavery Here, Slavery There, its fourth annual conference and symposium.

The Alliance plans to release findings from its recent research report on human trafficking in Ontario. The study, "The Incidence of Human Trafficking in Ontario," was conducted from Jan. 1, 2011 to Dec. 31, 2013. With a focus on in-person case studies, it is meant to shed light upon human trafficking in the province, the needs of trafficking victims and the challenges facing organizations that provide services to these victims.

"To date, the largest number of cases reported and charges laid in cases of trafficking in Canada have been in Ontario," said Sapoznik. "In order for us to truly understand the scope and the scale of the issue... we need solid research."

The Alliance sets three criteria to define modern slavery: individuals who are forced to work without pay, are under the threat of violence and they are unable to walk away.

Sapoznik said forced labour can occur in the construction industry, agriculture, restaurants, the

migrant worker program and domestic service.

“There are individuals who are from other countries who are coming here. They don’t have status and they are exploited.”

Special guests at the symposium include Gulnara Shahinian, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.

“She’s an expert on this topic globally and is really someone I think who can help us understand the context here and also the scope around the world,” said Sapoznik. “We are in Toronto, we are in Ontario, but the cases that are occurring in our city and in our province involve people from around the world.”

Representatives from local police and UNICEF will be in attendance, among others.

For more information, visit [www.allianceagainstmodernslavery.org](http://www.allianceagainstmodernslavery.org) .

Source: The Catholic Register, June 8, 2014