

2017-K1362

Assembly Resolution No. 1362

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URGING the New York State Congressional delegation to support the passage of H.R. 644, strongly condemning the slave auctions of migrants and refugees in Libya

WHEREAS, H.Res.644, introduced in the House on December 4, 2017, strongly condemns the slave auctions of migrants and refugees in Libya; and

WHEREAS, New Yorkers have a history of diverse activism and advocacy regarding issues of equality and civil rights at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, New York will remain a beacon of hope and a guide for other governments; and

WHEREAS, The world is struggling against global displacement crisis as a result of human rights violations and economic burden; and

WHEREAS, After the death of leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, the trafficking of African migrants rapidly increased; and

WHEREAS, The Mediterranean is considered one of the most dangerous sea routes for refugees and migrants; in 2014, 3,500 out of 219,000 people died passing through the perilous sea; and

WHEREAS, In October of 2014, Italy revoked their successful rescue operation, "Mare Nostrum" and replaced it with their border control policy of "Triton" which will hugely limit the search and rescue of migrants crossing the Mediterranean; and

WHEREAS, In March of 2016, The Thomson Reuters Foundation reported that Libya has become a trafficking market where people are bought and sold on daily basis; and

WHEREAS, On November 14, 2017, CNN released a shocking footage of migrants being auctioned off into slavery; and

WHEREAS, In December of 2017, Amnesty International released a report called, "Libya's Dark Web" which states that European Governments are "complicit in the torture and abuse of thousands of refugees and migrants"; and

WHEREAS, The international community is outraged at the discovery of the Slave Trade; concerned people from around the world rallied and protested for the end to the slave trade, and protestors have demanded action from International officials; and

WHEREAS, The UN estimated 700,000 migrants in Libya with 70% originally from sub-Saharan Africa; and

WHEREAS, The displacement crisis of sub-Saharan Africans obtains little public and political attention; in 2013, less than 15,000 African

migrants and refugee were resettled to a new location from the estimated amount of 550,000; and

WHEREAS, The Libyan Government considers only seven countries to be

in economic and social turmoil, as a result, limiting their scope of aid to refugee and limiting the admission of vulnerable people to governmental safe places; and

WHEREAS, In December, Amnesty International published a report that over 20,000 refugees and migrants are being held in detention centers operated by the Libyan government; and

WHEREAS, International migration is effective for poverty reduction; and

WHEREAS, The European Union's efforts to control and tighten its borders, have limited safe and legal routes for migrants; and

WHEREAS, The Europe Union's strict policies on migrants has led to the Slave Trade; and

WHEREAS, Italy drafted an 11 point code of conduct which limits and restricted the rescue operations of nine NGOs, whom typically operate Libya migrant rescue transportation; and

WHEREAS, NGOs will also be banned from entering Libyan ports without evidence of human lives at risk; they will also be forced to allow Italian police officers to travel on board with migrants between boats; consequently, such a proposal will greatly limit the potential number of people who are rescued; and

WHEREAS, Five out of nine of the NGOs have refused to sign the proposal; the consequences for the NGOs that are not compliant with the program is a ban from Italian ports; and

WHEREAS, Organizations such as the United Nations International

Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and Amnesty International fear the 11 step code of conduct will interfere with humanitarian work and neutrality; and

WHEREAS, When border control policies come under stricter laws and regulations, people often change their routes; this increases the demand for smugglers and, as a result, border control is not an appropriate solution; and

WHEREAS, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean, Vincent Cochetel, stated boats that belonged to organization for security and co-operation in European (OSCE) nations were financing trafficking groups in exchange for fuel; and

WHEREAS, Vincent Cochetel further stated that the successful reduction of the migration of people toward Libya successfully would require the acknowledgment of the cause and factors that lead to migration; and

WHEREAS, Migrants and refugees are tortured, sexually harassed, and abused; these refugees do not have access to legal procedures to protect their rights, and their living conditions are generally inhumane; they are placed in spaces with severe overcrowding and insufficient access to toilets, washing facilities, food, and clean water; and

WHEREAS, Migrants and refugee women were reported taking contraceptive pills before traveling to prevent pregnancy and to prepare for rape; and

WHEREAS, Survivors have reported their captors requesting ransom

from their family members, and when the payment was not provided, they were killed or sold off; the International Organization for Migration (IMO) has confirmed several other migrants being in similar circumstances; and

WHEREAS, In 2005, Human Rights Watch released the report, "A Threat to Society: Arbitrary Detention of Women and Girls for Rehabilitation" which documents the violation and abuse of migrants and refugee women and girls; and

WHEREAS, The UNICEF reported that migrant children suffered enslavement, horrific violence, and sexual exploitation; and

WHEREAS, The humanitarian group, Human Rights Watch's access to migrants and refugees was repelled after their interview with migrants and refugees from prisons and deportation centers; Italy has also refused Human Rights Watch access to detention camps where migrants and refugees are being held; and

WHEREAS, In January of 2017, President Donald Trump issued an executive order to reduce the refugee admission from 110,000 to 50,000 and to suspend the refugee program; the limit is the lowest reduction implemented by any White House Official; and

WHEREAS, On December 4, 2017, The Honorable Representative Bass Karen introduced Resolution 644 which condemns the slave auction of migrants and refugees in Libya and supports efforts to halt the Slave Trade in Libya; she has received support from her colleagues in the United States Congress, and numerous government officials are sponsored on the resolution; and

WHEREAS, On December 1, 2017, the influential leader Thomas Dexter

Jake also known as Bishop TD Jakes, condemned the human trafficking in Libya; with the use of social media, he urges the global community to undergo an investigation and also advised more leaders to denounce the Slave Trade publicly; and

WHEREAS, Poverty and exploitation fuel the migration of refugees to Libya; and

WHEREAS, The UN reported that a higher rate of people are being displaced from their homes as a result of war, natural disasters, and persecution, than any other time in the organization's history; and

WHEREAS, UNHCR announced that displacement reached a record high of 65.3 million people in 2015, and 21.3 million of these people were refugees; and

WHEREAS, Libya's exploitation and forced returns of refugees breaches the Constitutional Proclamation from 1969, which states, "the extradition of political refugees is prohibited"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to join the international community in condemning slave auctions of migrants and refugees in Libya; and hold every participating party accountable; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause further to provide aid to the refugee and migrant population affected by the Slave Trade; allocate funds to an organization which provides aid to migrants in Libya; urge the United States to increase their resettlement placement for migrants suffering from the Libyan slavery; urge the European Union to implement humane border control; urge the European Union to call upon Italy to edit or remove its 11 point code of conduct; urge the European Union to

halt the support of Libyan official in detaining refugees and containing people in Libya; urge the European Union to provide aid and support for victims of the Slave Trade; urge Libya to detain members who are responsible and participated in the Slave Trade; urge European politicians to adjust their anti-migration narrative and include more inclusive and progressive narratives that aid in the world displacement problem; and urge the Libyan government to expand their protection of refugees to people from countries beyond Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Syria, Palestine, and Iraq; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Government of Libya, the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, Italy, the Secretary of State, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, and the President of the United States.