



Human Trafficking in the World. Challenges and Responses of the International Community

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Trafficking in Human Beings: Modern Slavery

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Your Eminence, Cardinal Etchegaray,

Your Excellency Monsignor Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo,

Your Excellencies the Ambassadors,

Distinguished Professors, Scholars, Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's a great honour and pleasure to be able to return to the Vatican since my early visit on 14 October to meet with Pope Francis prior to my trip to Lampedusa and I'm grateful to the Holy Father and to the Chancellor here of the Pontifical Academy for giving us all this opportunity for exchange on a very important subject.

I go to Malta tomorrow and in recent times I have been in Obock, in Djibouti, which is the point that sticks out into the Red Sea from which most migrants embark on their journey to Yemen, trying to get to Saudi Arabia. Talking to my Australian colleague this morning we have also seen the flows across the Indian Ocean and the seas around Indonesia and Australia so we have a global phenomenon here in terms of irregular maritime arrivals but we know from the news earlier this week that there are also irregular arrivals across the desert. When I was in the Sahara for two years as Head of our peacekeeping mission there, I used to hear of stranded migrants in the desert. We would send helicopters down to pick them up and all is simply to illustrate the globality and the urgency of this particular issue. I am very grateful to the Holy Father and to the Academy for the opportunity given this year, which I believe is one of the very first points he wished to make after the inauguration on 13 March.

This is all preparatory, as I understand, to a larger global meeting that would take place in the spring. I won't take a lot of your time. First of all, I want to make three points. I want to talk about the need for greater practical protection to support the legal frameworks. I like to address just very briefly some of the root causes of human trafficking and thirdly to say that even if we do all this well, we will fail if we do not address the public image of migrants, in terms of getting a greater focus on the contributions that they make and I will summarise that point in terms of saying the inevitability, the necessity and the desirability of large-scale migration.

I want, first of all, to set the scene. You and I, we all are living in an era of unprecedented human mobility and I think it's helpful to think about migration in terms of human mobility because migration is sort of an outdated term, it looks like we're moving from A to B where we'll stay forever, and we're not looking at how people move the patterns today. You have today again – the statistics are very soft – the first figure, 232 million International, is from the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, it has just been updated from an earlier figure of 214 million. The figure 740 million Internal is a figure from the UN Development Program, these are constantly updated but they are ballpark estimates as to what we are talking about. They are very soft. I simply use them to make the point that there are more people on the move today than at any other time in recorded history, numerically. This reflects the fact that the 20th century was the first time in the history that the global population quadrupled. It's never happened before, unlikely to happen again, and I won't be around to be proved wrong.

That is the main drive of migration. Two interesting aspects: 2010, of course, was the first year in which there were more people living in cities than in the rural areas. We plan to hold a major conference in 2015 on migrants and cities. Monsignor Sánchez and I spoke about this a week or so ago, in terms of what's the effect of migrants on cities and cities on migrants, most of whom come from the rural areas. And then, of course, we now have the feminization of migration when at least 50% of all migrants are women. Qualitatively it is somewhat different today than fifteen years ago, because more and more these are women who are following career paths etc. but just as vulnerable as ever all along the migration route. Recently on the Syrian border with Jordan I was looking at some of the buses, we have taken about 400,000 migrants from the border of Syria to Jordan and

Lebanon and you see these people coming across, they are largely women and children, they are literally on their last legs as they make it to the border. So we have to be very aware that increasingly women are going to need support all along this way there.

Domestic migrants are 740 million. On my annual visit to China I'm told every year, one year it was 200 million, now it's up to 230 million internal migrants alone in China, who also deserve a certain amount of attention, even though that's not our preoccupation today. If you looked at them as a population group, migrants would represent a population somewhat smaller than Indonesia, somewhat larger than Brazil. The remittances they are sending home is about the equivalent of Saudi Arabia or Austria, that will go probably to 500 billion by the next couple of years, so it's a major contribution that migrants are making, even though it goes very unrecognised.

The point is that migrants are vulnerable all along the migratory route, from start to finish, and even after they get there they are very often vulnerable, having no access to facilities and often having not proper papers. We never use the term "illegal migrants": they are legal, they are people, they are irregular in the sense that they may have gotten there by some strange route, they may have no papers etc but they are irregular, not illegal and that helps us also in getting away from the problem of laws that criminalise migrants. Our number one priority has to be saving lives, whether it's at sea or in the desert, and the other has to be to decriminalise how we treat migrants. The traffickers in human beings are of course part of the overall crime network. We have heard all the figures on that, I shall not repeat them. But I will underscore that we all have some responsibility to bear in all of this. There is a strange and cruel irony, this is the counter, this is the contradictory trend of increasing mobility and trend of increasing anti-migrant sentiment. It's built on a lot of things. It's built on the fact of the global economic and financial crisis. It's built on the post-9/11 security syndrome, the security preoccupation, fear of everybody being a threat, and it's based on a fear that people perceive of a threat to their personal identity or even the national identity with all these people coming in. We did a study in 2011, Italy, United States and a lot of other countries: every country we polled, and we're working now very closely with Gallup world poll, showed that persons polled estimated the number of migrants in the country to be at least double the actual figure, so it shows again a fear factor there that we have to try to get away from.

So we need to acknowledge our obligation to act and to move ahead. That's the scene setter. I wanted just to now talk just a bit about the first point, which is the need to give greater attention to practical protection. We need to be doing this on a daily basis. There has been a certain degree of progress, particularly in Europe, in creating legal frameworks designed to protect migrants. Many countries' registered victims now have access to judicial systems, accommodation, medical care, etc. But IOM manages and supports around the world a number of support mechanisms, shelters – we are doing a lot of this in partnership with many of you, working very closely with the Church – but we need to close the protection gap between these nice categories we like to create, and we heard something about it this morning, who is a trafficked victim, who is forced labour, etc. We need to provide protection to all of those who are vulnerable.

I would just like to highlight a few of the practical protections that we and our organisation are modestly trying to carry out. With support of many member states we are present now in 470 sites in 170 countries with 9,000 people around the world, with a budget of about a billion dollars, mostly donor money, working in partnership trying to provide protection to migrants wherever we are. We have a global capacity to counter trafficking of human beings, often with the crucial support of partners such as the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerants, and over the past two years we have done a number of things to try to support: we have completed about one thousand countertrafficking projects in about a hundred countries, we trained tens of thousands of judicial police and other authorities in law enforcement, we have assisted and protected some 50,000 victims of trafficking through shelters, psycho-social counselling etc. We have mounted any number of public information campaigns to try to deter people from taking the trafficking route. We've assisted governments in drafting new laws and we try to reunite and assist, under our Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Program, many victims of trafficking and others. We average about 70,000 voluntary assisted returns in the course of the year, not only for victims of trafficking, but many other vulnerable and stranded migrants. So practical protection must be used to accompany these legal frameworks.

Second point, some of the root causes of trafficking. We need to manage migrants in crisis comprehensively, long-term and effectively in all situations. Let me give you the example of Libya. We got a lot of good publicity and media coverage for the fact that we took back two hundred and fifty thousand migrants to 54 countries in the course of 2011 at a cost of about 125 million dollars but we need to be frank: we did the job halfway. What do I mean? 177 thousand of these were Sub-Saharan Africans. We dropped them off in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, etc. The problem? These countries had no capacity to receive them either for schools, clinics, jobs – that's why they left in the first place, there was no livelihood there – and in addition their remittances were finished. We can't do that again, we have to do it differently, we have to be linked up as a community, and I'm talking particularly about the UN system, although we're not part of the UN we are kind of like kissing

cousins or whatever they call it, we work closely with the UN but we have to do it in that fashion next time that we are ready to go. So that when we take people back like that, there is a welcoming system, a way to help reintegrating and help governments to reintegrate their own citizens.

Haiti, again, we help, I was able to tell President Martelly earlier this year on the commemoration of the earthquake of 12 January 2010, "Mr President, good news and bad news. The good news: 1.3 million of the victims of the earthquake living in tents are now in transitional housing. The bad news: 200,000 are still in tents", but what was happening? As we were all trying, there were hundreds and hundreds of NGOs and other helpers there, as we were doing what we thought was – I guess you'd say in this house "The Lord's work" – strange things were happening beneath our very eyes. Planes were flying in taking children out, absolute trafficking of the worst kind and sort, thinking the parents were dead only to discover later that the parents were alive and they no longer had their children, so again we have to do it better, we have to be better organised, do it more comprehensively and we have to do this in a longer-term fashion.

So, in addressing these root causes we have to look at the longer-term development challenges. Now, as you know the Secretary-General at the UN General Assembly this year announced the holding of a World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 and we all very much applaud and support this idea. I would say that the greatest challenge of that Summit is to answer the question, how are we all, those of us assembled in this room and others who want to be helpful, how are we going to manage what is a trend towards increasing, multiple, complex humanitarian emergencies? When the lights go off and the big television networks leave, how do you keep a sustaining quality to what you do? How do you, at the same time as you're dealing with Syria, not forget that we still have other problems in the Middle East and North Africa? That we still have Mali? That we still have Haiti, etc? So being able to deal with all of these responsibly and effectively over the longer term is a challenge that I don't think we have yet met or even begun to discuss in terms of the kind of political will and resources that will be required if we are going to address this all adequately. We have to reduce exploitation effectively if we are going to do it and I was pleased to hear this mentioned earlier. We have to address both the fundamental structure of supply and demand. Now, supply has gotten all the attention but we have to look at demand also. This is why we mounted, two years ago, what we called a "buy responsibly" campaign to try to show how many of our goods are actually the product of forced labour, in some cases slave labour. Consumers need to be aware of their role in the trafficking area, and how many of us have really thought at all about the source and origin of the products we buy, and whether they might just have been made by forced labour. It's a difficult thing to get our minds around but we must not forget there is this demand side.

On the supply side, I think from our side at least there's a bit of potentially good news. We've been concerned for a long time about the problem of the corrupt, illegal and criminal recruitment agencies around the world. I'm not saying that they're all criminal and corrupt and illegal, I'm just saying that those that are need to be taken into hand. We will be launching in 2014 something we are going to call IRIS for the beautiful flower, the International Recruitment Integrity System. It's a little bit like the old Sullivan Principles that helped get rid of apartheid in South Africa. It's a code of conduct, a set of standards, it's a way forward which a company, a recruitment office, can sign up to – I guess they will receive a Gold Star or something, to say that they are part of this network – and if you're not part of that network you have to assume that you are probably corrupt, racist, illegal, and all the other things that go with it. Now, the challenge that we face before we mount all this is we have to have a very reliable, strong monitoring and compliance mechanism or it will not work, people will sign up and then go about their usual ways, but I think this could help a lot in keeping people out of the hands of traffickers, many of whom are in these particular recruitment agencies.

And then of course a third point: we have to work on the problem of how do we change the public image of migrants. We know we are dealing with stereotypes: they're coming to take our jobs, they're probably bringing in a large criminal element, they're probably bringing in disease etc, but if you look at those demographic figures and you see the tens of millions of jobs that most highly industrialised countries are going to need, including Europe, including Japan, Korea, probably others, the tens of millions of jobs that they are going to have by 2040 you have to ask the question, where are they coming from? Well, you have an aging North and a youthful South: increasingly they're going to come from the global South. Now, the responsible political answer to that would be, we will mount a public information, public education campaign to talk about the historically overwhelmingly positive contribution that migrants have made. I happen to come from a country that was built on migration, continuously built, and in fact I sometimes think we have more Italians than there are in Italy, but anyway, we're proud of our migrants but we've got to recognise it. So if we don't do this, if we don't start preparing the public mind now, it won't finish well. But if we put in place measures that welcome people properly, offer them some options, including that of integration, it just might be that these people coming from the Global South might just share the same values that we all share. This is just some thinking that we're doing on that. I think again we plan to launch a global information campaign in the next year, with the limited means we have, we will try to get others on board to try to talk about the historical contributions that migrants make.

On 3 October we were all gathered in New York to talk about a high-level dialogue on migration and development. That same day a large ship capsized off the shores of Lampedusa, and we know the story of that. Somewhere between 300 and 400 people lost their lives. When I was in Lampedusa I talked to Syrians, I talked to Eritreans, I talked to Nigerians, I talked to others, a very mixed group. Some were clearly qualified probably for political asylum, some simply wanted to go north and join their families, some were obviously headed by traffickers into some kind of either forced labour, prostitution, etc, but the link between Lampedusa and New York was poignant that morning, as if any of us needed reminding. So we need to recognise that migration is central to these challenges and that countries are increasingly in the same boat: we're countries of origin, countries of transit and countries of destination at the same time, so in a globalised world we need to think about these linkages and we are going to have to learn to conjugate better than in the past the paradox between national sovereignty and individual freedom. How you bring those two elements together in your policies is largely going to determine our ability to tackle the question of trafficking.

I want to just finish with a couple of points here. We also have to reduce the cost of migration, we will get at that with the recruitment agencies but also with the costs of transferring remittances home. Those should be down a couple of percentage points only, rather than the 10 and 12% that some people are paying. The loss in human life, too many migrants are still perishing on their journey, as in Lampedusa or in Malta, too many are still suffering gross abuses of their rights, too many are still obliged to take up work that falls short of their own qualifications, and too large a share of migrants' earnings are now going to the cost of transfer.

Let me end on a sombre note, even a confessional note and perhaps that's appropriate in these hallowed halls here. Despite all our efforts, information campaigns, protection, prosecution where we have done very little, prevention, all of that, we have to ask the question, have we really made any impact at all on the global problem of trafficking? I'll leave that question with you but on my part I'd say there's a lot of room for honest doubt and I don't say that to make anybody feel badly but we've simply, somehow, got to organise ourselves better for this. We built a migrant resource centre in Djibouti, at Obock, that point in the Red Sea that I was talking about, paid for by the Japanese government, so we counsel people when they get that far, "Don't go across" and they say "I understand, I understand". The next question is, "Do you have a job for me?" and the answer is, "No, I don't have a job for you, I'm just giving you information", so then they continue their journey and go across, so information campaigns are falling short because we haven't answered the livelihood question. Prosecutions are few and far between and the big fish never get caught, so I think we've got to do a lot better.

Let me conclude by leaving you with the thought that large-scale migration, which means more and more people are going to be victims of trafficking, large-scale migration is inevitable because of the demography I gave you, also the digital revolution, you had 300 million people connected to the Internet in the year 2000, today it's 2 billion. People like Mark Zuckerberg and others are saying it will be 7 billion soon. People know what's going on if they have access. We have distance shrinking and budget shrinking in transport, we've got a growing number of disasters, we've got the economic and social divide between North and South, so the drivers of migration are clearly there, more and more people are going to be on the road or on the sea and we have to realise, therefore, it's inevitable. It is also necessary if those 30-40 million jobs that we talked about are going to be filled by mid-century and it's also highly desirable if we put in place the kinds of policies that will reflect the global trends that I studied in talking to you. I tried to say something in a kind of wandering way, I'm sorry for that, about the whole question of greater practical protection for migrants to match up with the law enforcement frameworks, the need for greater, closer look at the root causes and, thirdly, to try to change the public perception that would allow migrants to get a better deal.

Thank you.