



## PASS President Margaret Archer's Address to Pope Francis



Saturday 18th April 2015

Dear Holy Father,

Thank you so much for receiving us today, during the Plenary meeting of PASS on Human Trafficking. It is to you that we owe the inspiration for our work over the last two years – to that small, handwritten note, which is now famous, encouraging us to examine human trafficking and modern slavery, including organ trafficking. In all humility we hope that our efforts have not disappointed you, because at each stage we have tried to carry the agenda forward in opposing Human Trafficking. At this meeting we are trying to take the biggest giant step yet.

Criminal law is undoubtedly a necessary condition for the abolition of this illegal practice, which is growing and whose profits of \$150 billion now exceed those of the drug trade. But, criminalization is not a sufficient condition for eliminating its consequences for victims.

To enslave any person – for their labour value, abuse of their bodies, harvesting of their organs or as babies for sale – nullifies their human dignity by reducing subjects to objects. It is a Crime Against Humanity that traduces the foundational principle upon which all Catholic Social Teaching rests: the dignity of every human being, without exception, deriving from their divine filiation.

The criminalization of this trade is the start not the end of the 'New Abolitionism'. Criminalization of trafficking concentrates on reducing and ideally eliminating the 'Supply' side of the equation, but what about the 'Demand', which is the motor sustaining this trade? It is the demand for cheap labour, for prostitution, for organs, by which rich people's wants nullify poor people's right to work in physical safety, to protect their own bodies against abuse and to value their own vital body parts as necessary to life itself. This demand is growing, not decreasing and we must work against each element of it and especially the trail of human ruin they create.

To this end we have some radical proposals, of which we hope you may approve:

1. PASS has already become a social movement against Trafficking, welcoming all people of goodwill to join us in the New Abolitionism through our Website [www.endslavery.va](http://www.endslavery.va), which went live this week.
2. We want to dissociate Criminal Prosecution from automatic Repatriation and replace the latter with voluntary Resettlement programs in host countries, leading to a right to remain and constituting Pathways to Passports.
3. We seek to combat the traffic in Organs, through the obscenity of 'Organ Tourism'; we beg your endorsement of the Catholic Church both by blessing and promoting the distribution of Voluntary Organ Donor Cards among the faithful and to those of other faiths and none in order to reduce demand.
4. Lastly, we pray for your active support in convincing the Secretary-General of the UN to designate the elimination of Human Trafficking as one of the ten new Sustainable Development goals for 2020.

Please forgive me if I have been too direct, but moral outrage has to give rise to practical action for us to be able to say with Your Holiness: 'Slaves no more, but brothers and sisters'.

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