



YPFDJ Statement on the Lampedusa Tragedy

On Thursday, October 3, 2013, a boat carrying close to 500 migrants sunk off the coast of the island of Lampedusa, Italy. We are deeply saddened by this tragedy involving the loss of life of many Eritreans and other African nationals. As Eritrean youth bearing witness to the suffering of our young brothers and sisters, we extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and the nations impacted.

Although this tragedy is potentially unprecedented in the magnitude of lives lost, it is not the only incident of its kind. In fact many of our brothers and sisters have been lost in similar circumstances at Lampedusa. Many more fall victim to human trafficking, suffering from crimes including abuse, rape and organ harvesting.

It is clear to us, and we hope it is clear to the world, that a tragedy of this magnitude demands coordinated effort among the international community to solve human trafficking and its associated risks.

It is also clear to us that such an effort can only be successful if it addresses the root causes of mass migration. It is critical that we overcome factors such as economic and political instability which produce south-to-north migration, brain drain, and ultimately human trafficking.

Any solution must involve sustainable economic development as well as regional peace and security. The need for coordinating such efforts among countries of origin, transit and destination was highlighted in a statement from Foreign Minister Osman Saleh last week at the UN High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development.

As youth involved in bettering our communities, we recognize that it is critical to develop programs that support Eritreans in their new homes. These programs offer services such as employment, education, and housing referrals that can create a more seamless transition for migrants upon arrival.

As concerned Eritrean youth all over the world, we reiterate Mr. Osman Saleh's call for full implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action on Human Trafficking. We pledge to continue to build support services for new Eritrean residents through our community centers. Furthermore, we strongly condemn any Eritrean and non-Eritrean elements who try to exploit such tragedies for various agendas that are not linked to solving the underlying causes.

YPFDJ North America

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