



Old Problems in the New World

A Forum on Modern Slavery



Buenos Aires, May 5-8, 2018

A Declaration of Unity Against the Sin of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

Modern slavery knows no boundaries and affects human beings on a global scale, regardless of economic status, political regime, cultural specificity and geography. In order to raise awareness and enact change within the multi-faceted scourge of human exploitation, which is characterized by human trafficking and smuggling, human supply chains and bonded labor, sexual exploitation and the sale of organs, The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew called for a second forum to take place in the New World, specifically in South America.

Inspired by the words of St. Basil the Great, who said *"the world that forgets God, brothers and sisters, is ruled by injustice toward neighbors and inhumanity toward the weak"*, all the participants affirm their vision of a world where all people are free and equal. All present commend the call of His All-Holiness and join together with him in solidarity against human slavery by declaring the following statement:

- i. We **condemn** all forms of slavery as a sin against the truths and values entrusted to the world by God, Who created human beings in His image and likeness.
- ii. We **appeal** to all world leaders to join in ending this plague and abomination.
- iii. We **seek to promote** legislation and systems that will hold criminals accountable for their actions.
- iv. We **proclaim** the belief that religious leaders are obligated to speak out against social injustice and exploitation and to encourage all people of good will to be a healing presence in society and a beacon of light in God's call for love and mercy.

- v. We **ask** all educators to educate students about the travesty of modern slavery, encouraging action and expressing compassion towards this sin.
- vi. We **seek forgiveness** from native and indigenous peoples, who have suffered as a result of these actions, especially the victims of colonialist ambitions, and pledge to never allow this injustice to occur again.
- vii. We **affirm** that we are a single, united voice and stand in solidarity in condemning these transgressions against God and His creation. We also commit not to delay in our actions and work, as our hesitation may bring greater evil on the human race.

By this Common Declaration, we, the undersigned, pledge to initiate and undertake every effort to heal the brokenness that is caused by modern slavery and to restore to each and every person their God-given dignity.

Buenos Aires, 7th May 2018.

