

ADDRESS BY HON. BERNADETTE MARIA JAGGER DURING THE DEBATE OF THE COMBATING OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS BILL IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON TUESDAY, 14 November 2017

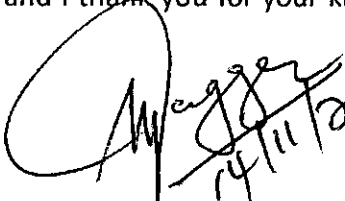
Hon. Speaker, thank you. I rise to make a contribution to the discussion of the **COMBATING OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS BILL** that is currently on the floor.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members: Human Trafficking is an act of terrorism, a grave violation of human rights and human dignity and a threat to regional and international peace and security. Trafficking has become a global problem as it is run by organized crime syndicates. There are these organizations operating within the borders of one state but the organization is managed from outside. Such organizations have connections with organizations in other countries. Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members, nearly all states suffer from the spread of this phenomenon. Women and Children are the highest and the biggest section in most, if not in all of our societies. Being regarded as the weakest chain in the family, they are subjected to aggression, displacement and severe physical, psychological and mental destruction worldwide. Women and Children are still living under very hard and severe circumstances despite the constitutional legislations which requires governments to secure honest lives for these target groups. We all know that many mothers have lost their children due to human trafficking and many children have lost their mothers under the same crime. According to available statistics as revealed during the 134th IPU Assembly, there are approximately 20 to 30 million people who are victims of human trafficking in the world and who have become slaves today. It is argued and widely believed that human trafficking practices remain economic profit and that the proceeds of human trafficking ranks 3rd after the returns made by illicit trafficking of drugs and arms. It should be noted that human trafficking, since it is a cross border crime, it can weaken in-border protection. If there is inadequate or lack of coordination among security forces and agencies in the different states, efforts to combat this crime will never be successful, thus creating a fertile breeding ground for organized crime to flourish.

Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members, I am supporting this bill for the mere fact that trafficking is real; it constitutes a grave crime that threatens as I said earlier on, the most vulnerable sectors of societies. We owe the Namibian people an Act that provides for and gives effect to our country obligations relating to the trafficking in persons in terms of international agreements binding on Namibia and therefore criminalize trafficking in persons and related offences.

Lastly, Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members, my hope is that as Members of Parliament, we shoulder our responsibility as Lawmakers in supporting all the possible efforts aimed at turning this Bill in an Act of Parliament and thereby combat this crime. This crime of human trafficking is a stain on the face of humanity and a blatant degradation of human dignity. It is exploitation and such exploitation must be prohibited and must not be tolerated worldwide in general and in particular, in Namibia.

Having said that, Hon. Speaker, Hon. Members, I support the Bill and I thank you for your kind attention



14/11/2017