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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN IN KARAMOJA REGION.

(Moved under rule 55 o the Rules of procedure of Parliament)

WHEREAS Uganda ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and optional protocols thereto; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), which contain a comprehensive set of international legal standards for the promotion, protection and fulfillment of the rights of every child;

AND WHEREAS Uganda and indeed this Parliament has committed itself to the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals including ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children;

NOTING THAT a fact finding mission conducted by a 17 person multi-sectoral delegation including Members of Parliament from the Karamoja region into the illicit trade in Karimojong girls made the following findings;

- (a) there is Illicit trade in "Karimajong girls" at Arapai market and Ochoremongin Market in the districts of Soroti and Katakwi with pimps or brokers stationed at different points of the market, ready to help with price negotiations;
- (b) trade in "Karimajong girls" has expanded to the neighboring countries including Kenya, Sudan and Somali, and the Karimojong girls are now a major target for Somali Communities in Kenya;
- (c) the perpetrators have specific stations at the border points at Busia Uganda and Busia Kenya where the girls are staged as sorting grains, and when they cross the border to Kenya, they are sold to Somalis who allegedly train them as Alshababs.

APPREHENSIVE THAT the alleged trafficking of the Karimojong children to Somalia poses a security threat to the East African region;

REALIZING THAT the phenomenon of Street children is closely linked to the economic hardships faced by several households in Karimoja and the children who immigrate from Karamoja have a misconception that they are going to work and take care of their poor families.

NOTING THAT these children find themselves in street situations due to various circumstances, for example, violence in homes, maltreatment; domestic Violence, neglect, Poverty, sexual abuse orphan hood and they merely turned to the streets for survival;

APPRECIATING THAT under the UN General Comment No. 21 of 2017 to which Uganda is a party, the Committee on the Rights of the Child provides authoritative guidance to States on developing comprehensive, long-term national strategies on children in street situations using a holistic, child rights approach and addressing both prevention and response in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

COGNIZANT THAT children in street situations are at risk of exposure to potentially life-threatening conditions associated with hazardous forms of child labour, traffic accidents, substance abuse, commercial sexual exploitation and unsafe sexual practices, and death due to lack of access to adequate nutrition, health care and shelter;

NOW THEREFORE be it resolved by this Parliament that –

1. Government addresses push factors alongside the rescue of these children given that many of these children are victims of trafficking and other forms of violence.
2. Government identifies and trains Para-social workers in a bid to establish more foster families and homes for alternative care of the children in street situations.
3. Government adopts specific measures for the rehabilitation and integration of these children.

MOVED BY : Esther Anyakun (MP)
DWR Nakapiripirit District.

SECONDED BY: Stella Namoe (MP)
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