

The Untold Story: post-modern genocide of the invisible fragile migrants

By Alagie Jinkang

While most of us are insensitive to the Mediterranean tragedy, some are doggedly ignorant about it, others use it for marketing purposes, and an invisible few continue to tell the bitter stories of those who (will) never make it out of the deadlock. In a rather very obnoxious way, the Western Media supported by the extremist right-wing antagonism –persist almost relentlessly, uniquely brushing the majority of the Mediterranean migrants with the same paint. These Mediterranean migrants who are collectively victims of some abusive socio-political systems, appeared to arose different tastes in the Western Media, most of the times unfairly harsh. But what actually lies ahead of those Mediterranean migrants who will make it to Europe, goes beyond the media's misinformation and disinformation. There are concrete fences awaiting them; from the concentrated camps below humanitarian standards to nonsensical European officialdom all designed to comfort an imperial project.

What lies ahead of these migrants is far from those gallantry illusionary paradise most had thought of; that sense of security, those beautiful houses and the life styles imagined to accompany it, the possibilities for luxurious investments to build a new life full of hope, in short, a dignifying life, are all very scarce in contemporary Europe. Such thoughts are at best misinformed and at worst a romantic fantasy.

The purpose(s) of this commentary is far from bringing to attention all the problems these highly vulnerable migrants face from their countries of origin to their European countries of destination, rather, it fundamentally looks at the status quo of those political relationships which reproduce the human rights violations that this type of migration breeds and why it should be regulated in the most possible humanitarian way. putting the interest of the migrants first. By now, it should be clear to all those interested persons, organisations and institutions that what is happening in the Mediterranean sea cannot be an acceptable political behaviour and must not be left to shape our future.

The rising death toll of Mediterranean victims is concretely preventable and affordable if the international community puts interest in it and show humanity through concrete and fairer systems of collaborations where political decisions are not made to kill those lives it should save. According to UN more than 100,000 have crossed the Mediterranean and 2,400 people have died in the attempt. In another statement, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) confirmed that there are more than 800,000 to a million people trapped in difficult and inhumane conditions in the war-torn country of Libya. Many are being imprisoned and ransomed and others sold in the “slave market” by the militias and criminal gangs.

For Africa, Asia, and the Middle-East, a political decision to cleanse themselves from this Mediterranean genocide and other ongoing human rights violations is immediate and essential if they intend to construct their continental economies, politics and social fabrics for a sustainable and progressive pattern.

For decades, the political gap between Europe and these countries of origin remained very stiff and opaque; Europe seems to dictates the terms of the resolution and its mainstream media helps to unfairly shape that so-called hegemony. The media's attention has shifted from bringing about solutions to problematizing even the existing humanitarian measures to save the lives of those who cannot protect themselves. Stories are nearly the same; all crafted to appease the status quo of the European political agenda to leave people fleeing from wars, persecution, hunger, diseases, poverty, global warming and dictatorial governments to literally die for their fates in the Mediterranean, and if

they make it at all, most still cannot meet their average expectations. These migrants are left to fight for their fates in the hands of criminal organisations in the transit countries in Africa, Middle-East, and Asia before meeting the dangerous no transit zone of the 'white-mushroom control Mediterranean sea' to their final unknown destinations –from the concentrated camps to the regularization processes. This paradigm is called the criminalization of migration.

Like slavery, brutal colonialism and the Jewish genocide of 1941-1945, the systematic 'killings' of vulnerable migrants (women and children) in the Mediterranean by European powers at the watch of the international community is the last but the most cruel way of controlling and punishing and exploiting the poor, hungry and vulnerable people who cannot find refuge in their own countries of origin. These hopeless migrants whose homes we can debate are destroyed by both home and European powers are now in a state of limbo; running from the known devil to the unknown angel.

These migrants who live in the periphery of international politics and economic discourses, happened to be the survivors of the decisions made by European and other world powers –victims of a political and social institutions. But, where do we actually start the analysis of this brutal incidence? Is the inability of the Mediterranean sea to protect those sacred lives due to political misbehaviours arising from both ends? Are the authorities simply unwilling or technically unprepared to take concrete measures that are open, sustainable and human? Giving any answer(s) to the Mediterranean tragedy will have to bring all concern political authorities together to discuss in fairer and clearer terms what will not compromise the future and the potential interests of the victims.

If we decide to overlook all the European infiltrations stretching from slavery, colonialism and modern-day imperialism that has paused the free development of cultures of millions of people in Africa, Middle-East and Asia, will we also decide to ignore the ongoing European wars, dictatorships and neo-colonial and neoliberal transmission belts that potentially lead to socio-political inequalities and tragedies including the Mediterranean cemetery? Or do we simply assume that present-day globalization with its rhetoric in market triumphalism is actually working for all?

Like the continuous misbehaviours of the World Bank and the IMF always help to drive home the interests of World Powers, the deliberate negligence of other international organizations like the UN, and other organisations responsible for migration help to perpetuate the human rights violations of the Mediterranean victims. Most of these migrants who live less than one dollars a day while producing to feed the world market, have become the victims of a financial and political system that pays them very little to keep their bodies and souls together. When they move away from their borders, they risk to be brushed as economic migrants and thus face many complexities not exhaustive in order to regulate their status to start a new life.

This exodus in most parts of our history and contemporary political and economic order was made unavoidable by generations of transcendental misconducts that have permanently left it ugly marks on a people and who by their own nature might not be able to salvage themselves from any potential inconveniences and danger. But, stories in the mainstream Western media deliberately paint the picture rather so hypocritically most of the times in support of aggressive political decisions against migrants. These hostilities are generally grounded on racism, narrow-mindedness, so-called western supremacy and the rest of the nonsense embedded in right-wing antagonism to migration. Yet, the more unbearable the conditions of these migrants become, the closer they move to their Mediterranean graveyard. It appears to be a systematic chain of suffering from the beginning to the end.

As the Libyan civil war clocks to rage six years after the UK, France, Italy, and the US all supported the removal of Muammar Gaddafi, smugglers and traffickers have set up a ruthless trade of vulnerable migrants routinely kidnapped, ransomed, forced into labour, raped, tortured and sold in “slave markets” or pushed to fight for their chances in the Mediterranean. Many souls are yet to carry their own stories by simply disappearing into thin air in the Sahara desert, prison houses or in the ‘deep European parliament’ situated in the Mediterranean sea where migrants are literally left to fight for their fates.

The UK, Italy, France, Malta, Greece, Spain are all highly technological countries of entry, training their coastguards to be protective of their sovereignties to the magnitude of allowing vulnerable migrants to perish in avoidable physiological and psychological sufferings. Systematically, while boats, equipment and millions of euros have been handed over in efforts to slow crossings, the business of deadly fibre or inflated boats and petrol-powered engines are still imported by this criminal organisations in Libya. The market of that illegal trade is yet to be sanctioned. Yes! and the business of destroying lives practically in the hands of those possible smugglers (and those who make human trafficking a business) is flourishing without significant hindrance –the tragedies continue unabated and the so-called least developed countries sit at the side-line carelessly watching the political fiasco while unconsciously obstructing their own developmental muscles. For now, it seems the responsible authorities will push as much as they can to avoid helping these desperate migrants who in reality are just socio-political victims, if we wish to be honest.

The right-wing smear political campaigns and the tourist attacks have all added to the hot soup in international affairs against Mediterranean migration and Europe is unfairly and erroneously using it to its own advantage.

Since the European Union was established, it has been always going to guide European interests even if that would mean inflicting social conflicts, influencing civil wars, regional tensions, maintaining dictatorial governments while simultaneously sponsoring militarism. The Mediterranean tragedy is a failure of political and economic institutions who by their deliberate actions and inactions make it possible. But, it is difficult to stop there without thinking why it is left to be unavoidable; in a global village of ours where everything is seriously interconnected, it is difficult to think that a super globalizing political and economic system that leaves many victims to take the Mediterranean as the only route to safety, remains unquestioned. Rather than questioning our institutions for the exploding injustices that simply carry it victims to the Mediterranean graveyard, we all take awesome pleasure in torturing the victims –denying them justice and dignity. We criminalize migration.

From the exploding hyper technology, to the stampeding security measures, and the spellbinding financial regulatory systems since the aftermath of the 2nd WW, African, Asians and the people of the Middle East will always live as survivors at the periphery of international politics with everything remaining equal. And until the exploited shouted for a change in the playing rules, the exploiter will continue to enjoy comparative advantage. Unfortunately, this tragedy and it kinds will continue to exist until it is no more bearable as it is the case today. No tangible change in the status quo has entirely arise from the will of the exploiter. It has always come from the voices of the sufferings and unfortunately for the victims, the Western mainstream Media might not help in that goal, or at least, not in anytime soon. However, we cannot solve our problems by temporarily ignoring them.