

Human Rights Group Says Some Holiday Presents Are Tainted by Modern Slavery

New one-minute video asks viewers if they are inadvertently financing slavery and racial inequality.

WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UNITED STATES, December 16, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- At the height of the holiday gift-giving season, the U.S. anti-trafficking organization [Free the Slaves](#) is alerting consumers that many common products are linked to modern slavery. Clothing, jewelry, electronics and food are products often tainted by forced labor.

Sometimes it is sweatshop slavery in manufacturing factories or processing facilities. Often, raw materials are the problem — from cocoa and cotton to gold and specialized metals used in computers and cell phones. The United Nations estimates more than 40 million people are trapped in modern forms of slavery worldwide.

"The things we buy are decisions we make about the world we want," Free the Slaves Executive Director Bukeni Waruzi says in a holiday reminder to consumers. "It's important to reflect on how everyday purchases can unknowingly fuel modern slavery and the racial inequality it creates around the world."

Free the Slaves has teamed up with the [522 Productions #untoldstory project](#) to produce a vivid video reminder of the impact that the globalized economy has on vulnerable individuals from disadvantaged groups. [See the video here](#). The one-minute message, which premiered on YouTube just before this year's Black Friday holiday sales began, is intended to raise awareness about the need to be mindful when buying gifts.

"Buying fair-trade-certified gifts is a good choice to break slavery's chain of exploitation," Waruzi says. "Contributing to anti-trafficking groups on behalf of a family member, friend or neighbor is also a good option for the holiday season."

Currently celebrating its 20th year, Free the Slaves is one of the world's most respected anti-trafficking organizations. The group's specialized field teams work in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean to change the conditions that allow slavery to still exist, helping entire villages and neighborhoods to ward off traffickers and become slavery-free. Since its founding, the group has helped liberate more than 14,000 people and put more than 300 traffickers behind bars.

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