

To:
The Joint Multi-Party Women's Caucus
Chair: Hon RMS Morutoa

Attention:
Bryan Mantyi
Tel: 021 403 3796
Per Email: bmantyi@parliament.gov.za

RE: Response to the South African Law Reform Commission's Report on 'Sexual Offences: Adult Prostitution'

From:
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I am a founder of youth-led organisation on Sexual and Reproductive Health, Rights and CHOICE. I am also a black woman in South Africa, whose choice and agency is constantly problematised and challenged. My activism in support of sex workers rights is rooted in the fact that sex work is work. Sex workers are our families and friends, and the fight for the decriminalisation of sex workers is a clear indication that we need to recognise and respect the rights of sex workers as any other citizen of South Africa.

Concerns Regarding the SALRC Report

- Illogical justification for continued criminalisation

Criminalisation is 'best option' to reduce eliminate sex work, and thus the harms associated with it – YET **no evidence** to date.

- Portrayal of decriminalisation as condonation of the abuse related to sex work

It is not – rather it is an acknowledgement that such abuses exist, and offers the most protection and recourse to sex workers who are perpetrated against.

- Report states that the harms suffered by sex workers can be separated from the legal dispensation

In reference to police brutality: “The chances of a change in the law addressing this abuse of power are negligible”

Concluding remarks and recommendations

The sex worker sector, made up of service providers, rights organisations and the sex worker movement, continue to support the Multi Party Women’s Caucus’ position and the ANC policy decision that supports the full decriminalisation of sex work.

The decriminalisation of sex work is a step towards reproductive justice, and reproductive justice addresses intersection issues of bodily autonomy and integrity, as well as factors of socio-economic standing.

Addressing the Committee

I would be keen to make an oral statement in this regard, should the opportunity be granted at all.

Thank you.