

March 13, 2018

H.E. Antonio Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations

c.c.
H.E. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations
Executive Director, UN Women

Ana Maria Menéndez
Senior Advisor on Policy

RE: UN Position on Sex Work

Dear Y.E. Guterres,

At the beginning of the 62nd Commission on the Status of Women we are writing to express our concern about discussions within your office to revisit the UN's and in particular, UN Women's, position on sex work.

We are individuals and organizations that work to advance the full realization of women's and girls' human rights and achieve gender equality across the world. Sex workers' rights are human rights and all women and girls, including sex workers, have the right to work under conditions of dignity and safety, without the fear of criminalization or violence.

UN agencies already have a clear position on sex work that has been developed with the meaningful engagement of sex workers, as well as representatives of women's rights and human rights organizations. This is the case, for instance, for the UN Joint Programme on AIDS guidance on HIV and sex work, and the policy recommendations of the Global Commission on HIV & the Law, managed by UNDP. The results are policies that place the human rights of sex workers at the center, respect the agency and self-determination of all sex workers, recognize that sex workers have the same rights as other workers in relation to rights at work, social protection and social dialogue as outlined in ILO's Decent Work Agenda, respect the agency and self-determination of all sex workers, and recommend decriminalization of sex work and related acts. It is the position that is supported by the best available evidence about what is effective in empowering sex workers, eliminating discrimination and reducing violence against them.

Given the mandate of the United Nations to promote equality and human rights for all, it is essential that the UN and UN Women continue to take such a rights-affirming approach to sex work. There cannot be a so-called 'neutral' position on the human rights of sex workers; that would actually undermine sex workers' human rights and run counter to the principles of the UN Charter.

We look forward to hearing a clear statement from your office reaffirming support for the UN Agencies' long-standing position on sex work, and working with you to further advance the human rights of all people, including sex workers.

Sincerely,

Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights, Canada
Action for REACH OUT, Hong Kong
African and Black Diaspora Global Network on HIV/AIDS (ABDGN), Canada
African Women's Rights Collective, Kenya
AKAHATA A.C., Argentina
All India Network of Sex Workers (AINSW), India
American Jewish World Service, USA
Amnesty International
Amra Padatik, India
Apoyo los derechos de lxs trabajadorxs sexuales
APROSMA - Maranhão Association of Sex Workers, Brazil
Aprosmig (Associação das prostitutas de minas gerais) Brasil Belo Minas Gerais, Brazil
ARC International
Articulação Nacional de Profissionais do Sexo, Brazil
Articulacion Feminista Marcosur
ASBRAD, Brazil
Asia Catalyst, USA and Thailand
Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN)
Asociación de Mujeres Trabajadoras Sexuales Girasoles Nicaragua
Asociacion Mujeres Meretrices Argentina
Asociación para el Mejoramiento de la Calidad de Vida de Trabajadoras Sexual, San José, Costa Rica
ASODEL, Nicaragua
Aspasie, Switzerland
Associação Diversidade e Direitos Humanos do Agreste/Brejo Paraibano (ADHUMAB/PB), Brazil
Associação Mulheres Guerreiras, Brazil
Associação Mulheres pela Paz, Brazil
Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)
ASTRA Network
ATHENA
Awami Workers Party, Punjab, India
Balance, México
Balaram Dey Street Anandam, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

Ban Ying Coordination and Counselling Center Against Trafficking in Persons, Germany
Bay Area Doula Project, USA
Black and Pink, Inc., USA
Bourbon Alliance, USA
Boutokan Inaomataia ao Mauriia Binabinaine Association (BIMBA), Kiribati
Boysproject, Belgium
Brazilian Society of Studies in Human Sexuality (SBRASH), Brazil
Campaña por una Convención Interamericana de DSDR
Cape Town Network of People who Use Drugs- CANPUD, South Africa
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Caribbean Sex Work Coalition
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE), USA
Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL), USA
Centro de Información y Servicios de Asesoría en Salud - CISAS, Nicaragua
Chinese Lala Alliance, China
CHOICE for Youth & Sexuality, Netherlands
Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies (CSBR), International
COC Nederland
Coletivo Feminino Plural
Collective Action for Safe Spaces (CASS), Washington, DC, USA
Collective Impact
Comitato per i Diritti Civili delle Prostitute, Italy
Committed Soul Women Health Advocacy Initiative (COSWOHI)
Coordinadora de la Mujer - Bolivia / Latino América
Count Me In! Consortium
CREA, India/USA
CUNY School of Law Human Rights and Gender Justice Clinic, USA
CUTS - Central Única de Trabalhadoras e Trabalhadores Sexuais, Brasil
Dabindu Collective, Sri Lanka
Dassc: Dignidade, Ação, Saúde, Sexualidade e Cidadania, Brazil
Davida, Brazil
Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)
Domestic Violence Project at the Urban Justice Center, USA

Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, India
Dutch Association Women and Law Clara Wichmann, Netherlands
Dutch CEDAW Network / Netwerk VN-Vrouwenverdrag, Netherlands
Ekta Sangathan, India
Equality North Carolina, USA
Equidad de Género, Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia, México
Estrela guia - Associação em prol da cidadania e dos direitos sexuais, Brazil
Excellent Community Empowerment Initiative, Nigeria
Fachstelle Lysistrada, Switzerland
Federation for Women and Family Planning, Poland
FEMNET, Africa
Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM), Fiji
Firecircle!
FIZ Advocacy and Support for Migrant Women and Victims of Trafficking, Switzerland
FUERTSA, Argentina
Fundación Arcoiris, México
Fundacion MARGEN de Apoyo y Promoción a la Mujer, Chile
Fundacion para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer (FEIM), Argentina
GATE
GAYa NUSANTARA Foundation, Indonesia
GESTOS, Brazil
Ghapro vzw, Belgium
GLITS - Gays and Lesbians Living in A Transgender Society, USA
Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, Thailand/global
Global Forum on MSM and HIV (MSMGF)
Global Fund for Women, USA
Good Women Association, Lagos, Nigeria
Gostaria de Assinar como ambos. Fátima Medeiros-APROSBA -Salvador-BA
Grupo de Mulheres Prostitutas do Estado do Para Brazil
Grupo Latinoamericano de Acción/Análisis de Mercados Sexuales (GLAMsex)
HarmRedux San Francisco, USA
Haus Of Khameleon, Fiji
Hispanics in Philanthropy, USA

Hong Kong Women Christian Council
Hope Empowerment for Good Health Support Initiative (HEGHSI) Anambra, Nigeria
Hope Sisters against HIV/AIDs, Stigma and Discrimination Initiative (HSI), Nigeria
HopeNow, Denmark
Horizontale Versatile, France
Human Capability Foundation, UK
Human Health Aid, Burundi
Human Resource Development Foundation, Turkey
Hydra - Treffpunkt und beratung für Prostituierte, Berlin, Germany
Initiative For Young Women's Health and Development
Inner City Legal Centre, Sydney, Australia
Instituto de Liderazgo Simone de Beauvoir, Mexico
Instituto EcoVida, Brazil
Instituto Paulista e Sexualidade - São Paulo, Brazil
International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW)
International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO)
International HIV/AIDS Alliance
International Indigenous Working Group on HIV & AIDS
International Treatment Preparedness Coalition Latin American and Caribbean ITPC-LATCA
International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), USA
International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific
Ipas, USA
Jamaica Community of Positive Women, ICW Caribbean
JERA International, Australia
Just Associates
Kaos GL Association
Keeping Ballroom Community Alive Network, USA
Kenya Female Advisory Organization (KEFEADO)
Komal Gandhar, India
Kranti NGO, India
La Strada International, Europe
Laboratório de Direitos Humanos da Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (LAIH/UFRJ), Brazil
Laboratório Genposs – UnB, Brazil

Lady Mermaid's Bureau, Uganda
Lajee Center, Palestine
Las Reinas Chulas Cabaret y Derechos Humanos AC
Latin America and the Caribbean Council of AIDS Services Organizations (LACCASO)
Lawyers Collective, India
LEFÖ - Beratung, Bildung und Begleitung für Migrantinnen / LEFÖ - Information, Education and Support for Migrant Women / Vienna / Austria
Liberty Asia
Mama Cash, Netherlands
Mental Health Project, Urban Justice Center; USA
Midnight Blue, Hong Kong
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland, Ireland
Milan Mahila Sangathan
Mind Renewal Women Initiative, Nigeria
Movimiento Amplio de Mujeres de Puerto Rico
Movimiento de Mujeres Orquideas del Mar
Mrignainy sewa sansth
Mujer Y Salud en Uruguay (MYSU), Uruguay
Nalane Associates for Reproductive Justice, South Africa
Naripokkho, Bangladesh
National Center for Transgender Equality
Nederlandse Vrouwen Raad (NVR)
Network for Sex Work Projects
Network of Beed by People Living with HIV/AIDS, Beed District Maharashtra State, India
New York City Anti-Violence Project, USA
Nodos, Argentina
NSW Council of Social Service, Australia
Núcleo de Estudos da Prostituição (NEP)
OTRASEX-Republica Dominicana
Outright Action International
Pacific Sexual and Gender Diversity Network
PAG-ASA, Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking
Pari o Dispare, Italy

Point of View, India
Police Zone Brussels North, Belgium
Pro-tukipiste ry, Helsinki, Finland
Programa Feminista La Corriente
Progressive Women Development Association Nigeria
Prokash, Bangladesh
Prokore Network, Switzerland
Prostitutes of New York, USA
Prostitution Policy Watch, Brazil
Rainbow Pride Foundation, Fiji
Rape Crisis Network, Japan
Reaccion Climatica, Bolivia
REBRAPD (Brazilian Network on Population and Development), Brazil
Red de Educación Popular Entre Mujeres (REPEM), America Latina y Caribe
Red de Salud de las Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe
Red Mujeres Trabajadoras Sexuales LAC
Red Umbrella Fund, Global
Rede Brasileira de Prostitutas, Brasil
Rede Feminista de Saúde, Direitos Sexuais e Direitos Reprodutivos, Brasil
Rede Nacional Feminista de Saúde, Direitos Sexuais e Direitos Reprodutivos - Bahia/ Brasil
REDTRANS, Nicaragua
Reframe Health and Justice, USA
Repro Rights Task Force, Judson Memorial Church, NYC, USA
Reproductive & Family Health Association of Fiji
Reproductive Health Matters, an international journal
RESURJ, international
Right Here Right Now, Indonesia
Rights4Change, Netherlands
Royal women health and rights initiative
Rural Women's Assembly
Rutgers, Netherlands
SAHAJ, India
Sakhijyot Sangathan

Salamander Trust, UK
Sangram, India
Santiago Puyol, Uruguay
Scarlet Alliance, Australian Sex Workers Association, Australia
Sekswerkexpertise, Dutch Sexworkers Platform, Netherlands
Sex Workers Alliance Ireland
Sex Workers Project, Urban Justice Center, USA
Sexual and Reproductive Justice Coalition, South Africa
Sexual Rights Initiative
Sexuality Policy Watch (SPW)
Shakti Samuha, Nepal
SHOP the Hague, Netherlands
SISONKE- National Sex Worker Movement of South Africa
Society for Women Development, Nigeria
Sonagachi Research and Training Institute, DMSC, Kolkata, West Bengal, India
Sonke Gender Justice, South Africa
Soroptimist International
Sramajibi Mahila Sangha
SRHR Africa Trust
St. James Infirmary, USA
Stella, l'amie de Maimie, Canada
SWOP Behind Bars, USA
SWOPUSA
Synergia International Human Rights, USA
Tamani Rarama
TAMPEP, the European Network for the of Rights and Health Promotion among Migrants
TARSHI, India
Te Aito Rangatira, New Zealand
The Brazilian Network of Prostitutes, Brazil
The Exploitation Intervention Project of The Legal Aid Society
The Global Network of People Living with HIV (GNP+)
The Sex Workers Education and Advocacy Taskforce (SWEAT), South Africa
The YP Foundation, India

Tiye International, Netherlands
Transgender Europe - TGEU
TRANSMEN
UHAI EASHRI, East Africa
Unidas en la Esperanza
Urban Justice Center, USA
Urban Justice Center: Safety Net Project
Urgent Action Fund - Latin America
Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights (UAF)
Urgent Action Fund- Africa
Usha Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited, South Africa
Vecinas Feministas por la Justicia Sexual y Reproductiva en América Latina y el Caribe, LAC
Veshya Anyay Mukti Parishad, India
Vision Spring Initiatives, Nigeria
Wild Thing
WO=MEN Dutch Gender Platform, The Netherlands
Women and Media Collective, Sri Lanka
Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) - New Ways, Turkey
Women Learning Initiative and Health Empowerment (WOLIHE)
Women's Rights Fund Clara Wichmann
Women's Fund Asia (WFA)
Woodhull Freedom Foundation, USA
World Association for Sexual Health, International
World Federation for Mental Health
Xaraés Consultoria em Gênero e Direitos Humanos, Brazil
Youth Champs for Mental Health, Fiji

Individuals:

Adrienne Germain, USA
Alain Giami PhD, France
Aldenora González, Brasil
Aline Batarseh

Ana Goreth Ricardo Santos
Andrea Cornwall
Andrew Park
Angelika Kartusch
Anurita P Hazarika
Aya ElHossiny
Baishali Chatterjee
Beyza Bilal
Carlos Hector Mesa, Argentina
Christine Nanlohy
Chuleepon Dechkum, Thailand
Claudyne Chevrier, PhD
Constance Mathe
Prof. Daniel Tarantola, M.D., France (Former Professor of Health and Human Rights, The University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, Australia)
Debolina Dutta, India
Dipawali Sharma
Dipika Patel sakhi jyot
Doris Fok
Eliane Kalmus
Elise Ketelaars, Ulster University
Enrique Chavez
Flavio Lenz, Berlin
Friederike Strack, Sociologist, Berlin, Germany
Gabriela Arguedas. Associate Professor. Universidad de Costa Rica.
Giulia Giacometti
Hannah Mara
Hari Shanker Singh
Helga Bilitewski
Herminda González
Hiroyuki Taniguchi
Prof. Dr. I. Vanwesenbeeck
Jacqueline Suter Schweiz

Jamison Liang
Jandira M. VÉras
Janet Price
Jawahar Mehts
Jessica Peñaranda, USA
Jofiliti Veikoso
Joke Swiebel, Vice Chairperson CSW (1992-1993))
José Miguel Nieto Olivar (Public Health Faculty, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil)
Kamayani Bali Mahabal
Kaoru Aoyama, Kobe University, Jaoan
Karin Astrid Siegmann, International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University Rotterdam (ISS), Netherlands
Kelly B G Miguel
Kesaya Baba
Khouloud Mahdhaoui
Laura Contreras
Lennie Van Proeyen, Belgium, Antwerp
Linda Bresseleers
Liz Afton, LMSW
Madeline Garcia Bigelow
Marco Aurelio Prado
María Eugenia Braida Cirio, Uruguay
Marianne Jonker
Marjan Wijers, Netherlands
Melisa de Oro
Miwa Matsumoto
Molly Cohen
Mona Mishra
Monica A.Diaz
Monique TULa
Motoko Kuroda
Nandinee Bandyopadhyay, Kolkata, India
Naofumi Yoshida as an individual

Natalia Canteros
Nurjahan Begum
Orlidy Inoa
Parinita Bhattacharjee, Kenya
Rangan Chakravarty
Ray Tanka
Regina Lizeth Barahona
Rhea Chawla
RJ Thompson, Esq., USA
Rosalind P. Petchesky, PhD.
Rosie Wang
Runa Bruun
Ryuko Kurita
Saahil Kejriwal
Sam Winter, Curtin University, Perth, Australia.
Sanne Peeters
Sara Solfanelli
Professor Dr Saskia E. Wieringa
Shoko Ssami, Japan
Silke Heumann, International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands
Simone Schuck da Silva
Solome Nakaweesi-Kimbugwe
Srinath Maddur
Susanne Zwingel
Tamani Rarama
Terry McGovern, USA
Tino Ruyters
Tita Virgílio
Vera Rodriguez
Veronica Munk, Germany
Viviane Vergueiro
Yuko Higashi, Japan
Professor Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Aotearoa New Zealand/ Cook Islands

Zaida Betancourth- Medica Salubrista especializada en género, Ecuador