



Shri Siddaramaiah,

The Honourable Chief Minister of Karnataka,

18 October 2014

Respected Shri Siddaramaiah,

We, the representatives of the National Network of Sex Workers, representing over 15 collectives and federations of people in sex work across India; wish to bring to your immediate and urgent attention concerns regarding the ongoing discussion on "legalizing sex work" in Karnataka.

- a. We congratulate the Government of Karnataka for taking the much needed step of recognising these concerns. However, we need a ***robust and meaningful dialogue and consultation*** to ensure that the any State policy fulfils the aspirations of sex workers for social inclusion, access to justice and a life of dignity.
- c. We thank the writers, academicians and well known public figures who have expressed their support for the rights of sex workers and have called for legalisation of sex work. This statement however does not correctly represent the demands of sex workers across India. ***Legalisation of sex work includes specific laws and policies such as mandatory testing and mandatory licensing of sex workers. We are against this formulation*** since it will negatively impact the free movement of sex workers and their right to livelihood.

We however seek Decriminalisation of sex work such that existing criminal and civil laws which are used to harass and punish sex workers are repealed. That is a crucial step towards redressing violence and discrimination. It will also enable us to seek justice like all other citizens of India, instead of being criminalized.

- d. Despite the well established and accepted principle world over and in India, that policy discussions regarding sex workers should be taken with meaningful involvement of and consultation with them, the present decision to set up a committee to discuss the rights of sex workers has been taken without any community participation and representation.

We request your immediate intervention and directions to ensure that sex workers networks and ***collectives are given adequate and equal space and voice within any committee set up in Karnataka to discuss any policy formulation that impacts their livelihoods and lives.*** The presence of Non - governmental organisations and agencies though welcome in these discussions cannot and must not substitute the voice and agency of sex workers. ***Sex workers networks and collectives must be directly involved in the Committees and all consultations.***

National Network Of Sex Workers – India

Email-nationalnetworkofsexworkers@gmail.com

Secretariat: Samraksha, Bangalore, Karnataka



We would like the opportunity of presenting our concerns with adequate facts and evidence and request you to give a delegation of sex workers time and opportunity to meet with you.

Thanking You

Sincerely

DIRECTORS OF BOARD, NATIONAL NETWORK OF SEX WORKERS, INDIA

Ms. Kokila, Ms. Bharathi, Ms. Alivelu, Ms. Sakina, Ms. Sangeeta, Rajendra Patil, Ms Shanti, Ms. Balanagamma, Ms. Nalini Jameela, Ms. Deepika A

Organisations

1. Karnataka Sex Workers Union
2. Uttara Kannada Mahila Okkutu
3. Veshya Anyay Mukti Parishad (Bagalkote, Belgaum)
4. Vadamalar Federation
5. Me and My World
6. Muskaan
7. Ananya
8. Sangram
9. Sangama
10. Aneka
11. Samraksha
12. Women's Initiative (WINS)
13. South India AIDS Action Project (SIAAP)
14. Centre for Advocacy on Stigma and Marginalisation (CASAM)

National Network Of Sex Workers – India

Email-nationalnetworkofsexworkers@gmail.com

Secretariat: Samraksha, Bangalore, Karnataka