

**Conflation of trafficking and sex work
Shah-Aiym Public Association**

Statement for presentation
at the Working Session No. 14 " Humanitarian issues and other commitments"

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
September 10-21, 2018, Warsaw, Poland.

Conversation about trafficking frequently implies selling people for sexual exploitation. Since I speak on behalf of sex workers who have chosen voluntarily to provide sexual services for a reward as a way to earn money, I would like to explain the difference between sex work and trafficking.

Trafficking means modern slavery, when people are used as labor in a wide variety of industries, in construction, agriculture, harmful production, as drug couriers or organ donors.

Sexual slavery is only one of many ways to exploit people. In many areas of OSCE region labor exploitation predominates.

In 2010, the International Labor Organization recognized voluntary sex work as a form of work, if a person does it without coercion, voluntarily. When we talk about trafficking the **absence of person's consent** is the one of key characteristics.

Please keep in mind that talking about "sexual slavery" is possible only when it comes to deception, violence and coercion, but when this term is applied to people who voluntarily engage in sex work, this is untrue and it brings harm.

This approach completely ignores the needs and requirements of such a numerous social group as sex workers. This approach does not allow implementation health programs and HIV prevention with sex workers, it does not allow us to create professional associations, regulate working conditions and work safety.

Sex work is work, and human trafficking is a crime requiring the strictest punishment. Those who conflate these concepts also commit crimes, exposing to the risk sex workers' lives, health and destinies.

I speak on behalf of several million sex workers in the OSCE region - **DON'T RESCUE US FROM SLAVERY!** Nobody is exploiting us. We voluntarily decided to earn money by providing sexual services. Please don't substitute concepts, and put equals sign between sex work and sex slavery. It will not help those who are exploited, while we are obstructed to work safely and to enjoy human rights.

We need in decriminalizing sex work and recognizing us equal members of the society.