

**Factors contributing to the violence against sex workers
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Statement to present at
Working Session No. 15 " Tolerance and non-discrimination II"

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

Violence by state and society is the reality of sex workers' daily life. Speaking about sex workers, we mean female, male and transgender adults (over 18 years of age) who voluntarily provide sexual services for a fee.

The majority of sex workers is women. At the same time, it should be noted that male sex workers and trans-sex workers are also experiencing violence based on gender stereotypes about the subordinate female role and lower social status prescribed to woman.

Factors contributing to the violence against sex workers

- legislative prohibitions of sex work (criminalization)
- law enforcement practices - police raids, forced testing on HIV and sexually transmitted infections.
- encouraging actions by social movements persecuting sex workers

Example of legislative prohibition

In Tajikistan, in 2015 the administrative responsibility for sex work was tightened contrary the CEDAW recommendation to cancel the punishment for sex work. According to the new law sex workers must pay a fine of 50 to 200 US dollars or serve an administrative arrest up to 15 days. This measure was declared necessary to "combat prostitution". Upon tightening punishment an active campaign of sex workers reintegration was also launched: the police detained women and sent letters to their relatives, indicating that woman is sex worker. As a result, sex workers experienced even more violence by relatives. Also, the detained women were sent to sewing or baking courses in order they stop doing sex work.

Example of law enforcement practices

In Kyrgyzstan sex work is decriminalized, it is neither an administrative offense nor a crime. Despite this police raids against sex workers are common practice. During raids sex workers are threatened and blackmailed, humiliated, physically abused. They are forcibly photographed and videotaped as well as extorted bribes. If a sex worker cannot give to police the required amount of money, the police make a protocol on an administrative offense, for example petty hooliganism, with violations of all material and procedural provisions. In 2016 the police announced: "We will cleanse the city from prostitution for a week". Raids became massive, the police publicly urged the population to find sex workers, take pictures of them and bring these photos to the police. It led to next wave of violence against sex workers by society. As a result, they went underground into more dangerous and uncomfortable working conditions, migration has increased both within the country and outside.

Example of encouraging actions by social movements persecuting sex workers

In Russia there are several public organizations which work jointly with the police to identify places where sex workers work, arrange illegal purchase operation, or as they call it "public purchase". This activity is presented as socially useful, as a "struggle for morality", for "the health of the nation and family values". Usually such raids are conducted with the participation of the media. Sex workers are photographed and filmed without any permission, forced to open their faces or forcibly unclothed in front of the camera, accompanied by degrading and offensive words. Then these videos are posted on the Internet and broadcast on central TV channels. Faces of sex workers and forcibly unclothing them

are shown openly. On the website of the "Belaya Gvardia", one of such public organizations, it is said that all their activities are under the constant control of state authorities and the media. Being afraid of violence and video shooting, sex workers try to escape, jump out of the windows and get seriously injured.

Sex workers are perceived either criminals and immoral people spreading infections and causing "lack of morals" in society, or victims of exploitation who are unable to make decisions on their own and therefore sex workers should be reintegrated into society via special programs. Guided by this, the State encourages violence against sex workers in law and in practice.

The CEDAW Committee recognizing sex workers a group with intersecting forms of discrimination recommended each of listed countries to take measures aimed at eliminating violence against sex workers, but the states completely ignore them.

Recommendations

1. **We call on Governments of Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan to implement UN Committees recommendations:**
 - to decriminalize sex work
 - to terminate police raids and forcibly testing on HIV and sexually transmitted infections
 - to introduce mechanisms for monitoring violence against sex workers by the police
2. **Also, we call on Governments of our countries** to make decisions and to develop laws related to sex workers with their meaningful participation
3. **We appeal to the OSCE with the call**
 - To assist OSCE member countries in fulfilling commitments to achieve gender equality and eliminate violence against all groups of women, including sex workers