



*Victims of Prostitution and Poverty Alliance*  
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Dear Amnesty India,

We are members of the Victims of Prostitution and Poverty Alliance in India. We would like Amnesty International to include our right not to be prostituted in their upcoming resolution. We are from the most marginalized section of society. We are poor, female and low-caste, often from groups labeled as nomadic tribes under British colonialism and from minority religions.

We would like Amnesty to recognize that our prostitution is an absence of choice and not a choice. We request you as Amnesty India to take into account the lived experiences of the most marginalized low-caste and poor women and girls in India who want protection from our exploiters, not their impunity. We want you to call on states to invest in our basic needs. Our basic needs are our "human rights".

Our prostitution is based on us being the most marginalized and weakest in society -the "last"- due to the fact that we are poor, female, low-caste and teenagers. We are facing the multiple inequalities of class, caste, gender and age. Our rights are violated in every way **before** we are prostituted **and** when we are in prostitution.

We are kept out of school, sold into child marriage, domestic servitude and child labour and then finally pimped into prostitution. In prostitution we live in debt bondage, with our debt increasing, not our income as we move into our twenties. We are finally thrown out when we are in our thirties and no longer commercially viable.

Our old pension is disease, trauma and the multiple wounds due to the violence done to our bodies by pimps and clients. The pimps beat us when we say no to standing for long hours on the street, or don't want additional customers in the same night. The customers are buying violence -they stub cigarette butts out on us, push rods into our bodies, slap us, piss on us, break our arms and punch us.

Amnesty is known for protecting the rights of prisoners. In prostitution, we are imprisoned by pimps and brothel keepers. We are subjected to mental and physical torture. Our mobility is controlled by psychological abuse and brothel managers actually sitting at the door of our brothels to monitor our movements. We cannot even decide when to stand or lie down. We suffer from sleep deprivation.

We are also imprisoned by our debt bondage. Over the years our debts increases and the income earned off our body decreases. We don't earn an income, we earn disease and trauma. It is the brothel owners and pimps who earn an income from us.

In the guise of protecting our rights from police harassment and detention, your resolution is giving impunity to our prisoners.

You will end up legitimizing our exploitation as work, and give legally acceptable status to those who torture and imprison us. You will also give states the easy way out and an excuse not to invest in ending our marginalization or looking at the violation of our human rights.

As a human rights organization we ask Amnesty the question: Do you stand for the commodification of human beings?

Submitted by:

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