



MEDIA RELEASE

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Doctors Concerned about Promotion of Prostitution

Doctors for Life is concerned with the continuous marketing of prostitution by the media, and wonders if they won't eventually wake up to having been complicit in human trafficking.

According to international statistics, the majority of trafficking victims are females trafficked into prostitution. As Premier Helen Zille said recently, "Sex work is so tied up with human trafficking that you cannot separate the two" and, "most women and children involved don't have a choice."

The suggestion that the legalization or decriminalization of prostitution would make it easier to control HIV/AIDS is absurd. How many times do we need to be reminded of what research has shown? Many do not register because they don't want to be controlled, have to pay taxes, or because of the stigma of being a prostitute. They are therefore not subject to HIV testing anyway.

If someone tests positive for HIV/AIDS or an STI, they can't be forced to stop engaging in prostitution. They often have no other means of survival and have to carry on regardless. A two tier system of prostitution develops, criminal and legal, and so abuse and trafficking continue.

This 'two tier system' creates a buyer's market, where they are forced to lower prices and offer prostitution without protection to compete for business. They are also more likely to be assaulted under these conditions. Condom use cannot be legislated.

Doctors For Life would like to commend Provincial Premier's Ace Magashule and Helen Zille, for acknowledging the link between prostitution and human trafficking, and for doing something about it.

Doctors for Life International, is an association of more than 1800 medical doctors. DFL is actively involved in helping people caught up in prostitution and trafficking and has rendered expert evidence to the Constitutional Court, Law Reform Commission and Parliament, regarding the social and psychological consequences of prostitution. For more visit www.dfl.org.za