

Protect sex workers' personal safety:

Amend the law to decriminalise “two sex workers working in one apartment”

(23 Nov 2008)

Another sex worker has been killed! The victim was found dead earlier this morning in her apartment which appeared to have been searched. This is already the fifth murder of a sex worker who worked in a “one-sex worker-apartment” this year! The other four cases happened in March.

We feel deep sorrow at this death, and we strongly condemn any kind of violence against sex workers. In the coming days we will pay extra outreach visits to sex workers working in different districts and once again share with them information about personal safety protection and referrals for safety alarm services. Our hotline service remains available 24 hours a day.

In fact, aside from murder, sex workers are also high risk victims of various crimes such as theft, robbery, rape etc. As the economy has recently worsened, sex workers who work individually in one-sex worker-apartments are more vulnerable. However, according to a survey conducted by Action for REACH OUT, nearly 80% of the interviewed sex workers would not prefer reporting cases to the police. This is very much related to discrimination and the police attitudes towards sex workers.

Once again, we urge:

- The police to make all efforts to investigate the case and to bring the murderer to justice.
- The police to further strengthen communication with sex workers and support groups, and deliver a clear message to the public that sex workers are protected by the police and the law like all citizens are, and that they should not be targeted by the offenders.
- The police to fairly and seriously handle cases reported by sex workers and practice no discrimination or impolite treatment against sex workers.

青鳥是一個成立於 1993 年的非政府組織，致力為女性性服務業從業員提供所需服務及支援。我們認同性工作是工作，並以倡議性工作者權益及性工作非刑事化為目標。

Action for REACH OUT is a non-governmental organisation established in 1993. We offer services and support to women working in the sex industry. We firmly believe that sex work is a legitimate occupation and we advocate the acceptance of sex workers' rights and sex work decriminalisation.

- Sex workers to come out and report crimes so as to prevent other sex workers from becoming victims.
- Sex workers to give each other mutual help and care and to keep close contact with sex workers support groups.
- The public to put aside biases, show concern to sex workers in their neighbourhood, keep contact with them and provide support when necessary.
- The Panel on Security of the Legislative Council to immediately resume the discussion about personal safety of sex workers, initiate reviews of the existing law, study and prepare for law reform that allows two sex workers to work in one apartment so that they can work in a safer environment.

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