



THE LAST GIRL FIRST

Second World Congress Against the Sexual Exploitation
of Women and Girls

29 - 31 January 2017, New Delhi, India

Summary report: Strengthening a global movement committed to a
world free from sexual exploitation



From 29-31 January 2017, CAP International and its Indian member Apne Aap Women Worldwide co-organised the Second World Congress Against the Sexual Exploitation of Women and Girls at the India International Center in New Delhi, India.

The event convened and strengthened a profound **global movement committed to a world free from sexual exploitation.**



Participants

Under the theme "Last Girl First", the three day international congress gathered **400 civil society representatives, leaders & decision makers** from **30 countries** and **5 continents**, including:

- survivors of prostitution
- representatives of the most marginalised women and girls (indigenous, low caste, migrant, minorities and women of colour),
- youth and student movements,
- trade unions,
- representatives from the new technologies sector,
- and members of parliament.



"In the words of one survivor, we do not choose prostitution, prostitution chooses us. And those of us who have been prostituted face lifetimes of physical and sexual male violence." - Jackie Lynne, co-founder of Indigenous Women Against the Sex Industry, survivor of prostitution

Speakers

70 speakers

contributed to the discussion and to the international, regional, and national movement building dynamics throughout the event, to pledge to put the last girl first.

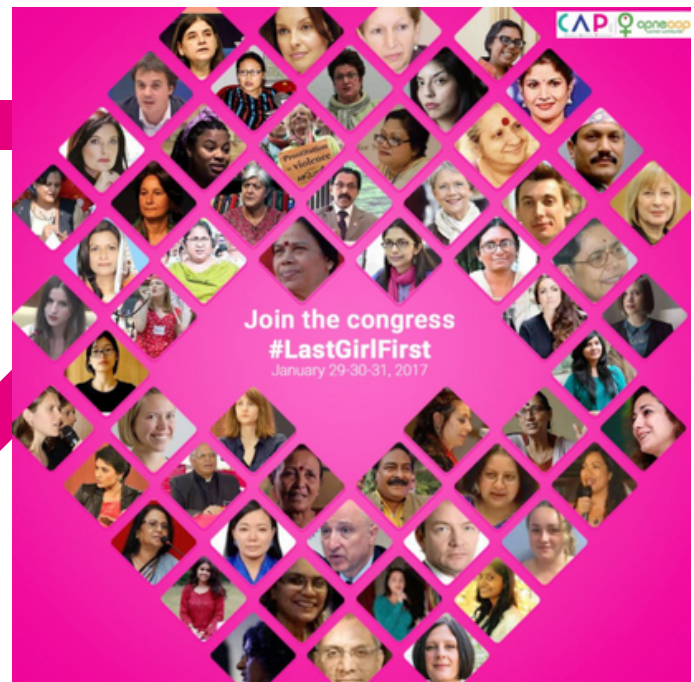


International dynamics

- **Survivors** from South Africa, USA, Canada, Ireland, France, India
- **Members of parliament** and decision makers from UK, EU, Pakistan, Sweden, India, France
- **Trade union** representatives
- **Youth leaders**

SAARC regional dynamics

From **Pakistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal** and **India**



National dynamics

- **Survivors** of prostitution from minority, low-caste groups
- **Members of parliament** from a wide range of political parties
- **Trade union** representatives
- **Youth leaders**

Support

Official partners and participating organisations

AIDMAM, All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch, was an official congress partner.

Indian participating organisations: CITU, Bodo Women's Justice Forum, National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights, STOP India, Rescue Foundation, Shakti Vahini, Impulse NGO, AITUC, SKA, Hind Mazdoor Sabha, All India Hawker Women's Federation, National Hawkers Association, All India Students Association

SAARC participating organisations: Maiti Nepal, BNWLA (Bangladesh), RENEW (Bhutan), Al-Sehar Foundation (Pakistan)

International participating organisations: SPACE International, European Women's Lobby, Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), UNODC, Survivor Speak, CGT, UGT, Freethem, Osez! le feminisme



Embassy support

The congress was supported by the embassies of Sweden, France and Australia:

- Delegates were welcomed for receptions throughout the week.
- Swedish ambassador to India Harald Sandberg gave opening remarks during the congress opening session, and Swedish ambassador on trafficking in human beings Per-Anders Sunesson spoke on the legislative panel.
- At the French embassy on Wednesday 31 January Ruchira Gupta, founder of Apne Aap, was also honored for her work with the prestigious French **legion d'honneur**.



Pictured above, left: Ruchira Gupta receiving *legion d'honneur* presented by MP Catherine Coutelle. Right: CAP Intl representatives and partners at Swedish embassy reception.

UN support

UNODC Regional Office for South Asia representative Sergey Kapinos was a speaker on the SAARC panel.

Private support

Vivel, a soap brand with a social justice campaign to end violence against women under the slogan »say no to compromise«, was an official congress partner.

Ashley Judd's support

Ashley Judd, feminist activist and UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador, supported the event throughout the week, speaking during the pre-session lecture on 29 January and making a keynote speech at the opening ceremony on 30 January. She attended all panels, participated in the press conference which was covered by a range of national and international media outlets, and the field and ministerial visits.

“This is the most powerful room I have ever found myself in... because the folks in here know that we should put the Last Girl First.” - Ashley Judd



Panel outcomes

Pre-session lecture: A global movement of survivors mobilising against sexual exploitation

This panel **brought together a global movement** of activist leaders from five countries and three continents to share their **personal testimonies**, get to know each other and the audience, and discuss the challenges and opportunities in their work to end sexual exploitation.

Last Girl First: Ending sexual exploitation & trafficking of the most marginalised women & girls

All over the world, and throughout history, the most systemically disadvantaged groups have been overrepresented in sexual exploitation and prostitution. This panel **strengthened a transnational movement** as speakers and participants **pledged** to advocate putting the last girl first in their countries.

SAARC regional dynamics & challenges

This session offered a unique opportunity to **assess** the realities of prostitution and sexual exploitation in each country of the SAARC region, and to **understand** the regional dynamics and flows of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Renowned author Nandita Haksar **launched** her latest book on trafficking in the region on the margins of the event.

Launch of a global coalition of trade unions standing together against commercial sexual exploitation

Several trade union representatives **joined** a growing movement of organisations **committed** to fighting all forms of sexual exploitation, including the prostitution of others.

Assessing the best legislative frameworks to end commercial sexual exploitation

Members of parliament from 5 countries **shared best practices** on best legislative frameworks to ending commercial sexual exploitation reaffirmation of abolitionist commitments. Indian government officials **pledged** to work toward abolitionist legislation, and to close all brothels in Delhi.

Youth & student movements for abolition

The gathering provided the opportunity for transnational youth movement ties were **strengthened** in formal (panel) and informal (strategy and dinner meetings on the margins) settings.

Added value of new technologies in the fight against commercial sexual exploitation

This workshop **highlighted** the **regulations, best practices** and **tools** currently used to counter cyber exploitation, and **identified** innovative potential partnerships and ways of harnessing new technologies to fight commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking (and provide direct help to victims).



Congress side events

On the margins of the congress, several artistic and creative initiatives were presented to encourage innovative ways for activists to combat commercial sexual exploitation.

Ceramic workshop

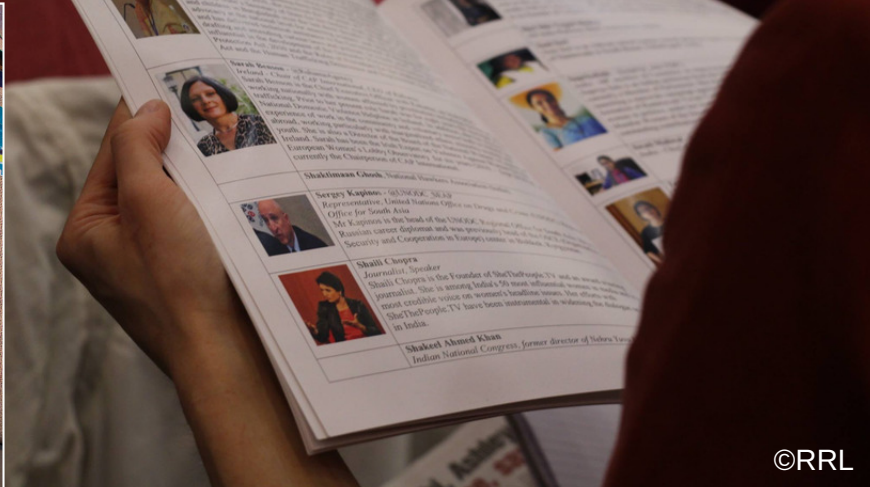
An exhibition of ceramic artwork made by the girls supported by Apne Aap was presented throughout the congress.

Music

Music and banghra dancing followed the pre-session and opening, starting the event off with a bang!

Book fair

Renowned author Nandita Haksar and South African activist and prostitution survivor Grizelda Grootboom presented their books on the margins of the conference, among other available research and advocacy materials.



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"The only action that needs to be done is to prove to them (political leaders) that there are survivors, there are testimonies to get this right."
- Grizelda Grootboom, activist and survivor of prostitution

Post-congress visits

Field visits

After the congress, several CAP Intl member and partner representatives attended field visits to Apne Aap's adopted school and met with the communities Apne Aap works with in Najafgarh, with French MP Catherine Coutelle, former Indian MP Meenakshi Natarajan, and social justice activist Ashley Judd. This provided an opportunity to exchange with a mother who had managed to prevent the trafficking of her daughter by her daughter's husband, to learn about the challenges facing the community and Apne Aap's valuable support to them.



Ministerial visit

CAP Intl and Apne Aap also had a follow-up meeting with Maneka Gandhi, Indian Minister for Women and Child Development Maneka Gandhi to exchange further on the new anti-trafficking bill. This came as a follow-up to a first meeting at the end of November 2016.

Pictured below: Apne Aap Director Tinku Khanna, social justice activist Ashley Judd, Apne Aap founder Ruchira Gupta, Swedish Ambassador to India Harald Sandberg, Minister Maneka Gandhi, CAP Intl Executive Director Grégoire Théry, Swedish diplomat Anna Ugglä.



"My advocacy is my therapy."

- Shanie Roy, 25 year old community worker, law student & survivor of prostitution

Coverage

Media coverage

We hosted a press conference on Tuesday 31 January, which attracted 40 journalists and resulted in conference coverage in over 50 media outlets in Indian print and digital press, including leading outlets such as **The Hindu**, **India Times** and **India Today** as well as international press. Including:

- Reuters. "Global sex trade thrives on indigenous, tribal and low-caste women." Nita Bhalla. 30 January 2017.
- Vagabomb. "Read Chilling Stories of Sexual Violence Survivors from the World Conference Against Trafficking." Stuti Battacharya. 1 February 2017.
- Scroll.in. "Sex work or slavery?: Why human rights discourse is no longer a tool for liberation." Nandita Haksar. 8 February 2017.
- OneWorld South Asia. "End impunity for buyers of sex, urge civil society actors." Ashok Kumar. 1 February 2017.
- India Today - In Delhi, actress Ashley Judd opens up about being a victim of sexual assault." 31 January 2017.
- She The People. "Is technology a perpetrator of trafficking and sexual violence?". 1 February 2017.
- She The People. "Sex Trafficking Survivors Share Stories Of Ordeal". 31 January 2017.
- DNA India. "Activist Ruchira Gupta awarded prestigious French award". 1 February 2017.



Social media coverage

- Hashtag **#lastgirlfirst** was used widely by conference participants online.
- CAP's Twitter account received 5 times the number of mentions and 3 times the number of profile visits (2,100) compared to its monthly average. It **increased its following by 15%**, to 650+, including notable media followers (Reuters correspondents), regional NGOs and activists.

Documentation

Full **video** and **audio recordings** of the conference panels, and **bilateral interviews** with key trade union representatives, survivor leaders, and other notable participants, allows for dissemination and sharing of best practices and the mobilisation of activists who were not physically present.