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AUGUST 11, 2015

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL DECIDES TO SUPPORT PROSTITUTION

MOHAMED ZEINELDINE

Amnesty International has voted in favor of a new proposal that pushes for the decriminalization of sex work and prostitution.

During the Amnesty International Council Meeting (ICM), Amnesty International delegates from various nations voted in favor of a resolution titled "Policy on State Obligations to Respect, Protect, and Fulfill the Human Rights of Sex Workers," according to the human rights group's [official website](#).

“The International Council requests the International Board to adopt a policy that seeks attainment of the highest possible protection of the human rights of sex workers, through measures that include the decriminalization of sex work.”

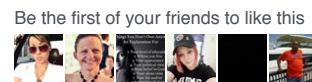
The first item of a 13-item list of aspects the International Board – the higher council in Amnesty International – should be “taking into account” and emphasizing “the need for states to not only review and repeal laws that make sex workers vulnerable to human rights violations, but also refrain from enacting such laws.”

The Amnesty International resolution also states that “states have the obligation to prevent and combat trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation,” and that they also “have an obligation to ensure that sex workers are protected from exploitation and can use criminal law to address acts of exploitation.”

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recognized as work for the purposes of regulation. It also considers that governments "can impose legitimate restrictions on the sale of sexual services, provided that such restrictions [...] must be for a legitimate purpose."

Of course, it is important to remember that Amnesty International is not the UN and does not have the right to impose new laws, nor sanction governments for refusing its resolutions for that matter.

And, as *Time* magazine reports, **Amnesty International's push** to legalize sex work around the world has been met with much criticism.

Demand Abolition, one organization that works on ending sex trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation, has rejected the Amnesty International proposal on the grounds that sexual exploiters would benefit greatly from it.

"By calling for the decriminalization of all facets of commercial sex, including sex-buying, pimping, and brother-owning, Amnesty is saying they value the rights of exploiters over the exploited," the group's policy specialist Ian Kitterman said.

Former U.S. President **Jimmy Carter** also voiced his rejection of the proposal before the vote and wrote an open letter to Amnesty International.

“The practice is inherently harmful, protecting (or expanding) that action legitimizes the sexual exploitation of a shocking number of vulnerable people, the large majority of whom are women and children. We urge you to reject any proposal that does not hold buyers, pimps, and other exploiters accountable for the harm they are doing to the sellers (who should not be criminalized).”

"Amnesty International is at a crossroad, with all of the world watching," Carter added. "Please ensure that the organization stays true to its mission of standing up for the world's most vulnerable people."

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f 5.2k g+ t



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6:07 PM - 11 Aug 2015

173 164



Caitlin Roper
@caitlin_roper

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.@Amnesty has voted to stand with pimps and johns- the exploiters, rather than the exploited. Seems human rights do not extend to women.

6:30 PM - 11 Aug 2015

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“Saddened & disgusted to hear that @amnesty have voted in favour if the rights of pimps and johns over women's human right to safety #ICM2015

— Karen Ingala Smith (@K_IngalaSmith) August 11, 2015

An Amnesty International press release stated that the International Board, a higher council whose “role is to provide guidance and leadership for the Amnesty International movement,” will have to “develop and adopt a policy on the issue” following the vote.

[Photo by Stephen Lovekin/Getty Images for CBGB]

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