

**DECLARATION OF BARCELONA**

**SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF VICTIMS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION. NEW FORMS OF SLAVERY  
AND ITS LOCAL IMPACT**

**BARCELONA, 13 JUNE 2014**

**The METROPOLIS Women International Network**, on the basis of the discussions and conclusions of the seminar “Safety and protection of victims of sexual exploitation. New forms of slavery and its local impact”, held in Barcelona on 13 June 2014 at the initiative of Barcelona City Council and the METROPOLIS Women International Network,

**CONSIDERS THAT** trafficking in women and sexual exploitation is 21<sup>st</sup>-century slavery as it constitutes a form of violence perpetuated against women and girls. Sexual exploitation, over and above being a violation of fundamental human rights, is one of the foremost manifestations of gender inequality worldwide.

**ACKNOWLEDGES THAT**, despite the available data, it is speculated that most cases go undetected and unpunished. Sexual exploitation is a phenomenon that is constantly evolving.

**ASSERTS THAT:**

- The fight against trafficking in women and sexual exploitation calls for both a global and local approach, though the impact borne on victims is detected at local level. In light of this context, the work of eradication calls for greater flexibility to adapt to constant changes and to tackle the phenomenon, providing women with more guarantees of protection.
- The debate must be focussed from the perspective of women and not only from the economic standpoint or the point of view of crime.
- Training and awareness-raising activities must be carried out, targeting all the stakeholders involved in defending and guaranteeing women’s rights in order to address the situation in a sensitive and mindful manner.

**CONCLUDES THAT**, given the situation of great vulnerability in which sexual exploitation victims are entangled, social resources must be rolled out for their full recovery, at the health, economic, social and educational levels.

**CALLS FOR:**

- Citizens to play a role in tackling this phenomenon to ensure that the policies implemented are truly comprehensive.
- The participation of civil society and specialist organisations that, thanks to their work in the field, are familiar with the situations the victims endure.
- The establishment of comprehensive laws that ensures all authorities, at their different levels, take action in a coordinated and coherent manner, preventing regulatory divergences and establishing minimum standards of action across all regions. Such laws

must place people at the core and consolidate an approach centred on care and full protection, essential for tackling this major infringement of human rights.

- The definition of mechanisms that improve police and judicial action vis-à-vis criminal organisations linked to trafficking.
- The eradication of the stumbling blocks and impasses at administrative level that prevent access to victims' full protection.
- The media to publicise women's unequal status as regards men without victimising them.

**ASKS METROPOLIS member cities:**

- To urge their states to endorse, execute and/or coordinate actions stemming from the Palermo Protocol to ensure the efficiency of the work to eradicate sexual exploitation and to foster victim protection.
- To include the fight against trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation in the agendas of METROPOLIS members.
- To take into consideration the specific needs of women living in major metropolises across the entire world.
- To request that METROPOLIS submit this Declaration to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDC) as well as to UN WOMEN; and to ensure that it is presented and read out during the CSW59 / Beijing+20, to be held in New York from 9 to 20 March 2015.

Hyderabad, 8 October 2014

METROPOLIS Women International Network