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Global Network of Sex Work Projects

Promoting Health and Human Rights

17 DECEMBER 2010 – The Global Network of Sex Work Projects (NSWP) is commemorating the 7th annual International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers with the release of the “Sex Work and Violence” issue of the annual NSWP journal *Research for Sex Work* and the launch of a brand new NSWP website at <http://nswp.org>. Both the journal and the website amplify the voices of sex worker-led organising projects around the world that speak out about violence from police, institutions, clients, and intimate partners, while debunking the myth that sex work is inherently gender-based violence.

Especially in places where sex work is criminalised, the human rights of sex workers are violated and sex workers are subjected to violence in their communities. However, sex workers are raising awareness, working with policy makers, and organizing against this violence, as the following examples in *Research for Sex Work* show:

- In Central Eastern Europe and Central Asia, a survey of 238 male, female, and transgender sex workers conducted by the Sex Workers’ Rights Advocacy Network found that 42 percent of sex workers in the region reported having experienced physical violence by the police and 36 percent had experienced sexual violence.
- Since 2006, police in Liverpool, UK have agreed a policy in which all crimes against sex workers are treated as hate crimes and have appointed a sex work liaison officer.
- Though recently institutional violence in Cambodia has gotten a lot of attention, violence committed against sex workers by intimate partners is also a major problem. The Cambodian Prostitute Union provides education to sex workers and their abusive partners about the domestic violence law as well as counseling, support, and service referrals for sex workers.
- The Aboriginal Sex Workers Education and Outreach Project in Canada was founded in 2008 to focus on the needs of Aboriginal street-based sex workers, who experience high rates of violence and HIV infection. Indigenous women are infected with HIV at nearly twice the rate as women in the general population.

NSWP’s members include 118 organizations and groups from 40 countries that work to promote the health and human rights of sex workers. To find out more about our work and our members, visit our new website at <http://nswp.org>. PDFs of the “Sex Work and Violence” *Research for Sex Work*, a bilingual publication in English and Russian, can be downloaded for free, or free hard copies can be requested by emailing secretariat@nswp.org.