

PRESS RELEASE ON THE MURDERS AND KIDNAP OF WOMEN IN UGANDA

26th June 2018

Today the Uganda Network of sex worker's Organizations (UNESO) and the entire sex work fraternity in Uganda condemn the inhuman and degrading manner in which women lives are abruptly ended through the numerous murders and kidnaps that have recently befallen.

The constitution of Uganda under Chapter Four article 22 provides for a right to life which encompasses the right to a meaningful and dignified life. The constitution further under the same chapter article 24 guarantees the right to freedom from inhumane and degrading treatment. However this is a right that is currently being deprived of very many Ugandan women and one that the state has failed to uphold despite its obligations under article 32 of the constitution to take affirmative action towards the protection of marginalized groups. There are also other international and regional obligations that the government of Uganda ratified. These include the MAPUTO Protocol, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights among others but still the country has failed to fully comply.

And now friends, lets pause and remind ourselves of the numerous kidnaps and murders of women that are happening in Uganda that we have on several occasions read in news reports and heard from numerous media channels that some and most of these women are targeted because of their gender vulnerability.

In 2017 alone, 28 women were brutally murdered in Wakiso district and an additional 10 have at least been confirmed to have fallen victims of these murders this year. Several of these women were identified as sex workers. Due to the nature of our work, we are prone to these merciless killings but we grieve with the general public as these tragedies not only affect sex workers but the whole womanhood and innocent children of Uganda. This is not a debate on opposing or proposing sex work but rather a cry to the government to protect lives of women. Just yesterday, we were held in horror about the news of a 75 year old woman who was raped and murdered in Kyengera a Kampala suburb.

All these inhuman attacks perpetuated towards women can largely be attributed to the laxity in the laws and failing state of security in the country. And when we talk about security we are not pointing fingers to the government alone, we are also talking about the vigilance of the populace to help in curbing crimes.

It's against these premises that the Uganda Network of Sex worker's Organizations is joining hands with the rest of the country in demanding for affirmative action by the government and collective responsibility by the citizenry to curb these escalating murders and gross abuse of women's' rights in the country.

We call upon the police and other security organs in the country to launch joint operations that include all Ugandans. Community policing could be the one of the initiatives that need to be revived in order for us to achieve the collective responsibility we need to keep all of us safe.

We beseech the parliament of Uganda to take quick, concrete and complete actions to ensure that all lives and especially lives of women and children which are currently at stake are well protected.

And to all the citizens including the media, let's continue to be vigilant and report all suspected situations and people that put our lives at risk. In a nutshell comrades, let's be our sisters keepers, let's be our brothers keepers.

For GOD and Our Country