



EFF STATEMENT ON THE LONG OVERDUE BILL TO DECRIMINALISE SEX WORK

Thursday, 02 February 2023

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) notes that the Department of Justice and Correctional Services (DCS) introduced a long overdue bill to decriminalize sex work to Parliament's DCS Portfolio Committee. The EFF, since its inception 10-years ago armed with superior logic adopted the framework for the decriminalizing sex work in consultation with sex workers.

The Decriminalization of Sex Work Bill, which is to be called Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Act) is expected to be tabled during the course of the year (2023).

Controlling sexuality and, in particular, women's sexuality has its origins in patriarchy. Patriarchal oppression which often is patriarchal violence, has permeated all societies across the globe. Colonialism has perpetuated the patriarchal control and oppression of societies and the control of sexuality. Bodies of women, girls and gender-diverse people have long been subjected to discrimination, violence and oppression where human rights violations have occurred unabated.

Colonialism made morality a commodity possessed by colonial powers, which was subsequently used to establish nationhood and which is underpinned by norms and values applied to subjects that are marginalized in relation to sexuality and gender.

Many of the laws that criminalize sex work at present were introduced at a time when men were the law-makers and law-enforcers. These laws embody outdated and

repressive ideas on sexuality, relationships, who owns women's bodies and the position of women in society.

Consensual adult sex work must have the same labour rights as all other workers. The decriminalization of sex work means that sex workers would be protected against sexual harassment, violence, rape and unfair working conditions. Sex workers must access comprehensive health care services, free from stigma, discrimination and equal treatment and where this fails to happen, they will be able to seek recourse without further violence due to hostile laws and practices.

The EFF is pleased that the ANC Government has finally boarded on the EFF superior logic - that continued criminalization is a tool that perpetuates and enables abuse that infringe on sex workers' rights to bodily autonomy, dignity, privacy, equality and freedom from violence

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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