



Press Statement: 01 September 2014

Local politicians urged to act on Jimmy Carter call for sex-buyer laws

Former US President writes to all local TDs and Senators

Calls for political leadership to put pimps out of business

Local politicians are being asked to act on a call from President Jimmy Carter to show leadership and introduce laws which will put pimps, traffickers and thugs out of business.

In the latest development, former US President Jimmy Carter has written to the Houses of the Oireachtas, the Taoiseach, and Minister Fitzgerald, urging the government to introduce sex buyer laws. Local politicians are being asked to act on a call from President Jimmy Carter for them to show leadership and introduce laws which will put pimps, traffickers and thugs out of business.

In his letter the President notes 'the significant progress being made in Ireland towards passing laws that would seek to end the exploitation, abuse and trafficking of women and girls by targeting the pimps and the buyers of sex.'

He also notes the passing of unanimous recommendations for such laws by the Oireachtas Justice Committee last year and calls on Irish politicians to now 'lead your nation towards the protection of prostituted women and girls with a sense of urgency.'

Sex buyer laws have been in place in Sweden and Norway for over a decade and have been successful in challenging the organised criminal activity behind the sex trade.

The letter has been welcomed by Doras Luimní, one of the 70 organisations of the Turn Off the Red Light Campaign which is seeking laws to target the buyers of sex.

Responding to the letter, Ms Karen McHugh CEO of Doras Luimní said:

"This contribution by a global figure who enjoys international respect again shows the importance of the debate which has taken place here in Ireland and the need for urgent political leadership to bring this issue to a conclusion. We warmly welcome the interest and support President Carter has shown and would urge local representatives of the Government parties and the opposition to take on board the important points he makes."

In the new Dáil term, together with our partners of the Turn Off the Red Light Campaign, Doras will be working to advance the Justice Committee recommendations by seeking the introduction of legislation. We have been greatly encouraged by the huge public support the campaign has secured with local members of the trade union movement, doctors and

nurses, the ICA, Macra Na Feirme the Union of Students in Ireland, academics and many more all showing their support. People have in their thousands also contacted the TDs, as individuals seeking action. The time is now for our local representatives to show political leadership and end demand for a crime which has reached into every community.

President Carter letter comes as more countries are moving towards sex buyer laws, with legislation in Canada expected to be enacted before Christmas, the French National Assembly backing such measures as well as votes of support in the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.”

ENDS

Editor Notes

Doras Luimní is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation based in Limerick. Our mission is to promote and uphold the human rights and wellbeing of migrants through personal advocacy, integration development and collaborative advocacy campaigns at the local and national level.

We have a dedicated Anti-Trafficking Office which participates in local and national campaigns against forced prostitution and sex trafficking. We provide a local street outreach programme, in conjunction with Goshh, for women affected by prostitution in Limerick city.

For more information about our anti-trafficking work, including training and resources, see our website (www.dorasluimni.org) or contact the Doras Luimní Anti-Trafficking Officer (phone 061 310 328 or email p.stapleton@dorasluimni.org). Our submission to the Joint Committee is available online at <http://www.dorasluimni.org/images/publications/dorasluimnisubmissionaug2012.pdf>.

Doras Luimní is an active partner in the Turn off the Red Light (TORL) campaign which seeks to end prostitution and sex trafficking in Ireland. TORL is comprised of a coalition of NGOs, civil society groups, trade unions, political parties advocating legislative change to criminalise the purchase of sex. See the www.turnofftheredlight.ie for more details.

Contact Information:

Karen McHugh, CEO, Doras Luimní, Central Buildings, 51A O’Connell Street, Limerick.
Telephone: 061 310 328 **Email:** k.mchugh@dorasluimni.org

Patricia Stapleton, Anti-Trafficking Officer, Doras Luimní, Central Buildings, 51A O’Connell Street, Limerick. **Telephone:** 061 310 328 **Email:** p.stapleton@dorasluimni.org