



*“Il n’est nullement question de faire gouverner la société par les femmes mais bien de savoir si elle ne serait pas mieux gouvernée par les hommes et par les femmes.”*

*John STUART MILL*

Une association pour  
ré-agir au féminin

Achievements, challenges and gaps in the ECE countries implementation  
of strategic objectives D3 of Beijing Platform for Action to  
« **Eliminate trafficking in women  
and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking** »  
EQUALITY NOW Side event  
Genève, Palais des Nations, vendredi 7 Novembre 2014

Michèle Vianès, présidente de Regards de Femmes – France

Since its creation in 1997, Regards de Femmes denounces the reality of violence against women and the archaic relationships between women and men which are both at the origin and perpetuation of the system of prostitution.

We support actions against this form of sexual violence, as we want a society where sexuality and women’s bodies will be free from violence and coercion, a society of justice, Equality and progress.

We need to look at the system of prostitution as a system where profits are more important than human rights. This is why we need to make accountable those who benefit from this system: organised crime and mafia, lobbies of pimps, traffickers and the buyers who maintain the vulnerability of women and children, considered as objects for buyers’ use, according to so-called “sexual needs”.

Prostitution is about male domination, business and dehumanisation. We refuse the new language, the new terminology used to normalise the violence of prostitution: “sex work”, sex workers”...

Last year, the French parliamentarians have voted on a law that would bring the Nordic model to France. Many organisations were heard during the discussion process. When we went to the Assembly, we clearly stated that prohibiting the purchase of sex is a precondition for the elimination of all forms of sexual violence. The human body is not a commodity! Prohibiting the purchase of sex is the foundation of non-sexist education, so that children, boys and girls, grow up as responsible and respected adults, respecting their own body and the body of the others.

Regards de femmes is a member of Abolition 2012, a coalition of 60 organisations of women’s rights, human rights and grassroots support to person in prostitution. We also have a network of men against the system of prostitution “zeromacho”.

We want a comprehensive law protecting persons in prostitution, changing mentalities and criminalising the perpetrators, namely buyers, pimps and traffickers.

When the French law was debated and voted, the sex industry lobby was vocal criticising the law, saying that it wouldn't work and wouldn't stop prostitution.

Then should we stop criminalising murderers or rapists because they are still murders or rapes?

Today the law is stuck in the Senate, where some political groups, especially The Greens and some libertarian people (male) agree to decriminalise women in prostitution but don't want to touch men's "right" to buy sex!

The new laws adopted in Northern Ireland and Canada are giving us hope that we can have the Nordic model in France and even in Europe.

Regards de femmes is signatory of the "Brussel's call "Together for a Europe free from prostitution" and works with the European Women Lobby to get more debate on prostitution at EU level. In 2012, we organised a convention in Lyon: "*Le système prostitueur violence machiste archaïque*" You will find the conference proceedings on our website [www.partagider.fr](http://www.partagider.fr) <http://www.partagider.fr/index.php?post/Le-système-prostitueur-%3A-violence-machiste-archaïque>.

Thanks a lot Equality Now for reminding member States of their obligation to eliminate trafficking and assist victims of the violence of prostitution.

Let's continue our efforts against this sexual violence.