

# **International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers**

A silent candle demonstration  
on Sunday 17th December 2006 at 6 pm

The Venue:  
The Corner of Mannerheimintie and  
Simonkatu, Helsinki, Finland

Take with you:  
a red candle or lantern  
a red umbrella

Arranged by:  
Seksialan Liitto SALLI ry  
SALLI - United Sex Professionals of Finland  
[www.salli.org](http://www.salli.org)

International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers  
has been launched by:  
SWOP-USA, Sex Workers Outreach Project  
[www.swop-usa.org](http://www.swop-usa.org)

# **What is common with:**

- 1. a miniskirt and  
a condom?**
- 2. dating and offering  
sexual services?**
- 3. a nurse and  
a sex worker?**
- 4. a kiosk worker and  
a street prostitute?**

### 1. **A miniskirt and a condom have in common:**

- it is not ok to rape user of one
- user of one always has a right to refuse from having sex
- still they have both been used as an excuse for raping

### 2. **Dating and offering sexual services have in common:**

- neither one takes a way your right to refuse from having sex
- neither one gives a right to force one into having sex
- neither one gives an excuse for violence
- still they have both been used to forcing into having sex

### 3. **A nurse and a sex worker have in common:**

- both can be subjected to violence or rape
- neither one should be subjected to violence or rape

#### **But:**

- one of them is forced to work alone because of the current law, without protection of co-worker community
- one of them has been ruled to having caused her own abuse just because of her profession by jury in law

### 4. **A kiosk worker and a street prostitute have in common:**

- both can be robbed or killed
- both have a right to receive protection and legal aid from police and legal system

#### **But:**

- one of them can report a crime and get help from police
- one of them is afraid to report a crime to police in fear of getting into more trouble

17th December

# International Day to End Violence Against Sex Workers

**W**e light a candle in memory of sex workers killed at work. They could not trust the police to help them, because they were afraid of the police enforcing prostitution laws. They were charged and arrested because of prostitution. They were swept away from the eyes of the public. The violence they encountered was claimed to be natural part of their job.

**W**e light a candle for human dignity and human rights. We believe that everyone is equally and inalienably entitled to human rights. No one is less important than another. Human dignity of a person is not diminished by sex work.

**W**e light a candle to remind jurors:

- A prostitute is a human being entitled to equal protection by the law.
- A rape of a sex worker is as serious a crime than an offence against any other person.
- Being a sex worker does not involve giving away one's right to say no.

**W**e light a candle to strengthen sex workers' trust in their legal and human rights. Every sex worker has a right to safety, a right to choose one's customers, a right to set one's own limits, a right to say no and a right to get legal protection.

**W**e are glad about the Finnish police taking seriously the crimes against sex workers – much better than police in countries where main focus is in the suppression of prostitution. At the same time we are sad that too many sex workers are unable to get legal protection because the law does not recognize their work.

**W**e light a candle to remind everyone:

- Violence is always wrong – even when it is targeted against a sex worker.
- Defining sex work as violence or crime makes sex workers unable to get help when they are subjected to violence and crimes.
- A victim of violence should always have a chance to get help – even in practice and even when she or he is a sex worker.