

IMPACT

In the public arena

News from : Christel Ngnambi &
Julia Doxat-Purser
Edited by: Gordon Showell-Rogers



EEA's Socio-Political Team, working together with EEA's members.

Issue 11 – June 2009

Two categories of Prostitute?

Lisa Thompson, the US Salvation Army's liaison for the abolition of sexual trafficking, says media attention on sex trafficking has "captured people's hearts and [their] desire to help those perceived as poor, 'innocent' victims—those trapped in brothels, held at gunpoint, or locked in somebody's basement. [...] But Christians tend to split prostituting women into two categories: the good prostitutes and the bad prostitutes. The good ones are victims of forced prostitution; the bad women are voluntary prostitutes and whores."

(Christianity Today, "Redlight Rescue" December 2006)

The Bible equates prostitution with wickedness (e.g. Leviticus 19:29, Proverbs 9:13-18). Sex is God's gift exclusively to those in loving, lifelong, heterosexual marriage. However, Jesus showed love and friendship to sinners, including those guilty of sexual sin, offering them a way out of their shame and condemnation (see Luke 7:36-51, John 4:4-26, John 8:1-11). He even said to the chief priests, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did." (Matthew 21:31 NIV).

Most women are drawn into prostitution because of their vulnerability, not out of choice. A woman may not be enslaved at gunpoint, but she may well be trapped through poverty, drugs or domestic violence. These same women have often been abandoned and abused as children, so have lost all sense of dignity and worth.

The extraordinary story of Hosea's enduring love for his wife Gomer, despite her willing

prostitution, and Gomer's eventual redemption illustrates God's astonishing and enduring love for His People – and it is a reminder of God's commitment to restoring dignity and worth to all prostitutes and adulterers, whether coerced or not.

It is the breadth of the Lord's compassion, plus the desperate dangerous reality for most people caught up in prostitution that leads the EEA to reject the idea of two categories of prostitutes. EEA also believes it is crucial to understand the strong, causal link between human trafficking and prostitution. As we campaign and care about human trafficking victims of all kinds, so we should campaign and care about prostitution victims of all kinds.

See EEA's paper "Tolerating Prostitution?" for more on the importance of caring, not just about trafficking, but also prostitution.

[http://www.europeanea.org/documents/Tolerating_Prostitution - June 09 Final.pdf](http://www.europeanea.org/documents/Tolerating_Prostitution_-_June_09_Final.pdf)

JDP

EEA contributes to major reflection on 'Europe's social reality'

Last month, Christel Ngnambi represented the European Evangelical Alliance at the first ever meeting of the Agency's Platform for Civil Society. In the goodness of God, Christel enjoyed significant relationship building opportunities with the Secularists and the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) groups.

In a potentially 'fiery' context, this was clearly a 'God thing' – by God's grace, a representative evangelical voice is being heard in a potentially very influential place. In Christel's own words: "We were delighted that everybody present agreed with us about the importance of a constructive approach to defending fundamental rights, including freedom of religion or belief and the situation of trafficked people. When people sit down together to talk in a respectful atmosphere, not wanting to claim rights purely for themselves but to seek what is fair and appropriate in our complicated, pluralist world, they can agree."

This despite the fact that the Secularists are absolutely dead set against (for example) a Christian nurse being able to pray for patients or wear a cross etc. Perhaps the positive time in Vienna is a reminder that positive things can sometimes be begun (and possibly even achieved) with prayer, and through grace in relationships?

GS-R

Julia Doxat-Purser
EEA Socio-Political Representative &
Religious Liberty Coordinator
eea@community-house.co.uk

Christel Lamère Ngnambi
Brussels Manager
christel.ngnambi@europeanea.org

Gordon Showell-Rogers
General Secretary of the European
Evangelical Alliance



Hard (joint) work on the Equal Treatment Directive

Christel Ngnambi has been working very hard on the 'Equal Treatment Directive' (ETD). The proposal has been the object of a report by the European Parliament adopted on April 2nd, 2009, calling to *extend* many dangerous elements of the ETD, which among other things would mean that a private association like a club, a ministry or even a church in some EU countries, would not have the right to judge by their own standards whether or not a person can become a member.

The Council of the EU has now received the EP's report. The Council is not obliged to accept the Parliament's advice. Meanwhile, we need to criticise the unhelpful elements of this legislation as it has evolved in Parliament.. After extensive research, and lots of conversations with others, it was agreed that the EEA should be the lead group in the production of resources for the **Council of Ministers** (i.e. the national governments in conversation together - they will make the final decisions). The EEA invested a lot of energy in

encouraging the very sympathetic Czech Presidency to make the ETD a priority during their Presidency. As a result, instead of leaving it well alone, they began a very helpful conversation, which is now in the hands of the Swedish Presidency.

Christel and his intern produced Briefing Papers for journalists in the Member States (delivered via national Evangelical Alliances), and are collecting data from the national Alliances for **Briefing Papers for Council of the EU**. These Briefing Papers will consist of one document explaining our position and concerns, including suggestions for amending the ETD, and secondly a document targeted at specific countries.

All of this has already been a lot of work - and it is far from complete. Thank you for praying for outcomes that will be genuinely positive for all those discriminated against, without creating fresh levels of discrimination for those with strong faith convictions.

GS-R

Stop the Traffik



ANNE DANNEROLLE

National Christian Alliance on Prostitution

Why are concerns about human trafficking and prostitution a priority for so many Christians? The World Evangelical Alliance and European Baptist Federation have established task forces on human trafficking; Stop the Traffik's declaration has been signed by more than 1.5 million individuals; many EEA members are involved in advocacy and establishing compassionate outreach; the International Christian Alliance on Prostitution (ICAP) is expanding its network and activities.

Many churches, denominations and NGOs have been working to help the slaves of trafficking and prostitution for years.

But the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the British slave trade in 2007 was the catalyst for many more of us. As we remembered the role of Evangelicals in freeing slaves in the nineteenth century, we realised that there are actually more slaves today.

What have Christians been doing and why?

Compassionate outreach

Across Europe, small teams of Christians go out onto the streets to offer a smile, hot drinks, food & condoms to those caught up in the world of prostitution and sex trafficking. Friendship often leads to more practical, emotional and spiritual support. Lives are changed - but it is a slow and very difficult task.

t t t

In Athens and Hull, Jennifer Roemhildt Tunehag and Anne Dannerolle have been involved in this practical, caring work. Through ICAP and "Beyond the Streets" in the UK, Jennifer & Anne are now assisting others to set up similar work.

Jennifer said "I am motivated by 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 and the desire to know, and to serve, Christ - and those He loves. I believe that He is at work to redeem women, and men, and societies! He is inviting us into this work. As we 'let our lights shine before men' in this arena, 'they will see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven.'

Anne said "What motivates me is seeing the women's despair and suffering, and realising that without God's love, and without Christians willing to show God's love in real ways then these young lives are without hope. Having seen many of the women die, I know that our work is a matter of life and death.

Any of us could have been born into families without love, families who abuse and hurt us. These women so often have no-one to love them and care for them... if that was my daughter or my sister I would want to know that someone was out there loving her, caring for her and helping her to piece her life back together.

The stories I hear week in week out from the women are so disturbing, so tragic, that my heart is filled with love and compassion for them, and a desire to see them brought out of darkness into light".

JDP



For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

2 Corinthians 5 v14-15

Business, human trafficking & prostitution

Human trafficking and prostitution are both huge, profitable businesses. As well as some trafficking for non-sexual commercial (cheap labour) purposes, the world of business is, sadly, also responsible for providing much of the clientele for the so-called sex industry. And many companies, including huge multi-nationals, benefit directly or indirectly from unofficial slave labour in the production of their goods.

However, business is also part of the solution. Often business travellers observe possible indications of forced prostitution and trafficking. Stop the Traffik has set up a website, promoted by the United Nations where people can report their suspicions, anonymously if desired. Please promote www.businesstravellers.org as information posted there has already led to convictions of human traffickers and the release of victims.

And not all companies are deaf to pressure from their customers about trafficking. Stop the Traffik has focused particularly on the chocolate industry, asking the biggest companies to guarantee enough checks to ensure that child slavery is abolished in the production of cocoa. So far, Mars, Cadbury and Royal Verkade have made some commitments to ensure that slaves are no longer involved in production of their cocoa. Other companies continue to turn a blind eye to reality. You can join in the continuing campaigning by going to www.stophetraffik.org. Choosing fairly traded products is another effective way of pressurizing other companies to find and stop the use of slaves in their supply chain.

Mats Tunehag of the Swedish Evangelical Alliance is a champion for Business as Mission (BAM), seeing it as a key way of tackling trafficking and prostitution. It saves people from being exploited by providing safe employment. For many poor communities, "Without jobs it is difficult to avoid prostitution and other forms of exploitative labour; and without jobs it is nearly impossible to stay out," says Mats. "BAM is also a key in restoration of victims. Because we need to be able to answer the question: out of trafficking, into what? We need to provide jobs and environments with dignity that can be part of a holistic transformation of individuals; socially, economically and spiritually."

<http://www.europeanea.org/greece2007/video.htm> and <http://www.lausanne.org/issue-business-as-mission/overview.html> have more ideas.

JDP

Impact across Europe

Evangelical Alliance Ireland's Social Justice Group is still wondering where God will lead them as they become more involved in anti-trafficking work. To understand the Irish context, they have undertaken research, including interviewing trafficking victims. Their research has led to some writing. A national newspaper published an article of theirs, waking people up to the reality of trafficking around them by looking at Ireland's patron saint, Patrick, as a trafficked slave and urging people not to condone slavery today by ignoring the signs. The Alliance is designing a church information pack to help Christians pray and act. They have sent a DVD of the film "Amazing Grace" to all Irish politicians and secondary schools with a letter showing the connection between the slave trade 200 years ago and trafficking today. They intend to do much more.

In Denmark, Hans-Henrik Lund's work with migrant churches has led his organisation KIT to support trafficking victims as they have come to church, seeking assistance. This counselling and practical support has led KIT to lobbying the Danish government about its policy of deporting trafficking victims. Hans-Henrik is also urging the government to provide funding for safe houses for victims who are sent home.

Several other Evangelical Alliances are involved in advocacy or outreach to victims.

We can benefit greatly by working with expert groups like the European Baptist Federation, CARE, ICAP, Beyond the Streets and other church denominations. We can all benefit by sharing best practice, the best ideas and resources and by seeking to influence politicians together.

If you know of ministries reaching out to those trapped by prostitution and/or trafficking, please let us know. If you want to envision Christians to pray, care and/or lobby on trafficking and prostitution, do get in touch. We would be delighted to work with you, learn from you or assist you.

Please pray with us that Europe would no longer ignore the suffering of those trapped by trafficking and prostitution. Pray that God would open the eyes and hearts of politicians, business people, the police, controllers and clients. Pray that governments would see the damage that is done when prostitution is legalised. Pray that victims will escape from exploitation and be fully healed. And please pray for all the ministries and businesses that are working to change lives.

JDP



JENNIFER
ROEMHILDT
TUNEHAG



MATS TUNEHAG