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ABN 47 552 535 661
Certificate of Incorporation IA37574

10th July 2016

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha,
Email:

Regarding: Incident at "Nataree Massage," 7 th June 2016

Dear Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha,

Respect Inc is a not for profit, community based organisation which has a membership consisting of current and past sex workers throughout Queensland, Australia. We are funded through Queensland Health, Communicable Diseases Branch to provide peer education to sex workers. We are members of various sex worker networks and have regular contact with other services both locally and internationally.

We have been advised by Empower Foundation that:

On the 7th June 2016, following a 3-month long entrapment operation, a human trafficking raid was conducted on Nataree Massage, Ratchadapisek Rd, Huai Khwang Bangkok by Department of Provincial Administration, under direction by the Ministry of Interior Affairs in cooperation with a New Zealand NGO, NVADER. A total of 121 workers were apprehended in the raid.

Of particular concern are the twenty-one women held in immigration detention since the 10th June 2016. The women in this group are not victims of human trafficking and have no outstanding fines or pending criminal charges. They do not know why they are being held.

This information was provided to your office by a letter sent by the Empower Foundation sent on the 1st July 2016. We support the points made as follows and urge the Prime Minister to address these failings of the system to meet these peoples rights within the local system:

1. To urgently ensure that the immigration authorities e.g. Suanphlu immediately arrange an appropriate space for witnesses to meet with family, advocates and access information on the processes (Witness Protection Act 2003)

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2. To guarantee that the witnesses are treated in accordance with all rights stipulated under the Witness Protection Act 2003, and the Suppression and Prevention of Human Trafficking Act 2008. In particular: 2.1 provide safe and appropriate accommodation that is not a form of detention (as defined in the Witness Protection Act 2003) 2.2 ensure witnesses are paid all compensation to which they are entitled, backdated to the first day of their detention, i.e. 12th June 2016. (Witness Protection Act 2003) 2.3 the witnesses must be fully informed and have freely consented to be part of the procedures (Witness Protection Act 2003)

For more information, our Management Committee can be contacted on mc@respectqld.org.au.

Yours truly,
Jenny King
Chairperson

Cc. Empower Foundation
cm.empowerfoundation@gmail.com

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