

**Media Release**

**Pornography & Sex Trafficking Linked**

**‘October 9 Declaration’ released by Strategic Roundtable**

On 9 October 2012, in Parliament House, Canberra, sixteen leaders representing fourteen key stakeholders and community groups representing millions of Australian families, met for a Strategic Roundtable on “***Pornography and the Increase in Sex Trafficking – How do we solve the problem?***” The ‘*October 9 Declaration’* and the resulting ‘*Three Point Plan*’ were confirmed by unanimous decision as urgent action points to turn back the tide of sex trafficking and the exploitation of women and children in our highly sexualised society.

Pornography and sex trafficking are inextricably linked.   It is pornography - the advertising and marketing of prostitution - that creates a growing market demand for the bodies of women and children. The Strategic Roundtable produced the following Three Point Plan as part of an overall call for action.

**1. CLEAN FEED OPTION - FREE OF PORNOGRAPHY AT ISP LEVEL - FOR EVERY AUSTRALIAN HOME**

**2. PREVENT SEXPLOITATION OF WOMEN & CHILDREN - EDUCATE ABOUT HARMFUL EFFECTS OF PORN**

**3. ENFORCE EXISTING LEGISLATION TO CURB THE PROLIFERATION OF PORNOGRAPHY & SEX TRAFFICKING**

Donny Pauling, former Porn Producer from the USA addressed the Strategic Roundtable on the damaging effects of porn on the women involved in its production and on those who consume it. He also testified on the similarities between recruiting for porn and recruiting for sex trafficking. If anyone can educate about the reality of porn, Donny Pauling can. He started producing porn in 1997 and by the time he’d given it up, he’d recruited over 500 college girls into the industry and had become a regular provider of content to some of the ‘big names’ in the industry.

Warwick Marsh from Dads4Kids helped to organise the Strategic Roundtable on *“Pornography and the Increase in Sex Trafficking”* along with Jason Huxley of *“Go for Greatness”*. Mr Marsh called for a minute’s silence at the Strategic Roundtable to remember the tragic murder of Jill Meagher, 29 years old, in Melbourne. Jill was sexually assaulted and murdered near her home in Brunswick in the early hours of Saturday morning, 22 September 2012.

Mr Marsh said, “*The shocking rape and murder of Jill Meagher in Melbourne has highlighted the need for action to turn the tide of pornography, which incites violence against women. The Premier of Victoria is right. We have to do something about the culture of violence against women which is pervading our society. To do something about the sexual violence we have to do something about pornography. Sexual assault has increased 38% in the fourteen years between 1993 and 2007. The time has come for action. Our common goal is a safe world for Australia’s women and children free of hate and violence. Let’s put Australia’s women and children first and reject the inherent misogyny of porn”.*

 Contact Warwick Marsh: 0418 225 212.

To schedule a media interview with Donny Pauling please contact:

Jason Huxley: 0408 121 185 - [jhuxley@goforgreatness.org](mailto:jhuxley@goforgreatness.org)

**October 9 Declaration**

**Protecting Women and Children from Sexploitation**

Pornography is a global business that is now turning over an estimated 100 billion dollars per year worldwide. Pornography continues to commodify women and girls and make them the target of abusive and dehumanising treatment. Due to rapid changes in technology and internet access in the last two decades there are no meaningful restrictions on who can access pornography. The average age of first exposure to pornography is 11 years old and 90% of children aged 8-16 have viewed pornography online, most while doing their homework.

Research has shown that exposure to pornography is desensitising children and young people to violent or sexually aggressive acts, reducing empathy for victims of sexual assault and reducing children's own inhibitions and boundaries, making them more susceptible to sexual exploitation by adults and earlier and younger sexual involvement.  Statistics show that the average age of a girl’s entry into prostitution/sex trafficking is 12-14 years old. Pornography is shaping the values, attitudes and beliefs of young people in a way that is inconsistent with healthy relationships, gender equality and safety for women and girls.

In Australia sexual assault has increased by 38% between 1993 and 2007. Two thirds of sex crimes in Australia are committed against our children. Police officers are now talking about an epidemic of child porn. Pornography is said to be increasing sex trafficking in Australia by increasing demand. Figures from the Australian Crime Commission and the US State Department confirm that between 1,200 and 2,000 women are trafficked for prostitution in Australia every year. As porn increases so does the demand for prostitution and sex trafficking. A human rights organisation, The Protection Project, found that sex offenders from Australia topped the list of foreigners involved in child sex tourism in Thailand.

There are now more women and girls exploited as sex slaves in the world today than at any time in human history. It is no coincidence that the increasing accessibility of pornography has taken place alongside an increase in the number of women and girls trafficked into the sex trade. It is pornography - the advertising and marketing of prostitution - that creates market demand for the bodies of women and children. It is the demand for women and children's bodies that keeps the traffickers in business.

Any moves to stop the scourge of human trafficking must include a concerted effort to curb pornography consumption. There are many with profit driven motives who will resist any challenge to wind back the profits they make from sexploitation, but the safety, rights, freedom and wellbeing of the most vulnerable in our society MUST come before the freedom to access pornography.

Recent news reports of sexual violence, murder and abductions and ABS statistics on increased sexual assault and violence have highlighted the urgent need to turn the tide of the pornification of our society and the sexploitation of our women and children. That time is now.

**1. CLEAN FEED OPTION - FREE OF PORNOGRAPHY AT ISP LEVEL - FOR EVERY AUSTRALIAN HOME**

**2. PREVENT SEXPLOITATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN - EDUCATE ABOUT HARMFUL EFFECTS OF PORN**

**3. ENFORCE EXISTING LEGISLATION TO CURB THE PROLIFERATION OF PORNOGRAPHY AND SEX TRAFFICKING**

­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Final Edition: On 9 October 2012, in Parliament House, Canberra, sixteen leaders representing fourteen key stakeholders and community groups representing millions of Australian families, met for a Strategic Roundtable on “Pornography and the Increase in Sex Trafficking – How do we solve the problem?” The ‘October 9 Declaration’ above, and the resulting ‘Three Point Plan’ were confirmed by unanimous decision as urgent action points to turn back the tide of sex trafficking and the exploitation of women and children in our highly sexualised society. Pornography and sex trafficking are inextricably linked. It is pornography - the advertising and marketing of prostitution - that creates a growing market demand for the bodies of women and children. Now is the time for action. Our common goal is a safe world for our children. Let’s put our children first.