

# JUSTICE PRESS RELEASE

JUSTICE  
59 Carter Lane  
London  
EC4V 5AQ  
DX 323 Chancery Lane  
(020) 7329 5100  
(020) 7329 5055  
admin@justice.org.uk  
www.justice.org.uk

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: WEDNESDAY 1 JULY 2009**

## **JUSTICE calls on Lords to decriminalise child victims of sexual exploitation**

JUSTICE, the all-party law reform and human rights group, today called upon the House of Lords to end the criminalisation of victims of child prostitution.

Peers will today debate an amendment to the Policing and Crime Bill which would mean that children could no longer be prosecuted for 'loitering or soliciting for the purposes of prostitution'. Those who control, coerce and sexually exploit child victims of child prostitution will still be guilty of serious offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sally Ireland, Senior Legal Officer (Criminal Justice) at JUSTICE, said:

**We need to send out a clear message to children who are being exploited in this way that if they come forward they will receive help, support and protection from the law - and need have no fear of being prosecuted. This outdated offence should be abolished.**

For further information please contact Sally Ireland on (020) 7329 5100

### **Notes to editors:**

1. The Policing and Crime Bill is currently in Committee stage in the House of Lords. Amendment 65, tabled by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer (Liberal Democrat); the Earl of Onslow (Conservative) and Baroness Stern (Crossbench) would amend section 1 of the Street Offences Act 1959 so that children and young people under 18 could no longer be prosecuted for 'loitering or soliciting for the purposes of prostitution'. The Bill and the amendments are available at <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/policingandcrime.html>
2. A JUSTICE briefing on the Bill for House of Lords Committee stage is available at [www.justice.org.uk/inthenews/](http://www.justice.org.uk/inthenews/)
3. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 criminalises sexual offences against children including specific offences of paying for the sexual services of a child (s47); causing or inciting child prostitution (s48); controlling a child prostitute (s49); and arranging or facilitating child prostitution (s50). The Act is available at [www.statutelaw.gov.uk](http://www.statutelaw.gov.uk)

*Chairman of Council Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws QC Director Roger Smith*  
JUSTICE Registered Charity No 1058580

A company limited by guarantee and registered in England No 3216897 Registered office as above  
*British Section of the International Commission of Jurists*