



WHAT IS SURROGACY : EXPLOITATION AND COMMODIFICATION OF WOMEN'S BODIES

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Surrogacy, also known as surrogate motherhood, is **a practice by which a woman carries and gives birth to a child on behalf of a third party**. In this practice, either the surrogate mother is artificially inseminated and grants her gametes for procreation for others, or the embryo, formed in vitro, is implanted with the gametes of two other persons and is carried by the woman in utero during the period of pregnancy.

This practice is unlawful and cannot be the subject of a contract:

1. It concerns human bodies which are not subject to commerce and violates the **principle of the non-commercialisation of the human body**; it is a commodification of the woman's body which will put at the disposal of others her procreative capacity and her gestation.
2. The consent required in a contract is lacking because even if the mother who acts as a surrogate gives her consent, she cannot know in advance how her pregnancy and delivery will take place. This is **not informed consent**.
3. The children born out of this practice are also involved. Indeed, the surrogate mother commits before the pregnancy to hand over the child at the moment of birth to the person or couple making the request. The very purpose of this contract is unlawful since the born **child** is considered a "**commodity**" that will be **handed over from one person to another**.
4. In cases where the surrogate mother "rents" her body and receives compensation for the pregnancy, this leads to the **exploitation of the poorest, most destitute, vulnerable and, often, migrant women**, which can go as far as trafficking in these women to "use" them as surrogates. This is all the more reason to affirm that **free and informed consent does not exist in surrogacy, as it does not exist in prostitution**.

Therefore, the practice of surrogacy, which consists of "renting" surrogate mothers, using them, taking advantage of their distress and vulnerability, commodifying their bodies and developing reproductive tourism and industry through the exploitation of women and their bodies, must be prohibited on the basis of protecting the principles of **human dignity, non-commercialisation of human body and the interests of the child**.

Women in surrogacy industry, victims of several other types of violence:

1. The risks faced by women or the child resulting from surrogacy should not be overlooked, especially the physical and psychological risks for women "used" in this industry.
2. This technique of surrogacy and the reproductive industry consists of **alienating and commodifying women's bodies**, making them a **resource** and a **means of production**.
3. Surrogacy is a reductive vision of pregnancy that engages the whole body and psyche of the carrier woman and often results in the exploitation of the most vulnerable women who will put their bodies at the disposal of others for financial reasons. Surrogacy is therefore a real **reproductive industry** and a means of **exploitation, trafficking** and **commodification of women**.

Therefore, surrogacy is not a question of individual freedom or the freedom to have a child. The principles of human dignity, the non-commercialisation of the human body and the protection of the interests of the child take precedence over the principle of individual freedom and the right to procreate. **The prohibition of surrogacy and its penalization are therefore indispensable for the protection of women!**

Surrogacy: the fruit of patriarchy and capitalism

There is no free, informed consent in surrogacy, nor freedom to dispose of one's body. Surrogacy is the result of the patriarchal system that grants men the right to control and dispose of women's bodies for their own interests. It also grants access to our bodies to capitalism that turns women and our bodies into mere commodities, especially when these women are poor, vulnerable and migrant.

Surrogacy: exploitation and violence to be denounced and opposed to protect women victims

The principles of human dignity and the non-commercialisation of the human body are inalienable, non-derogable and indisputable!

We cannot and **we do not tolerate the exploitation of women**, our **bodies**, our commodification and our use as mere means, resources and **instruments of reproduction!**

European Network of Migrant Women strongly denounces all violence committed against women, the exploitation of our bodies and their use in industries such as surrogacy!

We clearly declare that this practice constitutes exploitation of women, **perpetuates violence against their physical and mental health** and seriously undermines women's integrity and dignity!

We categorically refuse to justify this phenomenon by "freedom of choice"; it is simply a form of exploitation **founded and justified by patriarchy, male domination and capitalism**.

We call for and demand the abolition of the practice of surrogacy to protect dignity and equality !