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LEGAL ASSISTANCE CENTRE

Recipient of the UNICEF Maurice Pate Human Rights Award – 1997
JP Karuaihe Human Rights Excellence Award – 2008, 2010, 2014 and 2016 and Social Responsibility Award – 2013

30 June 2020

IN RE: LAW REFORM REGARDING ABORTION

The Legal Assistance Centre supports law reform which would expand freedom of choice in respect of abortion, in support of women's reproductive rights. Although some of our staff members oppose abortion on moral or religious grounds, we believe that the decision is a matter of personal conscience which should not be mandated by the law in the absence of any scientific or human rights-based consensus on the issue. Furthermore, purely religious views cannot be imposed on the public by law in a secular state, like Namibia. We advocate that the increased scope to decide on whether or not to have an abortion should be coupled with:

- improved access to family planning measures for girls and women of all ages;
- continued action to prevent gender-based violence and gender inequality which can lead to unwanted pregnancies; and
- the provision of information before a decision on abortion is made, since many people do not know about options such as foster care, adoption, or the mechanisms they can use to secure financial support from the father or the State.

T. Hancox

The Director

Trustees of the Legal Assistance Trust:

Clement Daniels (Chairperson) Esi Schimming-Chase Taamba lithete Dantago Garosas
Tangeni Amupadhi Norman Tjombe Toni Hancox (ex officio)