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The Salvation Army hails modern slavery breakthrough

The Salvation Army welcomes the successful passage of Australia's first modern slavery bill through the New South Wales parliament today.

"The states can now assume their rightful place as key partners in the fight against modern slavery," The Salvation Army Freedom Partnership's National Policy and Advocacy Coordinator Heather Moore said.

"This legislation represents a leap forward in Australia's fight against modern slavery. Slavery is a crime that occurs in our communities and neighbourhoods, it cannot be eradicated without proper cooperation from state and local stakeholders."

Ms Moore says she is pleased the bill has adopted a number of recommendations which were proposed by The Salvation Army, including the establishment of an independent commissioner to combat slavery-like practices in New South Wales.

"The Salvation Army has been advocating for nearly 10 years for states to take more leadership on this issue and appoint a commissioner on modern slavery," she said.

"To have a designated point person at the state level is a welcome development. We hope to see similar roles appointed in states around the country and at a national level."

"We are pleased the bill will also provide greater protections for young people facing forced marriage by incorporating forced marriage into the eligibility criteria for Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOS)."

The Salvation Army welcomes the introduction of a Government Sector Finance agency to ensure goods and services procured by the state are not products of slavery.

Additionally, Ms Moore says the establishment of a public register for businesses to voluntarily monitor and report on slavery in their supply chains provides an opportunity to show strong leadership in the fight against modern slavery.

"We need to adopt a comprehensive approach to abolish modern slavery, which includes businesses actively working to eradicate slavery in their supply chains. We remain hopeful business leaders will recognise the crucial role they can play in ending modern slavery in Australia and around the world."

Through its national initiative to end modern slavery, The Salvation Army has been instrumental in mobilising community, business and government to realise their contributions to modern slavery and take action to eradicate it.

The Salvation Army looks forward to continuing this partnership in the fight against modern slavery in the months and years ahead.

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