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Brazil: Outrageous Supreme Court ruling gives green light to rapists

The acquittal by Brazil's Supreme Court of a man accused of raping three 12-year-old girls on the basis that they were allegedly "sex-workers" is an outrageous affront to the most basic human rights and it has no place in Brazil today, said Amnesty International.

The decision confirmed earlier rulings by state-level courts in Sao Paulo, where the original report was filed. The defence claimed the three girls were "sex workers" and therefore had consented.

Under Brazil's 2009 Penal Code, sexual intercourse with an individual under 14 years of age is criminalised under any circumstance.

"Rape is never the fault of the victim. This shocking ruling effectively gives a green light to rapists and if it prevails could dissuade other survivors of sexual abuse from reporting these crimes," said Atila Roque, Executive Director at Amnesty International in Brazil.

"It is of extreme concern that the protections provided by Brazil's legislation in cases such as these have not been implemented."

"Amnesty International welcomes the news that the government is calling for the case to be appealed. Brazilian justice must ensure the full protection of victims of this heinous crime and that those responsible are brought to justice. Rape is a grave human rights violation in all circumstances."