



RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRD ASEAN GO-NGO FORUM FOR SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

2 December 2008, Manila, Philippines

We, the participants of the 3rd ASEAN GO-NGO Forum on Social Welfare and Development held in Manila, Philippines, on 2 December 2008 from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam;

1. **Reiterate** the value of the ASEAN GO-NGO Forum in strengthening the partnerships and cooperation between the Government and NGOs towards achieving the goals of the Vientiane Action Programme 2004-2010;
2. **Note** the signing of the ASEAN Charter by the ASEAN Leaders at their 13th Summit on 20 November 2007 and its full ratification by all ten ASEAN Member States. We are heartened by ASEAN's commitment to establish an ASEAN human rights body, as stipulated in Article 14 of the ASEAN Charter, which underpins the policy concerns and directions of this ASEAN GO-NGO Forum;
3. **Note** the ASEAN's key purposes and principles under the ASEAN Charter that are of direct significance to the ASEAN GO-NGO Forum, particularly those stipulated in Article 2 of the Charter, as follows:
 - (6) To alleviate poverty and narrow the development gap within ASEAN through mutual assistance and cooperation;
 - (7) To strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law; and to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms with due regard to the rights and responsibilities of ASEAN Member States;
 - (9) To promote sustainable development so as to ensure the protection of the region's environment, the sustainability of its natural resources, the preservation of its cultural heritage and the high quality of life of its peoples;
 - (11) To enhance the well-being and livelihood of the peoples of ASEAN by providing them with equitable access to opportunities for human development, social welfare and justice; and the principle of respecting fundamental freedoms, the promotion and protection of human rights, and the promotion of social justice;

(13) To promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building;

4. **Acknowledge** the support and endorsement of the SOMSWD at its 5th Meeting held in Ha Noi, Viet Nam on 4-5 December 2007 to the recommendations of the 2nd ASEAN GO-NGO Forum on 3 December 2007;
5. **Acknowledge** SOMSWD's support by formalising the annual ASEAN GO-NGO Forum in conjunction with the annual SOMSWD Meeting and that some Member States have included the ICSW-nominated NGO representatives as part of their country delegations;
6. **Agree** to recommend the following actions which are imperative to support the organisation of future ASEAN GO-NGO Forums:
 - a. Support the commitment that ICSW is undertaking to establish the Focal Point in each National Council (or its equivalent in ASEAN Member States without National Councils yet established) with the responsibility to coordinate and work together with the SOMSWD Focal Points in organizing national meetings at least twice a year in between ASEAN GO-NGO Forums and in implementing the ASEAN GO-NGO Forum's recommendations;
 - b. Source adequate funds and other resources to ensure continuing and full participation of NGO representatives at the Forum. The GOs acknowledged that there is a lack of NGO resources to self funding their participations;
 - c. National Councils and other participating NGOs, through their respective Focal Points, to undertake national consultations with the SOMSWD Focal Points during 2009 on the issues highlighted in the ICSW's draft research paper "Closing the Gap: Making the Rights-based Approach Real for People with Disabilities in the ASEAN Region" presented at the Forum to address a key issue raised in the 2nd ASEAN GO-NGO Forum in 2007. Such national consultations would enrich the contents and recommendations of this ICSW's draft research paper for finalisation, presentation and deliberation at the 4th ASEAN GO-NGO Forum;
 - d. Focal Points of the National Councils and other participating NGOs together with the SOMSWD Focal Points should prepare their country reports on the progress of follow-up actions of the GO-NGO Forum's recommendations and submit the reports to ICSW and the ASEAN Secretariat one month prior to the next Forum for the compilation of joint overarching summary report for presentation to the 4th ASEAN GO-NGO Forum;
 - e. Adopt the theme of rights-based approach to disability in the context of the development towards an ASEAN human rights mechanism for the 4th ASEAN GO-NGO Forum in 2009;

- f. ICSW and the ASEAN Secretariat to jointly develop the draft terms of reference of the GO-NGO Forum taking into account inputs from national councils and other participating NGOs to facilitate its institutionalization for consideration of SOMSWD;

Social Protection

7. In light of pressing issues as ageing population, urbanization, workforce mobility, the decline of traditional social protection systems, economic development and the growing interdependency and economies and in support of the “Towards social protection throughout ASEAN” Report, this Forum agreed to recommend the following:
 - a. Continue to review the present social protection systems in relation to income security provisions with a view to identifying the policy changes necessary to implement better, multi-tier social security protection provisions in each ASEAN Member State;
 - b. Adopt a coordinated approach towards development social protection systems by promoting inter-ministerial coordination to avoid duplication of efforts. This is relevant as there are generally different agencies enforcing the provisions, making cash payments and providing services;
 - c. Explore the possibility to establish an ASEAN research and higher learning capability in the area of social security for the benefit of all ASEAN Member States.

Trafficking in Persons

8. In light of the pressing issues of trafficking and associated labour exploitation in the region, noting the 2004 ASEAN Declaration on Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children and the 2007 ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers and in support of the “Towards eliminating trafficking in ASEAN countries” Report, this Forum agreed to recommend the following:
 - a. Adopt a comprehensive, integrated approach to human trafficking that facilitates inclusion of human rights and victim support;
 - b. Develop and promote among ASEAN Member States consistent, compatible definitions of trafficking in persons in line with the UN definition so as to ensure that all cases of trafficking are included;
 - c. Encourage the development and use of better, consistent data models and data collection methods by ASEAN Member States;
 - d. Consider the adoption of a multi-sectoral approach towards a coordinated labour migration system that priorities worker protection and matches supply with demand;
 - e. Take concerted action to reduce trafficking in persons, in particular women and girls, into domestic service by extending key labour protections to domestic workers and ensuring that employers and labour agents are held accountable for abuse;

- f. Develop and implement stronger victim support systems, including repatriation models that keep trafficked persons out of detention and which provide more assistance in their repatriation and reintegration;
- g. Develop and implement joint programs between GOs and NGOs to facilitate livelihood options that mitigate against people having to migrate for work against their will, thus, increasing their vulnerability of being trafficked;
- h. Identify, document, disseminate and coordinate the implementation of best practices examples of effective means to combat human trafficking from within and beyond the ASEAN region;
- i. Consider addressing better investigative measures and processes towards identification of persons such as regular and irregular migrant workers, displaced persons and those who are trafficked.

Climate Change

- 9. Noting that climate change seriously affected all people in ASEAN Member States and its impact is likely to escalate and to be disproportionately greater particularly on the socially vulnerable groups with the increased incidence of more severe weather events and significantly increased costs of energy and fuels, this Forum recommended a regional study and cooperation to look at the impact on the socially vulnerable groups brought about by climate change. Adaptation to the impact of climate change on socially vulnerable groups could be part of the areas to be discussed between the Focal Points of National Councils and/or other participating NGOs and the SOMSWD Focal Points.
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