

e-Bulletin



Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

GAATW e-Bulletin

February 2008

Dear Members and Friends,

Greetings from the GAATW International Secretariat.

The Vienna Forum; a UN Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking (UN.GIFT) has just been concluded. A high profile affair, with participation of many celebrities this was once again an occasion where the NGO community listened to new and reiterated commitments made by representatives from the governments from around the world. We look forward to see that these commitments are realised in the coming years.

In our global highlights we feature a news report that Malaysia is applying stricter standards of hiring foreign migrant workers in to the country with the aim of reducing the number of migrants in the following years. This will be a major concern for most migrant workers in the informal sector, for they will be the hardest hit once the decision has been enforced. Good news in our legislative updates, Macao and Kuwait has formulated an anti-trafficking bill which will also include measures to support trafficked persons. In the members/regional updates section, we bring information about the voices of trafficked persons being represented in the Constitutional Assembly in Nepal, the timely enforcement of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, a successful case of compensation in Germany, and the campaign of Indonesian domestic workers group in Hong Kong.

For the Secretariat's update, we are pleased to announce GAATW's global campaign entitled 'Recognise Rights' which was launched on the eve of the UN Vienna Forum. We are grateful for the cooperation of LEFO-IBF (Intervention Center for Women Affected by Trafficking) in Austria and all our members and partners present in Vienna for making the event a success.

We urge our members, friends and partners to continue sending us your contributions about pressing issues, publications, blogs and latest campaigns.

Warmly,

The GAATW International Secretariat

GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS

Malaysia: The government has decided to apply stricter standards for the hiring of foreign labour in Malaysia in order to reduce the number of non-Malaysian workers to 1.8 million by next year and to 1.5 million by 2015. Home affairs secretary general, Raja Azahar Raja, said that the government would allow skilled workers to stay for up to 10 years, but would not extend the permits of unskilled foreign workers who have been in the country for at least five years. Malaysia's treatment of the foreign minority groups has become grounds of concern in Asia and it has been seen to have an impact on its foreign policy. <http://www.merineews.com/catFull.jsp?articleID=129585>

Abu Dhabi: UAE backs global efforts to fight human trafficking. A UAE delegation to the Vienna Forum on human trafficking concluded a final round of panels and discussions with senior government and UN officials, NGOs and international experts on human trafficking. The UAE stated its commitment against all forms of involuntary labour and outlined its full engagement in promoting bilateral partnerships among countries of labour origin and destination to halt the crime at its source. The UAE is actively forging partnerships in all fields related to combating human trafficking, particularly in information sharing and cooperation. <http://www.gulfnews.com/nation/Government/10190419.html>

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Macao: The government of Macao Special Administrative Region (SAR) has submitted a bill to the city's Legislative Assembly in a bid to strengthen its fight against human trafficking. Once passed by the assembly, the bill will give the government greater power to tackle activities both to and from Macao. In the meantime, the government is also planning to provide necessary assistance, such as legal advice, accommodation and medical services, to human trafficking victims. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-02/16/content_7615254.htm

Kuwait renews commitment to human rights. Kuwait reasserted Friday its commitment to all international conventions on human rights including those banning all forms of human trafficking. 'Kuwait has joined all UN conventions on human rights including the so-called Palermo Protocol, criminalizing human trafficking and increasing protection for victims. 'Kuwait has also developed a draft law on the implementation of the protocol and adopted other measures to combat human trafficking and improve human rights situation. 'The measures include launching temporary residential places for expatriate workers in Kuwait. <http://www.arabtimesonline.com/kuwaitnews/pagesdetails.asp?nid=12323&ccid=9>

REGIONAL/MEMBER UPDATES

Shakti Samuha (Empowered Group), a self organised GAATW member in Nepal successfully organised a programme on "the place of trafficking survivors in the Constitutional Assembly" which was graced by political party leaders lead by the Speaker of Parliament Subashchandra Nemwang as the Chief Guest of the program. Parliament members as well as the party representatives vowed to support Shakti Samuha to be represented in the Constitution Assembly. The guests further encouraged Shakti Samuha to continue with the campaign until the trafficking survivors will have a voice in the Constitution Assembly.

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings entry into force on 1 February 2008 represents a major step in the protection of rights of the individuals who have been trapped in a modern form of slavery, said Amnesty International, Anti-Slavery International and La Strada International today. The groups called on the other 33 member states of the Council of Europe, as well as the European Union, to follow the lead taken by Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Georgia, Malta, Moldova, Norway, Romania and Slovakia by becoming parties to and implementing this Convention without further delay. <http://www.antislavery.org/archive/press/latestpressrelease.htm>

To read the copy of the COE Convention, visit

http://www.gaatw.net/Resources/PDF_Conv_197_Trafficking_E1.pdf.

Ban Ying, Germany has released a press declaration about the **prompt solution through Embassy of Yemen to help the case of Ms. Hasniati** - a 30 years old Indonesian woman - who worked as a domestic worker of a Yemeni Diplomat (an Attaché) in Berlin. She was maltreated and not paid her salary. The Yemen Embassy has agreed to pay Ms. Hasniati her due salary. www.ban-ying.de

United Indonesians against Overcharging or PILAR along with other Indonesian formations such as GAMI had launched their campaign early this year to stop overcharging and demand the reduction of agency fee to one month salary following the international standard of practice of allowable fee for sending countries since middle of 2005. Last 10 February 1,000 Indonesian workers gathered at Victoria Park to call for the scrapping of the Letter Order 2258 implemented at the beginning of this year. The public forum was followed by a march rally and brief program in front of the Indonesian Consulate. After a series of protests and calls for action from various labour groups and unions, the Indonesian Consulate finally announced the withdrawal of Letter Order 2258, which stipulates conditions that binds the Indonesian migrant workers to their recruiters for the first two years of working in Hong Kong.

Have you released a new report? Have you organised an important event? Does your campaign need support? We want to hear about it and so do other members and friends. If you need support, ideas, resources or information from other members on campaigns or activities you are running, the e-bulletin can help. Send us the brief message you may like to send out to other members through the e-bulletin. If it is urgent, we could consider sending the message out through our members' mailing list.

FROM THE SECRETARIAT

On 13-15 February, the UN Global Initiative to Fight Trafficking (UN.GIFT) held the **Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking** at the Austria Centre, Vienna. The Forum was a huge event with over 1600 participants including government delegations, NGOs, the private sector, academics and UN representatives who met in both plenaries and thematic workshops. GAATW members from Europe, Asia and LAC were present and Betty Pedraza from Espacios de Mujer, Colombia, and Maria Tchomarova of Animus Association Foundation (La Strada Bulgaria) spoke on panels. From the GAATW IS, Eleanor attended and the IS also organised a stand in the NGO Exhibition room at which GAATW members displayed materials. Most attention, however, was on the celebrities who lent their support to the event, including Emma Thompson and Ricky Martin, who gave opening addresses, and a Canadian singer and Ukrainian pop star Ruslana who performed at the closing. The UNODC and a member of the Women's Leadership Council gave closing speeches to highlight the conclusions and recommendations that emerged from the three days of discussions. These speeches are available at www.ungift.org. UN.GIFT was established in March 2007 as a temporary initiative to coordinate global anti-trafficking efforts. It is led by a steering committee comprising various UN agencies and intergovernmental organisations, with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime playing a key role.



Campaign for the Promotion of Human Rights for All Trafficked Persons and Migrant Workers

In response to the major recommendations from GAATW's latest report *Collateral Damage*, which emphasises the critical need for a re-assessment of anti-trafficking initiatives around the globe, GAATW launched a **global campaign** entitled "Recognise Rights", on the eve of the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking to call on governments to make human rights a priority in dealing with trafficking, and to do more to create long term solutions to trafficked

persons. Some of the priority issues highlighted in the campaign include the need to provide trafficked persons with access to justice and compensation, and to create

opportunities for work in destination countries. The campaign will run until 2010 with activities at regional and global events. *For further information contact, Eleanor Taylor-Nicholson, Advocacy Coordinator, eleonor@gaatw.org*

Michelle and Alfie from the Communications Unit went to Hong Kong, SAR in end of January to begin with the **video advocacy plan in collaboration with the Association of Indonesian Migrant Workers in Hong Kong (ATKIHK)**, a GAATW member. The video plan aims to show the implications of policies regarding placement fee structures and conditional ties in the recruitment process amongst Indonesian domestic workers in Hong Kong. The video is set to be screened in July 2008.

GAATW-REDLAC meeting will take place in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic from 5-7 March 2008. We will bring you more news in the next ebulletin.

RESOURCES

Reports

Leaving the Past Behind? When victims of trafficking decline assistance

The research project was implemented by Fafo Institute in Norway and NEXUS Institute in Vienna and was generously funded by the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study considers the reasons that some trafficking victims decline assistance and examines the circumstances under which they do so. Understanding the reasons, experiences and perceptions of persons who do not participate in assistance programmes can play an important role in developing and tailoring anti-trafficking services to meet the needs and desires of as many trafficking victims as possible. The report benefits from the experiences of trafficked persons who have both accepted and declined assistance as well service providers and other as anti-trafficking actors.

The report can be downloaded for free, or if this should cause problems, please contact:

Anette.Brunovskis@fafo.no or Rebecca rsurtees@nexusinstitute.net

and they will send you a PDF file (1.32 mb):

<http://www.fafo.no/pub/rapp/20040/20040.pdf>

Exported and Exposed: Abuses Against Sri Lankan Domestic Workers in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, and the United Arab Emirates

Human Rights Watch released a report in November 2007 based on interviews with migrant Sri Lankan domestic workers who had returned to Sri Lanka after working in the Middle East. The 131-page report documents the serious abuses that domestic workers face at every step of the migration process. It also shows how the Sri Lankan government and governments in the Middle East fail to protect these women.

<http://hrw.org/reports/2007/srilanka1107/>

The report, **Children on the move** is based on a number of key studies undertaken by **Save the Children** in the southern African region. The report confronts the general understanding that child migration leads to trafficking and refugee movement, and reveals that children often cross borders unaccompanied, as a survival strategy. The report winds up that the region must take a more upbeat role in ensuring that children who migrate are better protected.

<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/docs/children-on-the-move.pdf>

Mapping the Realities of Trafficking Women in Cyprus

This report is the result of a research project conducted by the **Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies [MIGS]**. The main aim of the project was to gain and share awareness, knowledge and understanding on the phenomenon of trafficking in women in Cyprus for the purpose of sexual exploitation. MIGS is very much alarmed about the present situation in Cyprus with regards to trafficked women for the purpose of sexual exploitation and stresses that there is no evidence of tangible efforts either by the Cyprus government or the civil society to tackle it in a specific way.

http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?attachment_id=320

Child Trafficking in Europe: A Broad Vision to Put Children First - Summary Report

This Report published by the United Nations Children's Fund and released in January 2008 examines how the European region is responding to child trafficking. It assesses the legal, policy and implementation frameworks in place to address this phenomenon, which affects the lives of untold numbers of children and families in the region. To order a copy: <https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?pid=17592>

Events

The UN Committee on Migrant Workers will meet from 14 to 25 April 2008 in Geneva. It will adopt concluding observations on Bolivia and Syria as well as a list of issues on El Salvador, Colombia and Azerbaijan.

<http://www.december18.net/web/general/start.php>

On 28 February 2008, the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) and the University of Nicosia will host a conference on the exploitation of migrant women in domestic labour, including situations of modern slavery, marginalisation and labour rights violations. The conference is organised within the framework of the transnational project entitled *"Integration of Female Migrant Domestic Workers: Strategies for Employment and Civic Participation"*, funded under the INTI Preparatory Actions 2005 Programme of the European Commission. Strategies for special protection and social integration will be discussed with NGO representatives, policy makers and migrant organisations. For information on the *agenda* and *registration form* for the conference please visit: <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=331>

"For the international trade union movement, ensuring better protection for domestic workers is one of the keys to promoting decent work, which is at the heart of our action,"
Guy Ryder, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

The GAATW e-bulletin is sent out to all member organisations of the Alliance as well as to many of its friends and sister NGOs worldwide.

- o The e-bulletin is published every last week of the month. A Spanish version goes out three days after the English version. Sometimes additional follow up information and/or reminders are also sent via email to member organisations.
- o Primarily a tool for communication between the International Secretariat and the Alliance members, the e-bulletin aims to cover a broad range of topics although trafficking related issues remain its special focus. We also use this e-bulletin to inform members about upcoming events and provide regular updates about the Secretariat.
- o We strongly encourage members and friends to send us their input to the e-bulletin at info@gaatw.org
- o If you do not want to receive this e-bulletin please send us a message at info@gaatw.org and we will delete your address from the list.

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