



**REPORT OF THE
ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE
57TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

5-6 FEBRUARY 2013

BANGKOK

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women was held during 5 and 6 February 2013 in Bangkok. The Meeting was jointly organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in cooperation with the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women.
2. The objectives of the Meeting were to prepare participants for the 57th session of Commission on the Status of Women by: (a) enhancing their understanding of the achievements, remaining obstacles and emerging challenges with respect to ending and preventing violence against women and girls in Asia-Pacific through cross-country sharing of experiences and practices; and (b) identifying priorities, common strategies and ways forward, including through regional cooperation, to address the obstacles and challenges for the elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls at the national and regional levels.
3. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following 12 member States of the Asian and Pacific region that serve on the Commission on the Status of Women: Bangladesh; China; Georgia; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Malaysia, Mongolia; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation and Thailand.
4. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies attended: ITU, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF.
5. The following civil society organizations were represented: Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development; Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS; Asia-Pacific Women with Disability United; Asia-Pacific Women with Disability United; and Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand.
6. The list of participants is contained in Annex I to this report.

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

7. The Meeting elected the following officers:

Chair: Ms. Emmeline L. Verzosa (Philippines)

Rapporteur: Ms. Mashitah Binti Ahmad Sabri (Malaysia)

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:
 1. Opening of the Meeting.
 2. Election of the Chair.
 3. Adoption of the agenda.

4. Introduction of the priority theme for the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women: “Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls”.
5. Presentation of recommendations from the Expert Group Meeting on Prevention of Violence against Women (17-20 September, 2012, Bangkok)
6. Roundtable: Sharing of experiences on elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls in Asia-Pacific: achievements, remaining obstacles and emerging challenges.
7. Working Groups.
 - a) Multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence;
 - b) Prevention of violence against women and girls.
8. Identification of common strategies and ways forward.
9. Adoption of the report.
10. Closing of the Meeting.

**IV. INTRODUCTION OF THE PRIORITY THEME FOR THE 57TH SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN:
Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls**

9. The Meeting had before it the document entitled “Report of the Secretary-General on Prevention of violence against women and girls” (E/CN.6/2013/4) and “Report of the Secretary-General on Multisectoral services and responses for violence against women and girls” (E/CN.6/2013/3), which was introduced by a representative of the joint ESCAP/UN Women secretariat.
10. The following issues were highlighted as requiring further attention by member States:
 - Addressing harmful stereotypes, norms and attitudes that are based on gender inequality and contribute to, and cause, violence against women;
 - Addressing legal barriers and strengthening the administration of justice to ensure the elimination of stigma associated with victims and reduction of secondary victimization;
 - Enhancing knowledge and understanding of the causes and consequences of violence against women by the law enforcement and justice sectors to ensure systematic implementation of laws and procedures in addressing violence against women;
 - Collecting data on prevalence and risk factors of violence, and undertaking mapping exercises to identify good practices, gaps and emerging challenges in the provision of services and responses; and

- Addressing the specific needs of women who face multiple forms of discrimination, including indigenous and ethnic minority women, women with disabilities and women living with and affected by HIV.

V. PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON PREVENTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (17-20 SEPTEMBER 2012, BANGKOK)

11. The Meeting had before it the document entitled Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the Prevention of Violence against Women” (EGM/PP/2012/Report), which was introduced by a representative of the joint ESCAP/UN Women secretariat.

12. The following issues were highlighted:

- The need to transform unequal power relations that are the root cause of violence against women and accelerate attainment of gender equality;
- The importance of women’s economic, social, educational and political empowerment and gender equality in preventing violence against women and ensuring exit options for survivors;
- The importance of engaging the media to transform harmful stereotypes and ensure gender sensitive reporting;
- According priority to policies and programmes and ensuring adequate resource allocation for prevention and response services;
- Strengthening institutions to ensure accountability for the effective implementation of laws and policies that prevent, protect and respond to violence against women; and
- Developing and strengthening approaches within the justice sector that promote perpetrator accountability, including through appropriate psycho-social and educational programmes.

VI. ROUNDTABLE: SHARING OF EXPERIENCES ON ELIMINATION AND PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN ASIA-PACIFIC: ACHIEVEMENTS, REMAINING OBSTACLES AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

13. A Roundtable was held on experiences on elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls, focusing on achievements, positive approaches, remaining obstacles and identification of ways forward for the elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls in Asia-Pacific. The Roundtable was moderated by the Regional Director, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

The panelists were:

- Ms. Yuniyanti Chuzaifah, Chairperson, National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan), Indonesia;
- Ms. Suneeta Kar Dhar, Director, Jagori, India;

- Ms. Lara Fergus, Independent Consultant, Australia; and
- Mr. James Lang, Programme Coordinator, Partners for Prevention.

14. The following key issues were discussed by panelists and participants:

- Effective administration of justice response was an essential contributor to prevention and ending the culture of impunity;
- Women's organizations have played a leading role in advocacy and the provision of services and have built successful partnerships with state and non-state actors;
- Harmful constructions of masculinity characterized by men's perceived entitlement to, and control over, women's bodies, voice and choices were key drivers of violence against women;
- Promotion of positive and nurturing forms of masculinity, including care giving and equal sharing of responsibilities within the family, should be an intrinsic component of prevention strategies;
- Engaging influential leaders in all sectors, including religious leaders and youth leaders, was critical for championing zero tolerance for violence against women;
- Comprehensive, coordinated and multisectoral approaches were essential to effectively address the root causes and consequences of violence against women; and
- Gender sensitive and culturally appropriate approaches were required to ensure the inclusion of women in peace building and conflict prevention and resolution, through which women's heightened vulnerability to violence could be addressed, in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

VII. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMON STRATEGIES AND WAYS FORWARD

15. The Meeting recognized that violence against women was a manifestation of unequal power relations between women and men and, therefore, the elimination of gender inequality and other forms of social and economic exclusions must be promoted.

16. In addition, the Meeting agreed that a holistic approach, spanning the continuum of prevention and multisectoral responses was necessary to address violence against women.

17. The representatives of the CSOs delivered statements on the outcome of the CSO consultations. The statements are contained in Annex II to this report.

18. The Meeting adopted the following recommendations pertaining to:

- (a) Prevention of violence against women and girls; and
- (b) Multisectoral services and responses for women and girls subjected to violence.

Recommendations

Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls

A. Political commitment and leadership

- (1) Call on the highest levels of national leadership to adopt a systematic and holistic approach to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and to coordinate multisectoral institutional mechanisms.
- (2) In consideration of the intersectionality of multiple forms of discrimination, call on States and international entities to pay particular attention to the needs of, inter alia, women living with disabilities, women living with and affected by HIV, indigenous women, rural women, migrant workers, and other vulnerable groups.

B. Global legal and policy frameworks

- (3) Work towards the universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and withdraw all reservations to the Convention and ratify or accede to its Optional Protocol.
- (4) Increase accountability, including through comprehensive reporting to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.
- (5) Work towards the universal ratification of:
 - Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 - International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
 - International Labour Organization Convention No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers
- (6) Reaffirm national commitment to all relevant international instruments and outcome documents, including, inter alia, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of The International Conference on Population and Development and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- (7) Integrate and prioritize the elimination of violence against women into the effort to promote gender equality and women's empowerment as a cross-cutting theme within the post-2015 development framework.
- (8) Consider proposals to develop a global implementation plan to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls.

C. National legal, policy frameworks and resources

- (9) Urgently abolish discriminatory laws and practices that create a context for violence against women and girls.
- (10) Urge States to adopt and implement comprehensive national action plans and policies, with specific timelines and benchmarks, that promote gender equality and address violence against women and girls, including prevention measures.

(11) Call on States to allocate adequate resources and establish all appropriate mechanisms to ensure the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws and policies, as well as coordination among different multi-stakeholders.

(12) Develop regulations to address new forms of violence against women, including violence through electronic media.

D. Social norms

(13) Engage men and boys in awareness-raising and adopt measures and programmes to promote equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women in child-rearing and parenting, domestic work and caregiving in order to strengthen gender equality and transform social norms.

(14) Develop educational programmes, including sexuality education, that promote gender equality, human rights and skills-building for respectful relationships, which is accessible for all and at all levels of education, including non-formal educational settings, and sporting clubs and organizations; review school curricula and textbooks to promote gender equality; and promote the specialized training of teachers and the overall capacity-building of schools in order to foster a culture of gender equality, human rights and non-violence, including through the involvement of parents and communities.

(15) Carry out community mobilization activities to challenge gender stereotypes, beliefs, behaviours and attitudes that condone such violence and discrimination, such as early and forced marriages, missing girls at birth, female genital mutilation and honour crimes; raise awareness of the unacceptability of violence; and promote gender equality and respect for human rights.

(16) Enhance legal literacy and awareness for women and men with the intent to create broader and deeper understanding of women's human rights, legal guarantees and entry points for protection and redress for women subjected to violence.

E. Institutions and capacity development

(17) Ensure that public and private workplaces are safe, encourage women's participation and leadership; and promote gender equality through collaboration with employers and workers, regulatory and oversight frameworks and reforms, codes of conduct, protocols and procedures, as well as through awareness-raising and capacity-building.

F. Safety in public spaces

(18) Design urban planning and infrastructures to ensure the safety of women and girls; undertake assessments and audits to identify unsafe areas, including in the context of disasters; engage local communities, men and boys; and strengthen laws and policies on harassment and violence in public spaces.

G. Partnerships at the national and regional levels

At the National Level

(19) Support, and engage in partnerships with civil society organizations, particularly those working with women and girls, to drive prevention at the community level, and ensure coordinated action at all levels.

(20) Engage all segments of society in preventing violence against women and girls, including traditional and religious leaders, young men and women.

(21) Engage the private sector to promote corporate social accountability to prevent violence against women.

(22) Engage in partnerships with the media, including national and regional broadcasting organizations, to ensure gender-sensitive training, guidelines and regulatory frameworks to promote messages of gender equality and non-violence and strengthen the positive role of media in raising public awareness, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

(23) Engage national and regional broadcasting organizations in promoting media responsibility.

(24) Enhance efforts to prioritize the prevention of all forms of violence in conflict-affected settings, including countries under sanctions, inter alia through the capacity-building, empowerment and meaningful participation of women in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and post-conflict decision-making.

Regional and Subregional Cooperation

(25) Strengthen existing partnerships and identify new opportunities for collaboration with existing regional and subregional mechanisms, such as ESCAP, ASEAN, SAARC, PIFS and others, in supporting the development of national policy, as well as standards for data collection and monitoring.

(26) Encourage systematic sharing of good practice from national experience on the prevention of violence against women.

H. Data collection and research, monitoring and evaluation

(27) Ensure systematic and coordinated collection of data, at the national level, on different forms of violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, disaggregated by sex, age and disability, in order to inform sound prevention policies and measures.

(28) Carry out research on factors that increase risk of or protect from violence against women and girls as well as on prevention strategies in conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian settings.

(29) Develop indicators to measure progress on the prevention of such violence, including short- and medium-term progress, such as changes in attitudes, norms and practices.

(30) Carry out systematic evaluation and monitoring of prevention programmes with methods appropriate to the context and scale of interventions and include in the evaluations measures on the cost-effectiveness of the interventions and the feasibility of scaling up efforts.

(31) Develop monitoring and evaluation tools that are practical and feasible for small organizations and low-income countries.

Recommendations

Multisectoral Services and Responses for Women and Girls Subjected to Violence

A. Political commitment and leadership

- (1) Urge senior leaders in all sectors to lead by example and influence society at large by publicly condemning and committing to end all forms of violence against women, and encourage them to formulate and adopt codes of conduct and individual pledges, such as “Leaders’ Manifestos” or “Integrity Acts” to outline their commitment to respect women’s rights and promote gender equality.
- (2) Foster political commitment at the highest level across all relevant ministries and ensure universal applicability of the rule of law.
- (3) Encourage individual initiative and leadership among law enforcers and service providers to end impunity for violence against women and girls.

B. Global legal and policy frameworks

- (4) Recommend that all States respect, ratify and implement all relevant international agreements and human rights instruments, including inter alia:
 - Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
 - Security Council Resolution 1325
 - General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women
 - Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment of Punishment
 - Convention on the Rights of the Child
 - Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 - International Labour Organization Convention No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers
- (5) Enhance implementation of internationally agreed normative frameworks concerning the provision of services for internally displaced and conflict-affected women subjected to violence.
- (6) Enforce all relevant codes of conduct for international and national security forces in accordance with international norms and standards in times of peace and conflict.
- (7) Strengthen global cooperation to protect the rights of women migrant workers.
- (8) Encourage donors and funding organizations to prioritize resources for women’s organizations that provide support and services to victims and survivors of violence.
- (9) Identify traditional practices that are counter to the spirit of universal human rights and work towards their elimination.

C. Laws, policies, coordination and resources

- (10) Ensure that laws, policies and regulations on violence against women and girls address all forms of violence in line with comprehensive definitions contained in international standards.

- (11) Prioritize the implementation of laws, policies and regulations on violence against women informed through data collection and monitoring.
- (12) Develop systematic and holistic approaches that coordinate service provision and referral mechanisms, including in collaboration with civil society.
- (13) Ensure sufficient resource allocations for the provision of multisectoral services and responses and mandate the ongoing provision of adequate resources in law and policy.
- (14) Integrate gender issues into all aspects of governance and ensure that government budgets, planning, programming and monitoring frameworks are gender-responsive.
- (15) Promote women's economic empowerment as a means to eliminate violence against women, in particular to enable survivors of violence to leave abusive relationships, and ensure access to economic support and compensation from the perpetrator in cases of divorce or separation.
- (16) Promote workplace mechanisms that ensure gender equality and gender justice, including through:
- Establishing codes of conduct in the corporate sector
 - Supporting women's financial independence
 - Ensuring equal pay and equal rights
 - Enforcing regulations to address sexual harassment
 - Providing support mechanisms for women who experience violence such as paid leave for recovery
- (17) Ensure the safety and rights of women in conflict and humanitarian situations.
- (18) Recognizing regional demographic patterns, including growing youth populations, aging populations, migration and trafficking, ensure that laws, policies and services address the different forms of violence that women and girls face throughout their lifecycle.
- (19) Laws, policies and services should address forms of violence and harmful practices that particularly affect girls, such as sex selection, sexual abuse, sexual violence and early marriage. Recognizing the cultural barriers and stigma that girls face in accessing reproductive health and other services, ensure that these services cater to their needs.

D. Provision of multisectoral services

- (20) Provide support services for women who experience physical, sexual and psychological violence, including within intimate relationships, marriage and the family.
- (21) Ensure support for victims and survivors, even in cases where legal action is not pursued or discontinued.
- (22) Support community-owned and sustainable mechanisms for case management and referral, such as safe houses and informal shelters arranged by communities and developed to be culturally acceptable.
- (23) Strengthen formal response systems to supplement and reinforce informal mechanisms.

E. Ensuring quality of services

- (24) Legally mandate quality standards for services in responding to violence against women and girls.
- (25) Develop procedural guidelines and gender sensitization training to build the capacity of service providers, including the police, judiciary and healthcare services, to provide high quality, gender-sensitive services.
- (26) Strengthen the capacity of frontline workers to identify cases, respond to incidents, and provide support services, including through mechanisms such as one-stop crisis centers and special police units or desks dedicated to addressing violence against women and girls.
- (27) Address violence against women and girls as a public health issue requiring engagement and services provided by the healthcare system.
- (28) Encourage the media to serve as a “watch dog” for service quality through investigative reporting to highlight service needs and support the development of media codes of conduct that ensure responsible reporting and prevent re-victimization.

F. Access to multisectoral services

- (29) Build the support capacity of all relevant stakeholders who may be the first point of contact for a victim, including primary health care providers, schools, community institutions and local, traditional and faith leaders, to ensure consistent messages of support, non-judgment and zero-tolerance.
- (30) In concert with activities to prevent violence against women and girls, remove the legal, social, cultural, economic and physical barriers that prevent women and girls from accessing services, including allowing for universal access to reproductive health and rights.
- (31) In consideration of the intersectionality of multiple forms of discrimination, ensure legal protection and services for migrant workers, displaced women, women living with disabilities, and women living with and affected by HIV.
- (32) Strengthen the role of religious, community and traditional leaders to identify cases, provide support and refer victims to services, and work with perpetrators to change behaviours.
- (33) Engage community volunteers to promote safe families and communities and strengthen the role of community-based organizations in bridging the gap between survivors and district- or sub-district-level service providers.
- (34) Ensure protection for victims and witnesses of violence and their defenders.
- (35) Establish a system of victim advocates to provide information and support to women in accessing and navigating the multi-sectoral system of legal, health, protective and other support services.

G. Assessing effectiveness

(36) Invest in collection of data and research, including national prevalence and other qualitative and quantitative data, for developing and advocating proper multi-sectoral responses.

(37) Strengthen national data systems on violence against women by integrating data gathered outside state institutions, including from civil society service providers, as well as direct victim/survivor reporting.

(38) Improve the quality of administrative records and address existing gaps, including a lack of shared standards for administratively-collected data, limited data collection and low reporting.

(39) Carry out mappings of access to services, including services provided by civil society programmes, to identify geographic or other gaps in access for women and girls subjected to violence.

(40) Undertake costing exercises and ensure adequate funding for the provision of services and programmes.

(41) Encourage local governments, civil society organizations and communities to supplement national-level monitoring, data collection and evaluation.

(42) Mainstream the monitoring of the implementation of laws, policies and regulations to address violence against women into the work of independent national human rights institutions.

H. Regional cooperation

(43) Foster greater collaboration at the regional level to address regional and transnational aspects of violence against women, such as violence in the context of migration and displacement.

(44) Develop common guidelines for the implementation of international norms and the provision of multisectoral responses to violence against women and girls, including methodologies for mapping access.

VIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

19. The Meeting adopted the present report on 6 February 2013.

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

BANGLADESH

Mr. Md. Ashraf Hossain, Director General, Department of Women Affairs, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Dhaka

Mr. Bikash Kishore Das, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Dhaka

CHINA

Mr. Zhang Yue, Minister-Counsellor and Permanent Representative of China to ESCAP, Bangkok

Ms. Xu Jing, Deputy Director, Department of International Organizations and Conferences, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing

Ms. Zhang Caixia, Deputy Division Director, All-China Women's Federation, Beijing

Ms. Xie Zhangwei, Assistant to the Permanent Representative of China to ESCAP, Bangkok

GEORGIA

Ms. Lali Papiashvili, Chair, State Interagency Coordination Council for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Tbilisi

Ms. Tamar Kintsurashvili, Deputy Secretary, National Security Council of Georgia, Tbilisi

INDONESIA

Ms. Rohika Kurniadi Sari, Assistant Deputy of Handling Violence Against Women, Ministry Women's Empowerment and Child's Protection, Jakarta

Ms. Grata Endah Werdaningtyas, Deputy Director for Vulnerable Groups' Rights, Directorate of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jakarta

Ms. Imada Sagita Simbolon, Head of Section for Child's Rights, Directorate of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jakarta

Ms. Putri Perwira, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Bangkok

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Ms. Mansoureh Sharifisadr, Director-General for Human Rights and Women Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran

Ms. Elham Aminzadeh, Advisor, Presidential Center for Women and Family Affairs, Tehran

JAPAN

Ms. Hideko Kobayashi, Chief, General Affairs Division, Gender Equality Bureau, Cabinet Office, Tokyo

Ms. Tomomi Kasai, Official, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo

Mr. Hisanobu Mochizuki, Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Japan, Bangkok

Mr. Tetsuya Murakami, First Secretary and Deputy Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Japan, Bangkok

MALAYSIA

Ms. Mashitah Binti Ahmad Sabri, Assistant Secretary (Policy Division), Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Kuala Lumpur

Mr. Hanizam Bin Darham, Assistant Director, (Management Service Division), Department of Women Development, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Kuala Lumpur

MONGOLIA

Ms. Jadamba Dolgormaa, Director, Strategic and Policy Planning Department, Ministry of Population Development and Social Protection, Ulaanbaatar

Ms. Ulziibayar Vangansuren, Deputy Director, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ulaanbaatar

PHILIPPINES

Ms. Florita R. Villar, Undersecretary, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Quezon City, Manila

Ms. Emmeline L. Verzosa, Executive Director, Philippine Commission on Women, Manila

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Ms. Seh Young Kim, Specialist for International Organization, Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Bangkok

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. E. Bessonov, Senior Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to ESCAP, Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Kingdom of Thailand, Bangkok

Mr. I. Andreev, Attaché, Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Kingdom of Thailand, Bangkok

THAILAND

Mr. Somruay Suwanpakdechit, Senior Social Development Officer, Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Bangkok

Ms. Perada Phumessawatdi, Senior Social Development Officer, Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Bangkok

Ms. Paweena Subhimaros, Social Development Officer, Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Bangkok

UNITED NATIONS BODIES

JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Ms. Yuki Takemoto Gender Equality Advisor, UNAIDS Regional Support Team, Asia and Pacific Office, Bangkok

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)

Ms. Amalee McCoy Child Protection Specialist, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office , Bangkok

Ms. Jessica Aumann Communication Consultant, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office , Bangkok

Ms. Anna Richardson East Asia and Pacific Regional Office , Bangkok

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

Ms. Kim Henderson Gender Practice Leader, Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, Bangkok

Ms. Omar Siddique Programme Specialist, Gender, Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, Bangkok

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)

Ms. Kiran Bhatia Gender Adviser, UNFPA Country Technical Services Team for South and West Asia, Bangkok

SPECIALIZED AGENCY AND RELATED ORGANIZATION

INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION (ITU)

Ms. Sireerat Bunnag Project Manager, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific,
Bangkok

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON WOMEN, LAW AND DEVELOPMENT (APWLD)

Ms. Kate Lappin Regional Coordinator, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Ms. Marion Cabera Member, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Ms. Punika Shinawatra Finance Officer, Chiang Mai, Thailand

ASIA PACIFIC NETWORK OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS (APN+)

Ms. Naro Nukshinaro Women Coordinator, Bangkok

ASIA-PACIFIC WOMEN WITH DISABILITY UNITED (APWWDs United)

Ms. Saowalak Thongkuay Representative, Bangkok

INDIGENIOUS WOMEN'S NETWORK OF THAILAND (IWNT)

Ms. Noraeri Thungmeoungthong Chairperson, Chiang Mai, Thailand

RESOURCE PERSONS

Ms. Yuniyanti Chuzaifah, Chairperson, National Commission on Violence Against Women
(Komnas Perempuan), Jakarta

Ms. Suneeta Kar Dhar, Director, JAGORI, New Delhi

Ms. Lara Fergus, Independent Consultant, Melbourne

Mr. James Lang, Programme Coordinator, Partners for Prevention, Bangkok

JOINT ESCAP/UN WOMEN SECRETARIAT

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ESCAP)

Ms. Nanda Krairiksh	Director, Social Development Division
Ms. Cai Cai	Chief, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section, Social Development Division
Ms. Beverly Jones	Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division
Ms. Jori Jorgensen	Associate Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division
Ms. Rachel Gerber	Associate Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division

UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (UN-Women)

Ms. Roberta Clarke	Regional Director, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and Representative of UN Women in Thailand
Ms. Anna-Karin Jatfors	Campaign Manager, Asia-Pacific United Nations Secretary – General's Campaign, UNiTE to End Violence Against Women, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

ANNEX II

Asia Pacific Civil Society Statement

Civil Society Organization's Preparatory Meeting on Grounding the Global: Making the CSW Meaningful for Women in Asia Pacific (3 and 4 February 2013)

Forty three women's rights civil society representatives and supportive UN agencies from 17 countries¹ of the Asia Pacific region gathered in Bangkok, Thailand to collectively prepare inputs and advocacy for the UN Commission on the status of Women 57. The meeting was co-organised by Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), Asian Indigenous People's Pact (AIPP), Fiji Women's Crisis Center, Disabled People's International Asia Pacific and made possible by the support of UN Women. The meeting prioritised inclusion of women most marginalised by intersecting forms of discrimination, prejudice and power inequalities: indigenous women, rural women, women living with disabilities, migrant women, women working in informal sectors, dalit women, women living with HIV/AIDS, sexual minorities.

We welcome the opportunity to work with governments and UN agencies at local, national, regional and international levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women. We recognise progress in legal standards and policy has been made by some governments but concerned that progress is uneven, often ad hoc, under-resourced, marginalised in governments, often developed without support of civil society and often does not reach those most affected by violence and exclusion. We also express concern over regression in language and approach in some countries or localised areas.

The meeting utilised the due diligence framework to identify the most critical areas that require attention. Key messages for CSW include:

- The most comprehensive research on violence against women policy making concluded that the single most important factor to ensure strong policy, programmes and laws on VAW is the **existence of autonomous women's movements (Htun and Weldon 2012)**.
 - All strategies should be developed with civil society and also include objectives on building civil society movements.
 - UN agencies should focus on strengthening autonomous civil society movements at the local level.
 - Recognise the role of civil society in your country statements and in the agreed conclusions.
 - Work with Civil Society in the lead up, during and following CSW. Meet with them, share information, include them on panels and include them in your delegation.

¹ Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, China, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Myanmar, Korea, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Fiji and Australia (PNG unable to attend).

- Focus on intersectional forms of discrimination and structural violence that produce the most intense forms of marginalisation, particularly indigenous, rural, dalit, women living with disabilities, migrants, domestic workers, women living with HIV/AIDS, sexual minorities.
 - Include intersectionalities in your statements and agreed conclusions.
- Recognise that prevention must primarily be about dismantling power, resource and wealth inequalities between men and women as well as between rich and poor. Prevention must address structures that enable patriarchy particularly the negative impacts of globalisation, militarisation and fundamentalisms.
- Commit to upholding and advancing existing international norms, standards and principles as articulated in CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at national and regional levels and arrest moves to erode women's rights and language particularly around SRHR, traditional values and gender equality (see statement following CSW56).
 - Promote the ratification and meaningful implementation of all relevant international treaties, particularly those with inadequate international support including:
 1. ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers
 2. Convention on the rights of migrant workers and their families
 3. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Recognise that violence against women undermines development and its eradication is a condition for development. Peace and security internationally, in the community and in the home should be a development goal.
 - Promote the elimination of violence against women as a Post2015 development goal for gender equality in your country statements and in the agreed conclusions.
- Participants identified the following policy areas as crucial to ensuring that states meet their obligations to act with due diligence to eliminate all forms of violence against women:
 - 1) Together with civil society develop and implement Plans of Action to eliminate all forms of violence against women at all levels of government and to produce National Plans to implement resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.
 - 2) Develop comprehensive prevention strategies to address gendered power relations and underlying social values that shape mindsets and permit gender violence to be part of daily life.
 - 3) Undertake holistic legal and structural reform of the criminal justice system:
 - a) Ensuring highest legislative standards;
 - b) Effective implementation of the law including supporting free legal services for survivors; and

- c) Built-in review / evaluation of law and policy (eg: Korea).
- 4) Develop multi- disciplinary approaches with adequate resources to ensure integrated services – shelter, legal, welfare, sexual and reproductive health, housing, economic empowerment.
 - 5) Fund and support strategies and services that address the care of survivors with different needs at different stages from prevention to shelter to seeking redress.
 - 6) Prohibit cultural, social and religious practices that reinforce the subordination of women (Article 5 CEDAW).
 - 7) Monitor and evaluate all plans and strategies and set specific standards that will be adhered to in prevention, prosecution and provision of services and include specific time frames and targets in the post 2015 development agenda.

Statement by Indigenous Women from Asia-Pacific

Asia is homeland to an estimated 2/3 of the world's approximate 300 million indigenous peoples. Indigenous women suffer disproportionately from a multi-fold of discrimination and oppression based on their ethnicity, race, location and economic status together with their sex. Indigenous people may be known by other terms in their own countries, as 'ethnic minorities', or 'hill tribes', or 'adivasi' or 'orang asal' and so on. Our reference is inclusive of all peoples who chose to self-define as 'indigenous' regardless of national government terminology.

The root causes of violence affecting indigenous women include the depletion of their natural environment and resources due to wide-spread *development aggression, loss of territories, militarization and displacement that can lead to trafficking and migration, poverty and denial of culturally appropriate social services.*

Belonging to an indigenous community means that women suffer from all the discrimination, exploitation, marginalization and human rights violations indigenous peoples are experiencing across the world. Women in particular feel the impact of loss of territory and access to resources, maybe even more than the men since they are more directly responsible for taking care of and bringing up their children. Often, dispossession goes hand in hand with violence by state armed forces, settlers or the security personnel of private companies. The occupation of indigenous peoples' land not only means forced eviction but murder and sexual harassment including rape of indigenous women.

Recommendations

- 1) Campaigns, trainings, continued education and re-education to address underlying social values that shape mindsets and permit gender violence to be part of daily life.
- 2) Include indigenous women issues and concerns in the national women development policies and plan of action on violence against women
- 3) Ban and remove cultural practices that reinforce the subordination of women (Article 5 of CEDAW)
- 4) Monitoring and evaluation of state intervention in order to hold governments accountable
- 5) Take effective measures to prevent all forms of violence and discrimination against indigenous women [articles: 22. 1 &2 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)]
- 6) Respect traditional land rights of indigenous peoples and prevent land alienation as provided in the UNDRIP
- 7) Crime committed by security personnel should be punished under criminal justice system.
- 8) All services related to protection of VAW should be universal and accessible and available at all levels and developed with holistic and culturally sensitive approach with the community.

- 9) Universal access and holistic approach to free formal legal aid support services to survivors of violence.
- 10) We call on governments of the region to demonstrate a commitment to Indigenous women's rights by meeting with them prior to CSW, by including them in their country delegations, by including them on panels hosted by governments, by meeting with them during CSW and consulting them on the relevant language of the outcome document and promoting all the rights and issues presented here in their country statements and in the agreed conclusions document.

We request that recommendations listed above are taken into consideration by government representatives in attendance to the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 5-6 February 2013 for national level implementation and in the final draft of agreed conclusions for the 57th Session on the Commission on the Status of Women.

Statement by Asia Pacific Women with Disability United (AP WWDs United)

We, the Asia Pacific Women with Disability United (AP WWDs United), attendees of the workshop on Grounding the Global: Strategising Workshop for the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in Bangkok, Thailand, hereby make this preliminary statement to call on member States to reaffirm their obligations under articles 6 and 16 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Goal 6 of the Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for persons with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, and the intersections of the CEDAW and CRPD

- Urge member States to recognize women and girls with disabilities as equal members of society with diverse and unique identities and consider the intersectional discrimination and gender-based violence they experience;
- Urge ESCAP member States to develop effective measures to prevent violence against women with disabilities, such as the establishment of separate hotlines and shelters for women with disabilities;
- Request ESCAP member States to establish national action plans to eliminate violence against women with disabilities with specific time frames and incorporate women and girls with disabilities in gender and disability policies and incorporate women and girls with disability into existing national action plan;
- Recommend ESCAP member States to provide adequate assistance during criminal procedures to survivors of violence against women and girls with disabilities, such as sign language interpreters during investigations and legal assistance;
- Encourage ESCAP member States to provide the outcomes of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and other UN procedures in various accessible formats to ensure women and girls with disabilities enjoy the freedom of communication and right to access information on an equal basis with others;
- Encourage ESCAP member States to establish a quota system to increase the number of women with disability in political positions to ensure adequate representation and proper mechanisms to eliminate VAWWWDs in Asia and the Pacific.
- Encourage ESCAP member States to strengthen the regional, sub regional and interregional networks formed by DPOs and encourage and support the mechanisms and networks to advocate, promote and lobby for the rights of women and girls with disabilities.
- Recognize the Asia Pacific Women with Disabilities United (AP WWDs United) as an inclusive platform of action to eliminate violence against women and girls with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific and allocate adequate funding through relevant entities, such as the UN PRPP Trust and UN Women Fund, to ensure the voice of women and girls with disability in the region are heard.

We request that recommendations listed above are taken into consideration by government representatives in attendance to the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, 5-6 February 2013 and in the final draft of agreed conclusions for the 57th Session on the Commission on the Status of Women.

Statement by UNZIP the Lips Platform

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share our experiences and recommendation. **I am speaking on behalf of the UNZIP the Lips Platform which is a platform of individuals and organizations working for the rights and meaningful participation of key affected women and girls in the context of HIV and its intersections with other gender issues in the Asia Pacific Region, such as violence against women.** At the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), Member States will discuss Violence Against Women, as well as reviewing the agreed conclusions on “the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV/Aids” that was adopted at the 53rd session in 2009. We ask you to listen to women and girls, particularly those most at risk and most affected by HIV. And to include our voices, our issues and our partnership in your country delegation, development of your country positions and in your further preparation for the CSW.

Member States have pledged to eliminate gender inequalities and gender based abuse and violence and pledged to take all necessary measures towards the empowerment of women to increase the capacity of women and girls to protect themselves from HIV. Women and girls should be able to exercise their right to have control over matters related to their sexuality including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. We ask you to reaffirm these commitments as crucial to the elimination of violence against women and uphold these rights.

We applaud UNESCAP commitment resolution 66/10 ‘the regional call for action to achieve universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific’ that noted the continuing high prevalence of HIV among key affected populations, including sex workers, injecting drug users and men who have sex with men, as well as the extent of the legal and policy barriers that impede progress.

Building on these commitments, we wish to highlight the following gaps.

We are proud that this region has taken up an important leadership role and we ask you to include the needs of women and girls living with HIV, female sex workers, women and girls who use drugs, transgender women and girls, mobile and migrant women, women with disabilities, and women in serodiscordant relationships as well as intimate female partners of men who engage in behaviors that put them at a higher risk of HIV infections. These women face multiple discriminations and violence.

Limited research conducted in the region demonstrates that violence is a risk factor for HIV and HIV as a risk factor for violence. Women affected by HIV are more likely to face violence. Key affected women and girls, especially sex-workers and female drug users are at an increased risk for violence which may make them more vulnerable to HIV. Countries should ensure that laws and policies to address VAW and HIV/AIDS are based upon an understanding of the links between the two and the need to address gender equality.

Therefore, countries must repeal laws that criminalize transmission of HIV, prostitution and drug use. And VAW and HIV services must be linked and should ensure that survivors of sexual violence are provided with access to PEP, safe abortion and emergency contraception on a priority bases.

Research has found that key affected women and girls, especially women living with HIV, are facing stigma, discrimination, violence and coercion in health care settings such as forced

sterilization, forced abortion, and compulsory HIV testing. Governments need to remove barriers to women and girls' access to non-judgmental and gender sensitive health services. We call on Member States to ensure accessible, rights-based, voluntary, and integrated HIV and sexual and reproductive health services, regardless of gender identity, age, HIV status, or socio-economic status.

We call on Member States here today to listen to our voices so we can live in dignity and enjoy our human rights. Thank you.