



Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)

59- B Malumanay Street, Teachers' Village West, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, The Philippines
Tel: (632) 433 35 08 Fax: (632) 433 12 92 • E-mail: mfa@pacific.net.hk • Web: www.mfasia.org

Standing Members

Bangladesh

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK); Association for Community Development (ACD); Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU); Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees (WARBE)

India

Center for Education and Communication (CEC); Center for Indian Migrant Studies (CIMS); Migrant Forum India (MFI); Migrant Rights Council

Nepal

All Nepal Women's Association (ANWA); Women Rehabilitation Center (WOREC)

Sri Lanka

Action Network for Migrant Workers (ACTFORM); Migrant Services Centre (MSC); Women and Media Collective (WMC)

Burma

Federation of Trade Unions – Burma (FTUB)

Indonesia

Center for Indonesian Migrant Workers (CIMW); Jarnas Pekabumi; KOPBUMI; Migrant Care; Solidaritas Perempuan; Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia (SBMI)

Malaysia

Charles Hector & Co.; Tenaganita

Philippines

Atikha Overseas Workers and Communities Initiative; Batis Center for Women; Center for Migrants Advocacy (CMA-Phils); Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-anakan ng Migranteng Mangagawang Pilipino (KAKAMMPI); Kanlungan Center Foundation, Inc. (KCFI); Unlad Kabayan Migrants Services Foundation, Inc.

Singapore

Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics (HOME); St. Francis Workers Centre (SFWC)

Hong Kong

Asian Migrant Centre (AMC); Coalition for Migrants Rights (CMR); Indonesian Migrant Workers Union (IMWU)

Japan

Solidarity for Migrants – Japan (SMJ)

Korea

Joint Committee with Migrants in Korea (JCMK)

Mongolia

Center for Human Rights Development

Taiwan

Hope Workers Center (HWC)

25 July 2007

Ms. Ferdous Ara Begum (Bangladesh)

Ms. Magalys Arocha Dominguez (Cuba)

Ms. Meriem Belmihoub-Zerdani (Algeria)

Ms. Saisuree Chutikul (Thailand)

Ms. Dorcas Coker-Appiah (Ghana)

Ms. Mary Shanthi Dairiam (Rapporteur) (Malaysia)

Mr. Cornelis Flinterman (Netherlands)

Ms. Naela Mohamed Gabr (Vice-Chairperson) (Egypt)

Ms. Françoise Gaspard (Vice-Chairperson) (France)

Ms. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari (Israel)

Ms. Tiziana Maiolo (Italy)

Ms. Violeta Neubauer (Slovenia)

Ms. Pramila Patten (Mauritius)

Ms. Silvia Pimentel (Brazil)

Ms. Fumiko Saiga (Japan)

Ms. Hanna Beate Schöpp-Schilling (Germany)

Ms. Heisoo Shin (Republic of Korea)

Ms. Glenda P. Simms (Vice-Chairperson) (Jamaica)

Ms. Dubravka Šimonović (Chairperson)(Croatia)

Ms. Anamah Tan (Singapore)

Ms. Maria Regina Tavares da Silva (Portugal)

Ms. Zou Xiaoqiao (China)

The Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

The United Nations Headquarters

New York, New York

RE: Appeal to the CEDAW Committee to approve a comprehensive General Recommendation 27 on Women Migrant Workers

To the Committee Members,

Greetings from Migrant Forum in Asia.

Migrant Forum in Asia is a membership network of more than 290 migrant organizations, migrants' rights advocates, and individuals from 14 countries in Asia working to protect and promote the rights and well being of migrants and members of their families.

Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) welcomes the opening of the CEDAW Committee's 39th Session especially now that the committee is celebrating its Twenty Fifth year Anniversary. We would like to congratulate the committee for its achievements in the past 25 years, particularly in its monitoring of state parties implementation of the Convention on all Forms of Discrimination Against Women which has enhanced state's accountability for women's enjoyment of their human rights.

In this 39th Session of the Committee we would like to raise our concern for the issues faced by women migrant workers. We hope that in this 39th Session the CEDAW committee will table in its agenda the discussion of the General Recommendation 27 which pertains to women migrant workers.

On 10-11 of July 2007 various Asian and European Civil Society organizations met at the Global Community Forum on Migration Development and Human Rights and among the issues

discussed pertained to women migrant workers and the use of CEDAW as a mechanism for calling on states to uphold the rights and well being of women migrants' workers. We welcomed the committee's move in its 32nd session to come up with a general recommendation pertaining to women migrant workers, the general recommendation 27. The organizations present at the Global Community Forum are looking forward to the approval of a comprehensive general recommendation 27 that will cover the following areas of concern:

1. The situation of women migrant workers
2. Gender based human rights concerns in the various stages of migration: pre-departure, transit, employment and return or reintegration
3. recommend for state parties to provide facilities for monitoring and reporting on the steps taken to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women migrants
4. recommend for countries of origin to provide sustainable socio-economic development alternatives to migration for women in order for migration to be an options and not a means to survive
5. recommend for countries of origin to take responsibility in ensuring the protection and promotion of their female citizens who migrate by ensuring that the following measures be required:
 - a. repeal outright bans and discriminatory restrictions on women's migration based on age, country of destination, occupation and marital status
 - b. provide adequate and timely pre-employment and pre-departure information to female citizens who are migrating
 - c. adopt regulations and design monitoring systems to ensure that recruiting agencies, marriage brokers and employers protect the rights of women migrant workers
 - d. deliver or facilitate free or affordable gender and rights based pre-departure and pre-employment training
 - e. provide health care services where necessary for women migrants
 - f. provide women who are migration with equal and independent access to travel documents
 - g. provide legal and administrative assistance whenever necessary
 - h. provide facilities to support the socio-economic and psychological sustainable reintegration of women migrant workers
6. recommend for countries of transit to take appropriate steps to ensure that women migrant's rights are not violated
7. recommend for countries of employment or residence to take appropriate steps to ensure the equal rights of women migrants by undertaking the following measures:
 - a. provide protection for the rights of all women migrant workers including undocumented women migrant workers
 - b. repeal outright discriminatory bans and restrictions on women's immigration base on age, country of origin, occupation and marital status
 - c. repeal discriminatory family reunification schemes
 - d. repeal discriminatory visa schemes
 - e. adopt regulations and design monitoring to ensure that recruitment agents, marriage brokers and employers do not violate the rights and well being of women migrants
 - f. provide training and awareness raising concerning the rights of women migrants
 - g. provide legal protection against gender discrimination
 - h. uphold women's right to freedom of movement and association
 - i. take steps to ensure that women who migrate through marriage have access to needed services, assistance and remedies
 - j. ensure access to all social services
 - k. ensure that there is no discrimination in terms of labor protection among local women workers and women migrant workers

Women migrant workers constitute more than half the total migrant population of the world. We celebrate their enormous contribution to all countries of the world, through their hard work, skills and creativity. Their contribution to the growth and development of society goes beyond measurable productivity in the roles they play as socio-political actors, bridging cultures and nations in both home and host countries. However, despite all these women migrant workers still experience abuse and discrimination in the various

stages of migration. The adoption of a comprehensive GR 27 will contribute immensely to calling on countries to protect and uphold the rights of all women migrants.

The adoption of a comprehensive GR 27 is crucial to our work in protecting and promoting the rights of women migrant workers. We look forward to the CEDAW committee's adoption of a comprehensive GR 27 that will cover the points stated above.

Courage, Peace, Power,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley William Gois". The signature is stylized with a large initial "A" and "G".

Ashley William Gois
Regional Coordinator