



Regional Informal Workshop on
Enhancing Parliamentarians Role in Shaping Labor Migration in Southeast
Asia
18 August 2008, Singapore

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, migrant labour mobility is an integral part of globalisation and economic integration;

WHEREAS, the flow of migrant workers is central to the economic and development policies of sending and receiving countries in Southeast Asia and beyond;

WHEREAS, sending countries encourage migration as a solution to local unemployment and to increase foreign exchange earnings;

WHEREAS, receiving countries require a continuous flow of cheaper and flexible labour to fuel expansion of their economic activities and to ensure the competitiveness of their countries and corporations;

WHEREAS, a number of labour laws and regulations in sending and receiving countries do not provide adequate protection to migrant workers;

WHEREAS, the lack of adequate protection to migrant workers has resulted in their trafficking, exploitation, maltreatment, physical abuse, sexual harassment, rape, torture, or in worst cases, death;

WHEREAS, the lack of adequate protection to migrant workers has resulted in their being cheated of wages, forced over-time, substandard working conditions, and living in fear of employers and local enforcement authorities;

WHEREAS, the lack of political will and the ambiguity in addressing migrant workers issues in both sending and receiving countries have undermine the interests and welfare of migrant workers;

WHEREAS, there is an increasing feminization of migration – where more than half of all unskilled migrant workers are women; where migrant women have become

breadwinners of families; where migrant women earn less than men but send a larger share of their earnings to their families; where unskilled migrant women face specific problems as a result of their gender; and where eighty per cent of the victims of human trafficking are women;

WHEREAS, there is a need to rethink the existing migration infrastructure and formulate the necessary laws or policies in order for migrant workers to benefit from migration and development – consistent with the Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) 2004, where the elaboration of VAP 1.1 calls for an ASEAN instrument that would protect and promote the rights of migrant workers;

WHEREAS, there is a strong need for Governments and regional bodies to effectively respond to the challenges of migration;

WHEREFORE, WE, THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE “REGIONAL INFORMAL WORKSHOP ON ENHANCING PARLIAMENTARIANS’ ROLE IN SHAPING LABOR MIGRATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA” HELD IN SINGAPORE ON 18 AUGUST 2008, HEREBY RESOLVE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Enhance the Role of Parliamentarians at the National Level:

- 1.1 To assert stronger oversight function of the Parliament to ensure effective implementation of national laws and policies on migration, and the accountability of government officials in migration issues;
- 1.2 To legislate national laws aligned with international conventions that promote and protect the rights of workers within the respective countries as well as out-going migrant workers, especially women;
- 1.3 To ensure that domestic work is protected by national labour laws and regulations;
- 1.4 To call on respective governments to ensure ratification of international human rights and core labour standards, especially on the promotion and protection of migrant workers;
- 1.5 To promote non-partisan parliamentarian caucuses that will specifically discuss migration issues;

2. Strengthen the Role of Parliamentarians at the Regional Level:

- 2.1 To build on AIPA and IPU Resolutions related to labour migration:
 - To acknowledge the multidimensional character of migration involving issues such as labour related problems, minority–security problems, health care issues, poverty, socio-economic, and not just political or State security matters;
 - To create concrete resolutions to protect migrants from issues relating to healthcare, welfare and labour;
- 2.2 To call for the ASEAN Governments to identify the national focal points which will constitute the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers;

- For the Committee to formally adopt its functions as stipulated in the Statement of the Establishment of the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers;
- For the Committee to come up with its Terms of Reference, work plan, time frame to be incorporated in the report of the ASEAN Secretary-General to the ASEAN Summit;

2.3 To call on AIPA to observe progress made by the Committee and to review the report of the ASEAN Secretary-General;

2.4 To call on AIPA to establish an Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on labour and migration;

- To deliberate progress made towards achieving the goal of an ASEAN Community by 2015 based on the 3 pillars;
- To identify focal points at the member countries that will coordinate national caucuses on labor and migration;
- To introduce a regulatory framework for employment and recruitment agencies as well as brokers in both sending and receiving countries;
- To explore the feasibility of harmonizing national laws or developing regional legislations setting floor standards for employment contracts, including wages;
- To organize dialogues and visits to enhance the understanding of social phenomena underlying issues related to labour migration;
- To monitor adherence of regional and bilateral agreements between ASEAN members to existing international norms, principles and standards; and

2.5 To call upon ASEAN heads of governments and the ASEAN Secretariat to draw up decent work country programmes that will assist in strengthening national labour markets.

3. Improve cooperation between Parliamentarians and Stakeholders (civil society organizations, trade unions, migrant workers' representatives, and the private sector):

3.1 To provide a space for more regular interface of Parliamentarians and Stakeholders, to exchange, share

and build on best practices and approaches to migration; and

3.2 To open debates on migration and development with a focus on the protection of migrant workers' rights and social developments.