

Well as predicted March was busy!

GAATW Member Organisations (MOs) recognised International Women's Day and attended the Commission on the Status of Women in New York.

GAATW-IS and MOs attended:

- The Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva where the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, Ms Joy Ngozi Ezeilo presented her report;
- The CREA (Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action, India) and CASAM (SANGRAM's Centre for Advocacy on Stigma and Marginalisation, India) meeting in Bangkok bringing together the Sex Workers' Rights Movement and the Stop Violence against Women Movement;
- The Annual Freedom Network Conference on Human Trafficking in Texas aimed at 'increasing awareness, assisting survivors and prosecuting traffickers'; and
- GAATW-IS also carried out advocacy in Washington DC in relation to the US annual Trafficking in Persons report and its impact on MOs.

Review Mechanism to the Human Trafficking Protocol:

- The UNODC acting on a UN General Assembly Resolution mandate related to reviewing the Human Trafficking Protocol has asked NGOs to respond to questions on the coordination of anti-trafficking responses and will be following up on this with GAATW-IS and MOs;
- The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice will take place in Vienna from 16-24 April with an agenda item to include 'Work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in facilitating the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime'

This month's Advocacy Update contains:

March advocacy

1. Reports from the HRC, Washington DC advocacy, the CREA-CASAM meeting and the FN conference.

Future advocacy

2. Looking forward to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice; and planned CEDAW advocacy through a workshop in May.

Please let us know if you have thoughts, questions or comments arising from this text at caroline@qaatw.org We look forward to hearing from you!

The 10th Session of the Human Rights Council

From 9th - 13th March GAATW-IS and MOs attended the 10th Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva at which the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) held a side event with the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Ms Joy Ngozi Ezeilo and then she presented her first report to which GAATW responded.

As noted in last month's Advocacy Update, overall we were pleased with the report from the Rapporteur and following her presentation at the plenary session of the HRC we gave a joint response to the HRC in collaboration with Franciscans International and Anti-Slavery International, after thanking the Rapporteur for her report, its clear link to existing research of International Organisations and her willingness to work with CSOs, the main points raised in our response were the following:

1. How she will address the lack of attention paid to the linkages between trafficking, labour and migration and consequently the trafficking of men and boys and trafficking in persons for forms of exploitation other than sexual.
2. The need to address the links between social and economic disparities between states, migration and human trafficking and between highly restrictive border controls and vulnerability to trafficking.
3. The increase in States adopting anti-trafficking legislation since the entry into force of the Human Trafficking Protocol and need to look at the human rights impact of such legislation, specifically through mechanisms such as the proposed review mechanism to the Human Trafficking Protocol.
4. The lack of quality data on human trafficking and some of the negative effects of poorly collected data, inadequate data protection mechanisms and the misuse of data.

Unfortunately the Rapporteur did not address our questions in her response to the plenary session but we hope to pursue these points with her in future meetings and any others you would like to raise, please contact caroline@gaatw.org if so.



Side event on the OHCHR Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking:

During the HRC the OHCHR held a side event on the Recommended Principles and Guidelines which were produced by OHCHR in 2002 laying out in a protections which must be given to trafficked persons as States implement anti-trafficking legislation. This event involved a panel discussion

with speakers including Mike Dotteridge, Dr Anne Gallagher, Special Rapporteur Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, Nicholas Le Coz (Vice-President of GRETA) and Somaly Mam (Founder of AFESIP-Cambodia).

Universal Periodic Review:

Linked to the HRC is the Universal Periodic Review Process (UPR) which involves a review of the human rights records of all 192 UN Member States once every four years.

The 6th UPR begins on 30th November - 11th December 2009 during which the following countries will be reviewed:

1. Côte d'Ivoire; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Equatorial Guinea; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia;
2. Cyprus; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Costa Rica; Dominica; Dominican Republic; Norway; Portugal; Albania.

NGOs wishing to make submissions in relation to the first group of countries must do so by 12pm Geneva time on 13th April 2009 and those wishing to submit in relation to the second group of countries must do so by 12pm Geneva time on 20th April 2009 to uprsubmissions@ohchr.org

Future HRC plans:

The 11th HRC will take place from 2-19th June 2009 - more updates to follow shortly.

GAATW-IS plans to address the subject of the Special Rapporteur on Contemporary forms of Slavery's report, debt bondage, due in the 12th Session of the HRC [7-25 September 2009] and would like to hear from you if you are interested in submitting examples of this in your work or would like to collaborate regarding a response to this report - contact caroline@gaatw.org

Washington DC Advocacy - the annual US Trafficking in Persons report

GAATW-IS met representatives in the US Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (G/TIP) which produces the annual US Trafficking in Persons Report. This meeting follows the dialogue we began in July 2008 when we wrote to US Secretary of State Rice raising MO objections to the report.

Our meeting included discussion of the following issues:

- The future of G/TIP following the election of President Obama, appointment of Secretary of State Clinton (G/TIP is housed in the US Department of State) and a new Director (now known to be Luis C De Baca but at this point unknown).

G/TIP will now achieve more of a balance between 'labour' and 'sex' trafficking (their distinction not ours) than has been seen previously. They are pleased to have Secretary of State Clinton on board who has a wealth of experience in this area.

- Implications for G/TIP of the new US Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorisation Act. *Removal of the clause that a country must record over 100 cases of trafficking in order to be included in the report means that it will now include more countries. Forced labour and fraudulent recruitment practices included in the Act and therefore also the report.*
- G/TIP planned response to the Cambodian anti-trafficking legislation which entered into force in 2008 and has caused heavy criticism from Cambodian sex workers rights and human rights groups. *They believe the situation in Cambodia has now improved and will maintain this belief unless they receive reports to the contrary.*
- TIP data collection methods: in our letter to Secretary of State Rice we noted our concerns at the way the Report cites and collects data. *More information was given on this and some acknowledgement that the tier ranking process and country narratives should be more transparent.*
- Distinction between sex work and labour, the US government's stance on prostitution and influence on States subject to ranking by the TIP Report: *I was assured that they are neutral on the issue of prostitution, despite believing as ever that in criminalizing prostitution States would end demand for prostitution they do not believe that they promote full criminalization of prostitution through funding decisions or the TIP reporting process.*



Since this meeting Luis C De Baca, whose nomination was supported by GAATW, was appointed the new Director of G/TIP. Prior to this role, de Baca served as Chief Counsel of the Civil Rights Division's Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit at the USA Justice Department. During the Clinton Administration, he was the Department's Involuntary Servitude and Slavery Coordinator and was instrumental in developing the United States' victim-centered approach to combating modern slavery. As a former U.S. Department of Justice prosecutor he investigated and prosecuted a broad range of human trafficking cases and insisted on a multi-disciplinary response to human trafficking.

We hope that this appointment means we will have even more avenues for dialogue with G/TIP through which to pursue the issues raised above.

If you are interested in any of the issues we have raised above or have different or expanded concerns with any aspects of the TIP report or US foreign policy impacts on trafficking responses in your country we would love to hear from you, contact Caroline Hames at caroline@gaatw.org

CREA-CASAM meeting with the Sex Workers' Rights and Stop Violence against Women Movement

This meeting took place over 3 days in Bangkok with GAATW-IS staff and Nelia Sancho from the Buhay Foundation in attendance. It offered an opportunity for representatives from the two movements to share their experiences of sex work. The conference included discussions on abolitionism, discomfort with sex work, human rights and HIV/Aids.

The conference aimed to address:

- When and where violence occurs within adult sex work, who are the perpetrators and how to prevent such violence;
- How to expand frameworks of global campaigns and interventions against violence on women to include not just trafficked women, but also violence against women in sex work;
- How to build strategies and alliances across movements to ensure that sex workers are seen to be as deserving of human rights as other constituencies;
- How to ensure that the rights of sex workers - including the right to freedom from violence - are better protected globally.

GAATW-IS spoke about our work on sex work, the history of GAATW and some of the international frameworks used for advocacy. Nelia Sancho highlighted the history of our association with sex workers rights groups and spoke about our support for non-abolitionist movements which address the far reaching negative human rights impacts of anti-trafficking measures.

The Freedom Network is a coalition of 25 non-governmental organisations that provide services to and advocate for the rights of trafficking survivors in the United States. GAATW-IS attended the 7th annual US Freedom Network Conference in Dallas, Texas on the 18th and 19th March. As part of our international advocacy programme we led a discussion on the subject 'The Global Impact of US Anti-trafficking Policies and a New Era of Hope'.



At this conference there was much discussion about what the newly re-authorised Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPRA 2008) would mean to service providers and advocates in the United States. Panellists included Government representatives, social service providers and NGOs who spoke about anti-trafficking frameworks within the USA.

A highlight of this conference was the key note speech by The Rev. Noelle Damico from the Anti-Slavery Campaign of the Presbyterian Church in the USA who spoke about their partnership with farm workers from the Coalition of Immokalee Workers with the aim of ensuring fair wages to tomato pickers working to provide tomatoes to major retail food outlets in the US.

GAATW-IS' session on the global impact of US anti-trafficking policies was well attended with a good discussion among participants on the content of the questionnaires put to NGOs and states during the compilation of the TIP report. There was also some discussion about the objectives of the TIP report and its relationship with national US anti-trafficking legislation and policy.

Future advocacy: the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

GAATW is collaborating with Caram-Asia and International Women's Rights Action Watch-Asia Pacific (IWRAP-AP) to convene a Roundtable on Using CEDAW to Protect the Rights of Women Migrant Workers and Trafficked Women in South and Southeast Asia from the 6th-9th May 2009 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

This roundtable will offer all involved a practical opportunity to identify a means of using the newly adopted General Recommendation 26 to CEDAW on the Rights of Migrant workers in advocacy to States Parties to CEDAW.

The purposes of the Roundtable are:

To explore the link between migration and trafficking in South and Southeast Asia in the context of migration for work looking at migrant women's position within international and national legal frameworks and developing advocacy strategies to promote the rights of migrant women through CEDAW.

Although this workshop looks at South and Southeast Asia, regardless of where you are based if you are interested in engaging in advocacy through CEDAW or would like assistance with a CEDAW shadow report please contact caroline@gaatw.org

Membership participation - monitoring mechanism to UNTOC

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice will take place from 16th April in Vienna and GAATW-IS and MOs will attend to discuss the question of a monitoring mechanism to the United Nations Transnational Organised Crime Convention including the Human Trafficking Protocol.

If you have any questions or would like to comment on the GAATW position on a monitoring mechanism to UNTOC please contact caroline@gaatw.org