

## Beijing Workshop on Women Migration in the Asia-Pacific Context October 13-15, 2000



### *Statement of Concern and Recommendations*

We are concerned about the impact of globalization on women and all marginalized communities who are being made more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and where sustainable livelihoods are being degraded and destroyed.

In this context we are concerned about the violation of human rights of women, particularly the trafficking of women and children in the course of migration for better livelihood options.

We are specifically concerned about the existing legal framework and mechanism in all our countries.

All national laws in Asia under terms such as "vagrancy", "obscenity", "immoral trafficking", "debauchery" and "combating social evil" criminalize different aspects of prostitution.

Currently many legislations have been formulated in several countries to combat trafficking. However, most of them fail to protect the rights of women. For example, trafficked women are still being arrested as illegal migrants. As such they have no means to demand legal protection in the country of destination. Often they are being deported to their countries of origin involuntarily.

We are also concerned that many trafficked women, upon their return, are facing economic hardship and social stigma. Those without a document to prove their nationality can not even return home. Furthermore, some of them are punished by their state for having left their country illegally.

Even when the laws are relatively adequate, they are not effective due to the dysfunctional judicial system, prejudice against women and migrants and because of corrupt authorities.

We therefore recommend that

- existing laws which criminalize women in prostitution be repealed\_\_\_\_\_
- anti-trafficking laws be formulated and reviewed and amended to ensure the\_\_\_\_\_
- protection of the rights of trafficked women and children\_\_\_\_\_
- trainings be conducted to sensitize law enforcement authorities\_\_\_\_\_
- adequate mechanisms be set up to monitor implementation of laws which promote and protect the human rights of women
- cooperation among women's NGOs and human rights groups working within and between countries be set up

*(The workshop was jointly organised by the Asian Women's Human Rights Council, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women. A detailed proceedings including some of the papers presented will be published by GAATW by 31 March, 2001.)*