Dear friends,

Warm greetings from Bangkok!

This year marks GAATW’s 25th Anniversary! As our International Coordinator shared in her end of year message, we spent some time last year in conversations with our members and partners, reflecting on the lessons learnt over the past quarter of a century, and deliberating on the future priorities of our Alliance.

Now it’s time to put these inspiring conversations into action, as we mark our anniversary year. In 2019 will strengthen the Alliance through inter-regional and cross-sectoral knowledge-sharing and learning by holding two global consultations: on Prevention of Trafficking and Unsafe Migration in April, and a knowledge-sharing forum on Women, Work and Migration in the last quarter of the year. Given the limited funding for this type of convening, we will also organise a number of webinars on topics identified by the GAATW Secretariat and members, such as feminism, movement building, trafficking in conflict, labour, sex work, as well as inter-regional migration. Where possible and needed, we will organise learning trips for members and partners in origin and destination countries.

This year we will also move towards a more pronounced articulation of a labour approach to trafficking. Such an approach seeks to create a shift in the power dynamics between workers, employers and states, and enhance the power of all workers, regardless of status and sector, to enjoy a living wage, decent working conditions and full labour rights, free from exploitation and risks of trafficking. A labour approach would shift the focus away from individual harms to the power disparities between workers and employers and the economic and social conditions that make people at risk of trafficking. We hope to challenge, with new analysis and evidence, the social and economic invisibility of women’s work, promote policy recognition of women workers, and support their mobilisation, collective voice, bargaining power and representation in relevant policy processes.

We will continue working with women and girls from tribal communities in Orissa, India before they migrate, or decide to migrate, for work within or outside their state. We will also continue documenting and sharing women’s experiences with work and migration through our three Feminist Participatory Action Research projects focusing on the domestic work, garment and entertainment sectors in South, Southeast and West Asia, and the domestic work sector on the East Africa-West Asia migration corridor, and in Thailand. In Latin America, we will work with our members to document migrant women workers’ experiences of violence in the world of work and how they face and overcome these.

The findings of our research, consultations and strategic shift towards a labour approach will inform and feed into our advocacy and action. We will hold a parallel event on Women Migrant Workers and Public Services during the Commission on the Status of Women in March. This event will look at the ways in which migration policies and migrant rights organisations can improve migrant women’s access to services and will look at ways in which migration and labour policies can seek to recognise, reduce and redistribute women’s unpaid care burden in countries of origin and destination. We will also bring our analysis to the International Labour
Conference in June where social partners will negotiate a new Convention and Recommendation on violence and harassment in the world of work. We will contribute, together with the International Women’s Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAW-AP) and other allies, to the development of the CEDAW General Recommendation on human trafficking. We will continue our advocacy for the implementation and monitoring of the Global Compact on Migration, and may also get involved in the newly adopted Review Mechanism of the UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime. We want to increase our engagement in ASEAN, in particular, monitoring the implementation of the ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons, if we secure funding for it. At the same time, we recognise that international treaties are losing their power and have limited impact on people’s lives, so we also plan to put more efforts into supporting our members with national-level advocacy.

We will publish two new issues of our open access, peer reviewed journal Anti-Trafficking Review. The April issue, themed ‘Sex Work’, will highlight, among others, the strength of the organised sex worker movement and the challenges and benefits of building alliances with other movements. The September issue, themed ‘Public Perceptions and Responses to Human Trafficking’, will focus on the image of human trafficking that awareness campaigns and the media create and the actions they propagate among the general public. We will put more concerted efforts into making this rigorously considered academic material accessible to a broader audience through videos and blog posts based on the published articles. We will also organise more public events to promote the journal.

We are looking forward to sharing this anniversary year with all our members, allies and supporters! If you wish to share it with us too, subscribe to our e-Bulletin, and follow us on social media!

As always we welcome your feedback and contributions to future issues at borislav@gaatw.org.

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**News from the GAATW International Secretariat**

**Global Forum on Migration and Development and Global Compact on Migration**

In December GAATW attended Migration Week in Marrakech, which saw the GFMD Civil Society Days, the Global Forum on Migration and Development and People’s Global Action, and the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact on Migration.

Throughout the week GAATW worked to highlight key points we have made throughout the process through discussions with other CSOs, collaborative advocacy with the Women in Migration Network, and through two side events we organised in collaboration with members OKUP, BOMSA, Justice Centre Hong Kong, the IOM, UNHCR, OHCHR and WIMN. One event was based on the Anti-Trafficking Review’s latest issue “Irregular Migrants, Refugees or Trafficked Persons?” (flyer), and the other one - focusing on the Bangladesh-Jordan migration corridor and looking at an initiative to improve migrant workers’ rights in the garment industry (Flyer). With Women in Migration Network we developed and launched the Women’s Rights Manifesto, where we are calling on Governments and other stakeholders to ensure that migrant women are at the centre of migration policy. …

**Latin American Knowledge Sharing Forum: Understanding and Addressing Exploitation in the World of Work**

On 11-12 October, GAATW and UITA (the Latin American branch from the International Union of Food) organised a two-day regional knowledge-sharing forum in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Forum brought together 30 representatives from anti-trafficking NGOs, migrant rights groups, trade unions, and academia to discuss linkages between human trafficking, forced labour and exploitation, the global political and economic system, and the state control of human mobility.

Héctor Morillo from IUTA highlighted that trade unions are traditionally masculine spaces. UITA is slowly introducing a gender approach in their work, acknowledging that gender issues are
not only women's issues but issues that affect society in general and workplaces in particular.

The situation in the region is quite similar to the rest of the world: high rates of unemployment and precarity in available jobs; a widening gap between poor and rich; rise of right-wing populism; alignment of the media with those in power; repression of human rights activists and trade unions by politicians and corporations; criminalisation and persecution of migrants, etc. In this regard, Natividad Obeso from AMUMRA highlighted that 'there is a governmental effort to divide migrants into "bad" and "good" instead of reinforcing the idea of migration as a human right in order to have a dignified life.' ...

Launch of Issue 11 of Anti-Trafficking Review 'Irregular Migrants, Refugees or Trafficked Persons?'

International migration has become a 'mega trend' of our times, with more than 260 million migrants crossing borders in 2017. Some of them move in search of better livelihood opportunities, others flee conflict, environmental degradation or natural disasters, and yet others are deceived or coerced into undertaking exploitative work. At the same time, the labels that the international community has come up with to designate people on the move - such as smuggled migrants, refugees, or trafficked persons - have become increasingly blurred in recent years. Yet the label that a person is given by authorities can mean the difference between assistance and protection, or arrest and deportation. ...

New Feminist Participatory Action Research project: Women’s Labour Migration on the Africa-Middle East Corridor

GAATW and the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) are undertaking a new research to better understand the processes, trends, challenges and opportunities around labour migration from select African countries to the Middle East for domestic work.

Most of the migrants taking up domestic work on this corridor are women. While some experience abuse and exploitation in the process of migration and/or at work places, many also achieve some degree of economic independence and support their families through this migration. As organisations committed to end the abuse and exploitation of workers, including migrant workers, and to enable migrants and their families to reap the benefits of migration, GAATW and IDWF hope that the findings of this research will enable them and other relevant stakeholders to strategise for better protection of the rights of migrant domestic workers nationally, regionally and internationally. ...

Read all news from the GAATW International Secretariat

News from our Member Organisations

Women in the Workplace: Tackling gender-based discrimination through participatory research

Focus on Labour Exploitation (FLEX), UK, is embarking on a new project to uncover the working conditions of some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of women workers in the UK. The project will seek to understand the structural drivers of abusive business practices associated with extended global supply chains and the 'race to the bottom' dynamic. These factors have increased sub-contracting, zero-hour contracts, agency-based labour recruitment, informal labour and other business practices that make workers replaceable, dispensable and exploitable. The project will also dig deeper to uncover specific drivers of gender-based labour abuse and exploitation through in-depth interviews with workers in highly feminised, marginalised, low-status industrial sectors such as hospitality, cleaning and garment manufacturing. ...

From California to Cambodia: Compensation for victims of human trafficking

In the past few months, three of our members - Human Trafficking Legal Center, USA, La Strada International, the Netherlands, and Liberty Shared, Hong Kong - published analyses and reports on the issue of access to compensation and remedies for victims of human trafficking and exploitation in, respectively, USA, Europe, and Thailand and Cambodia. ...

Chocolate or Chicken Bones: A Photovoice Art Exhibition of im/migrant sex workers

On 8 January SWAN Vancouver opened its exhibition 'Chocolate or Chicken Bones'. This exhibition uses photovoice methodology to
address misinformation and stigma about im/migrant women who work in massage shops and apartments. The project provides im/migrant sex workers an opportunity to self-represent their lived experiences and bring forth a dimension, reality and perspective which policy makers and law enforcement have neglected and dismissed.

In 2018, SWAN invited five im/migrant sex workers that they had worked with to be part of the project. Over the course of four months, they took photos of their lives, got together regularly to discuss them, and gradually put together an exhibit. The project doesn't actually centre on the work part of women's lives but on other aspects, such as how they build homes, how they travel, their hobbies and their families. Together, these photos and stories present their authors as thoughtful, complex, active, three-dimensional human beings, very different from the one-dimensional stereotypes of im/migrant sex workers that are the basis for so much public discourse around sex work and trafficking.

**Trafficking in human beings for labour exploitation in the case of women - an invisible phenomenon?**

In 2016, KOK, the German NGO network against trafficking in human beings, published a study (in German) on severe labour exploitation and trafficking of women for labour exploitation in Germany. In 2018 KOK published an English summary of the study.

Based on a review of news articles about human trafficking, and interviews with service providers, trade unions and a police officer, the study found that in Germany trafficking of women is associated almost exclusively with the sex industry. Women trafficked in other sectors, such as domestic work, factory work or agriculture, remain largely invisible. The main reason, according to the study, is the gender stereotypes and expectations, which lead to the perception that women are victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, and men - for labour exploitation. Socially constructed gender roles and the attribution of gender-specific features to certain jobs mean that people tend to expect men or women in certain industries or fields. This, in turn, hinders the access to justice and services for women trafficked in other sectors.

The study concludes with recommendations for the media, counselling centres, trade unions, and government agencies who all have a role to play in combating gender stereotypes and ensuring that all trafficked persons, in all labour sectors, are identified and receive the support they are entitled to.

**Theatre for development**

Migrants and victims of trafficking are often not well informed about how to move safely in search of decent work. Commonly cited knowledge gaps include information on employment options, laws and procedures in places of destination, basic financial literacy (including cost benefit analysis of migration), and recruitment options. The rights based approach to migration has not been sufficiently mainstreamed into community based work in Bangladesh. As a result, migrant communities are less able to address issues surrounding migration in an organised and enabling manner. Along with the need to provide stronger levels of awareness and education to protect and prevent vulnerable groups from the risks and consequences, a rights-based approach is needed to increase the access of trafficking victims to physical, psychological and social rehabilitation; it also needs to engage the whole community to build the capacity of government mechanisms including, anti-trafficking committees, as well as community based organisations, NGOs, human rights defenders, and other relevant actors to promote safe migration.

**Stories of Human Trafficking Survivors**

In September 2018, CoMensha, the Dutch Coordination Centre for Human Trafficking, published the report *Facing Forward, Nine stories*
about being a survivor of human trafficking in a post-trafficking shelter in the Netherlands. The report comprises stories of six women and three men, who all have been in a trafficking situation. In the stories, they reflect on how they experience the care and shelter support organised for them. The main message of the report is that shelter and care for trafficked persons should focus both on addressing their trauma, but also on their future, enabling them to better cope with problems from the past and related ongoing challenges.

Read all news from GAATW members.

www.gaatw.org

Resources

Not Stopping Here: Hong Kong as a transit site for human trafficking
Justice Centre Hong Kong
This report explores how and why Hong Kong may be a transit site for human trafficking. It is the first one on the subject that has been carried out. Sectors and activities studied include the domestic work sector, the sex work sector, and the drug trade. Recommendations on policy and law are made in the report. Justice Centre Hong Kong hopes that these early findings will prove to be the start of much needed conversations about how and why people are being moved through the city.

Issue Paper on The International Legal Definition of Trafficking in Persons
UNODC
In January 2019, UNODC launched a new Issue Paper on The International Legal Definition of Trafficking in Persons, consolidating the learnings from the three earlier technical issue papers and one guidance note regarding specific elements of the legal definition of trafficking in persons. The new paper aims, in particular, to guide consideration and development of practical guiding principles for criminal justice practitioners that emerge from the three definitional concept papers, and the underlying practical experience in over 30 jurisdictions, as well as determine next steps for further research and analysis.

Severe labour exploitation in EU
EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)
Severe labour exploitation is widespread across the European Union. While workplace inspections can help counter this phenomenon, they need to be strengthened to do so effectively. Based on interviews and focus group discussions with almost 240 exploited workers active in diverse economic sectors, a new report of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency provides important evidence on how unscrupulous employers manipulate and undermine inspections, and on what can be done to counteract such efforts. According to the report, workplace inspections are often lacking or ineffective, enabling unscrupulous employers to exploit their workers. Tightening up inspections to combat abuse and empower workers to report abuse are some of the ways FRA suggests to help end severe labour exploitation. For more information also see the related factsheet.

H&M: fair living wages were promised, poverty wages are the reality
Clean Clothes Campaign
This research published by the Clean Clothes Campaign in September reveals that many workers making H&M’s clothes live below the poverty line, despite H&M’s promise of a living wage by 2018, and despite the brand’s recent deceptive claims of progress. CCC researchers interviewed 62 workers in factories that make H&M clothes in Bulgaria, Turkey, Cambodia and India and none of them earn anywhere near living wage. Interviewed workers in India and Turkey earn about a third and in Cambodia less than one-half of the estimated living wage. In Bulgaria interviewed workers’ salary at H&M’s ‘gold supplier’ is not even 10 per cent of what would be required for workers and their families to have decent lives. The Clean Clothes Campaign demands that H&M fulfill its promise and ensure that its workers are earning living wage. See how you can take action here.

Work for a Brighter Future: Global Commission on the Future of Work
International Labour Organization
In this new report, the ILO Global Commission on the Future of Work calls on governments to commit to a set of measures in order to address the challenges caused by unprecedented
transformational change in the world of work. The commission outlines a vision for a human-centred agenda that is based on investing in people's capabilities, institutions of work and in decent and sustainable work. Among the ten recommendations are: a universal labour guarantee that protects fundamental workers' rights, an adequate living wage, limits on hours of work and safe and healthy workplaces; guaranteed social protection from birth to old age that supports people's needs over the life cycle; a universal entitlement to lifelong learning that enables people to skill, reskill and upskill; managing technological change to boost decent work, including an international governance system for digital labour platforms; greater investments in the care, green and rural economies; a transformative and measurable agenda for gender equality; and reshaping business incentives to encourage long-term investments.

**Smart Guide: Rights-Affirming International Policies Relating to Sex Work**

Global Network of Sex Work Projects

In recent years a growing number of international organisations have released policies, guidance and recommendations that promote the rights of sex workers and advocate for the full decriminalisation of sex work. It can be difficult for sex workers and sex worker rights activists to maintain an awareness of the many policies and recommendations that now exist. The purpose of this Smart Guide is to provide an accessible introduction to these rights-affirming international policies and recommendations on sex work, as well as to explore how international human rights law can be used in sex workers' rights activism. The Guide begins by looking at important policy recommendations that have been issued by international, human rights-focused, nongovernmental organisations that promote a rights-affirming approach to sex work. The second section focuses on the UN and details many of the recommendations that have been issued by UN agencies, treaty bodies, the Human Rights Council and Special Procedures concerning the rights of sex workers and the decriminalisation of sex work. The final section provides some brief comments on the use of human rights law to advance sex workers' rights.

**Behind Closed Doors: Forced Labour in the Domestic Work Sector in Singapore**

Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics and Liberty Shared

In Asia, Singapore employs the second highest number of documented migrant domestic workers - 246,800 as of December 2017. Yet there are very few protections in place for them. This report is based on the experiences of 800 migrant domestic workers assisted by HOME. The five most common complaints were: overwork, emotional abuse (including verbal insults, intimidation and threats), salary-related claims, illegal deployment, and inadequate provision of food. Other issues reported included a lack or denial of rest days, unreasonable restrictions on communication (including the confiscation of mobile phones), the denial of sick leave and/or medical treatment, and poor living conditions. There were also reports of physical and sexual abuse or harassment. Almost all the domestic workers who seek help have their identity documents (most notably passports) withheld by their employers. Many of these practices are indicators of forced labour.

HOME and Liberty Shared hope that this report will contribute to a deeper understanding of what forced labour looks like in practice and how it manifests itself in the domestic work sector in Singapore. It is hoped to encourage key stakeholders to collaborate towards ensuring timely and much needed support to victims and prevention.

**Latin America in 2019: Stories to watch**

Al Jazeera

In the last 12 months, Latin America has seen a series of high-stakes elections, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) deliver its biggest-ever bailout package and Venezuela’s economic collapse explode into the most severe migration crisis in the region's history.

As nationalists take the reins of the region's two largest economies and corruption scandals continue to dog politicians from Mexico City to Montevideo, Al Jazeera has put together these ten stories to look out for in 2019...

**ILO Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers**

International Labour Organization

In this report, the ILO estimates that 164 million people are migrant workers - a rise of 9 per cent since 2013. The majority of migrant workers - 96 million, or 58 per cent - are men, while 68 million, or 42 per cent are women. Approximately 68 per cent of migrant workers live in high-income countries, 19 per cent in upper middle-income countries, 10 per cent in lower middle-income countries and 3 in low-income countries.

Migrant workers constitute 19 per cent of the workforce of high-income countries, but only 1-2 per cent in lower-income countries. Nearly 61 per cent of migrant workers are found in three subregions: 23 per cent in North America, 24 per cent in Northern, Southern and Western Europe and 14 per cent in the Arab countries.

The report highlights the importance of gathering more comprehensive and harmonised
The ILO is planning to produce global estimates on international migrant workers regularly, to better inform decision-making and contribute to the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and SDG targets 8.8 and 10.7.

The Critical Role of Civil Society in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
This Occasional Paper outlines and analyses the role played by civil society in efforts to address human trafficking. It provides a detailed overview of the role and importance of NGOs in combating trafficking in human beings in the OSCE region as well as of the international legal foundation of their engagement. It reaffirms the critical role played by civil society in combating human trafficking, especially in crisis situations. It has also reveals that there is a continuing need to address and alleviate the many challenges faced by anti-trafficking NGOs in their daily work, including advocacy efforts, policy-making engagement, funding and sustainability prospects, service provision roles, and networking and co-operation arrangements. It should be read as a reference document for the more effective involvement of civil society organisations in preventing and fighting human trafficking at the national and local level.