



# Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

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## Oral Statement of APWLD for the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

Madame Chairperson, Members of the CSW Bureau and Distinguished Delegates of the CSW,

The Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, shares this statement on behalf of forty three women's rights civil society representatives and supportive agencies from 17 countries<sup>1</sup> of the Asia Pacific region, gathered in attendance to the Strategising Workshop for the UN CSW-57, held in February 2013, in Bangkok, Thailand. This space prioritised inclusion of women most marginalised by intersecting forms of discrimination, prejudice and power inequalities: indigenous women, rural women, women living with disabilities, migrant women, women working in informal sectors, dalit women, women living with HIV/AIDS, sexual minorities. We welcome the opportunity to work with governments and UN agencies at local, national, regional and international levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women.

We also recognise progress in legal standards and policy has been made by some governments we are also concerned that progress is uneven, often ad hoc, under-resourced, marginalised in governments. Some programmes and intervention are even developed without support of civil society and too often does not reach those most affected by violence and exclusion. We would also like to express concern over regression in language and approach in some countries or localised areas. With this we put forward some key recommendations:

- Support collaboration from autonomous women's movements is needed in policy and program development to address violence against women, as evidenced by a comprehensive research (**Htun and Weldon 2012**).

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<sup>1</sup> Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, China, Timor-Leste, Cambodia, Myanmar, Korea, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Fiji and Australia (PNG unable to attend).

- Recognise intersectional forms of discrimination and structural violence that produce intense forms of marginalization to indigenous, rural, dalit, women living with disabilities, migrants, domestic workers, women living with HIV/AIDS, sexual minorities; within this year's agreed conclusions.
- Recognise that prevention must primarily be about dismantling power, resource and wealth inequalities between men and women as well as between rich and poor, especially with negative impacts of globalisation, militarisation and fundamentalisms.
- Commit to uphold and advance existing international norms, standards and principles as articulated in CEDAW, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at national and regional levels and arrest moves to erode women's rights and language particularly around SRHR, traditional values and gender equality.
- Promote the ratification and meaningful implementation of all relevant international treaties: 1) ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers; 2) Convention on the rights of migrant workers and their families; and 3) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Recognise that violence against women undermines development and its eradication is a condition for development. Peace and security internationally, in the community and in the home should be a development goal. Have the elimination of violence against women as a major agenda in defining Post2015 development goal for gender equality in your country statements and in the agreed conclusions
- Undertake holistic, legal, and structural reform of the criminal justice system. This ensures the highest legislative standards; effective implementation of the law. Lastly, ensure that policy review and evaluation is embedded in the formulation of new policies and as an urgent agenda for existing policies.

We enjoin all of you delegates and representative of member states to support and adopt our recommendations as you deliberate on the substantive content of this year's agreed conclusions. Likewise we assure you of our commitment to ensure that these recommendations are carried out at the international, regional and national levels. Thank you for your attention.