



AP R2P

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SPOTLIGHT ON R2P



Convenors of APPAP Working Group on Gender and Atrocities Prevention facilitate fellowship program for ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children.

From 23-27 March 2017, the national representatives of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) participated in a five-day fellowship program at the University of Queensland, Australia on Advancing Gender, Peace and Security (GPS) in ASEAN, with a particular focus on preventing sexual and gender-based atrocity crimes.

Dr. Sarah Teitt, Deputy Director of the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, University of

Queensland, and Dr. Ma. Lourdes Veneracion-Rallonza, Assistant Professor at Ateneo de Manila University, the Philippines, co-facilitated the program as part of their ongoing collaboration as the co-convenors of the Asia Pacific Partnership for Atrocity Prevention's (APPAP) working group on Gender and Atrocities Prevention.

As recognised in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and UN Security Council Resolution 1820, widespread and systematic sexual and gender-based violence

(SGBV) can constitute an act of genocide, war crime or crime against humanity. SGBV can also be a tactic of ethnic cleansing. As such, the prevention of SGBV and the protection of populations at risk of SGBV is a fundamental responsibility for all states as part of their R2P commitment. Since 2009, the UN Secretary-General has submitted annual reports on R2P to the UN General Assembly and UN Security Council. In these reports, the Secretary-General has reiterated that preventing sexual and gender-based violence



is a vital component of implementing R2P. The Secretary-General's reports have also highlighted that gender discrimination and gender inequality are associated with greater risk of widespread or systematic SGBV, and noted that states that have strong mechanisms for protecting women's rights and a culture of accountability for SGBV are more resilient to gender-based atrocity crimes. The Secretary-General has encouraged States to consider how the UN Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, which calls for national and regional action to combat SGBV and to promote the full and equal participation of women in decision-making and peace processes, can be incorporated into atrocity prevention strategies.

A key aim of APPAP's Gender and

Atrocities Prevention Working Group is to encourage comprehensive action to prevent gender-based atrocity crimes in the Asia Pacific region. In line with this goal, this fellowship program provided an opportunity for ACWC representatives to exchange knowledge and explore strategies for strengthening resilience to gender-based atrocity crimes in ASEAN, including through deepening regional engagement with the WPS agenda.

The program included seminars on: gender and the responsibility to protect agenda; the UN Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Prevention and its relevance in the ASEAN context; gender analysis for early warning and prevention of SGBV as a war crime, crime against humanity or act of genocide; implementing the UN Women, Peace and Security agen-

da through national and regional action plans; the protection of refugee and internally displaced women and girls; enhancing youth participation in peacebuilding and promoting gender equity in peace processes; protecting women and children's rights through transitional justice; and the role of women in combatting terrorism and extremism in ASEAN. The program included an opportunity for ACWC to exchange views on promoting women's participation in peace and security institutions with representatives from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; the Australian Civil Military Centre, Department of Defence; the Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security and the Australian Federal Police.



Drawing on knowledge and ideas exchanged throughout the fellowship, the final day of the program entailed a workshop in which ACWC delegates identified opportunities and practical steps to integrate GPS principles into ASEAN, as a means to strengthen resilience to gender-based atrocities in the region. The ACWC delegates identified a number of areas where the ACWC could contribute to advancing GPS, including: promoting understanding of and developing guidelines on policies that prevent SGBV; advocating for the inclusion of GPS in ASEAN policy across all ASEAN pillars and requesting Member States to report on women/youth peace and security; and developing an information and education campaign to raise awareness of GPS in the region. To move this agenda forward, the ACWC agreed that there was a need to map existing initiatives and practices within the region that support the GPS agenda, including relevant previous ACWC projects. Representatives suggested that this would prevent duplication and build on ongoing work, lay the foundation for identifying good practice and areas for improvement, and provide a basis for the ACWC to develop concrete proposals for future action.

In line with APPAP's commitment to help mobilize regional actors to facilitate coherent and comprehensive action to prevent atrocities, at the close of the program, the co-convenors of the APPAP Working Group on Gender and Atrocity Prevention indicated their readiness to support the ACWC to progress this agenda as requested.

The ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) to Advance Gender, Peace and Security Agenda in the Region



**ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTHEAST
ASIAN NATIONS**

BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA, 31 March 2017 – The ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) joined a fellowship programme organised by the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect at University of Queensland from 27-31 March 2017.

The ACWC exchanged views with senior officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Federal Police, and Ministry of Defense of Australia on various aspects of women, peace and security in the contexts of Australia and Southeast Asia. Actions to advance women, peace and security in other regions and regional organisations, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as the Nadia Initiative of UN Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking were shared by expert speakers.

The ACWC was also engaged in discussions with civil society organisations. The Australian Civil Society Coalition on Women, Peace and Security, Australian National Committee on Refugee Women, Diaspora Action Australia, Australian Red Cross, and Stateless Network Asia Pacific (SNAP), shared information on their initiatives to advocate for protection of refugees, internally displaced persons, women and children as victims of conflicts and in other vulnerable situations. Senior lecturers from University of Queensland, Monash University and Griffith University shared knowledge and perspectives on issues of atrocity crime prevention and transitional justice.

The ACWC Representatives and delegates from ASEAN Member States shared information on country situations and initiatives concerning prevention and early warning of sexual and gender-based violence, preventing atrocity crimes, women and youth participation in peace building and promoting gender responsiveness of peace processes, women's and children's rights in contexts of transnational justice and emerging violent extremism, and building a culture of prevention were discussed. ASEAN Secretariat highlighted the relevant regional strategies and policies on peace building, prevention of and countering extremism and promotion of moderation under the political-security and socio-cultural pillars.

"Women, peace and security is part of the thematic areas of the ACWC Work Plan 2016-2020. It is also closely related to the ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Elimination of Violence Against Women and ASEAN Regional Action Plan on Elimination of Violence Against Children, and other programmes promoting and protecting the rights of women and children" said Mdm. Lily Purba, Chair of ACWC and Indonesia's Representative for Women's Rights. She further underlined, "The fellowship programme was relevant to the ACWC as it gave broader perspectives on how we could contribute to better promotion and protection of the rights of women and children and the responsibility of each ASEAN Member State to protect women and children's peace and security, and the whole population".

On 29 March 2017, the ACWC introduced its work and achievements to undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate students of University of Queensland. It was a good opportunity to raise public awareness of the ACWC. At the last day, the ACWC agreed to propose an ASEAN statement on women, peace and security for adoption at the 31st ASEAN Summit in November 2017 in the Philippines.

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