

Third Press Release of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC)

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Vientiane, Lao PDR, 18 February 2012

The ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) concluded its Fourth Meeting which was convened from 16-18 February 2012 in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

At this Meeting, the ACWC's work plan for 2012-2016 was concretized to ensure that the Commission's journey in the next five years would bring impacts to women and children in the region. Among the activities/projects identified are publication of the compilation of good practices in combating violence against women and children in ASEAN and establishment of an ACWC network of social service agencies involved in preventing, protecting and helping victims of violence against women and children in ASEAN.

Projects and activities that were identified at the ACWC's Consultation Meeting with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Violence against Children (SRSG-VAC) and prominent international experts on elimination of violence against women on 16-17 January 2012, and the ACWC's Dialogue with civil society on 18 January 2012 in Manila, the Philippines, were taken into consideration in developing ACWC's 2012-2016 work plan.

At the Meeting, the ACWC Representatives included a visit to the Counseling and Protection Centre for Women and Children in Vientiane in the afternoon of 18 February 2012. This Centre, which is the first shelter established by the Lao Women's Union, provides comprehensive services for victims of domestic violence, trafficking and sexual exploitations with the support of its networks throughout districts and villages in the country. The study visit is the first of the ACWC's series of study visits designed for the ACWC Representatives to have a better knowledge and understanding of what each Member State is doing for the healing, well-being, and reintegration into society.

The ACWC continues to synergize their work with other ASEAN bodies relevant to their focus areas by welcoming consultations, dialogues and meetings with them. Notable among them were the meeting of ACWC Chair with the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) in September 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand; the meeting of ACWC Chair and Vice-Chair with the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) in October 2011 in Bogor, Indonesia; and the dialogue of the ACWC Representatives with the ASEAN Inter-governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in November 2011 in Bali, Indonesia. A consultation of the Drafting Team of the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of

Migrant Workers (ACMW-DT) with the ACWC representatives is in April 2012 in Singapore.

The Meeting welcomed Brunei Darussalam's new Representative for children's rights, Datin Paduka Hajah Apsah binti Haji Majid, who is replacing the former Representative, Datin Hajah Adina Othman.

The Fifth ACWC Meeting is scheduled for 3-5 July 2012 at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia.

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