

**ASEAN  
INSTITUTE FOR PEACE  
AND RECONCILIATION (AIPR)**  
**SYMPOSIUM ON THE PLIGHT OF  
WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN  
CONFLICT SITUATIONS**

**8-9 December 2015  
Tagaytay City, the Philippines**



one vision  
one identity  
one community

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RECONCILIATION  
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TAGAYTAY CITY, THE PHILIPPINES**



**NORWEGIAN MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
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Swiss Confederation





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Edited by: Ms. Rina Jimenez-David

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the resource persons and participants and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of ASEAN and their respective governments.



The Philippines is once again the proud host of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations which was held in Tagaytay City on 8-9 December 2015, having spearheaded two other AIPR events earlier.

As a staunch believer in the effective Implementation of UNSCR 1325 (Women, Peace and Security), the Philippines deemed it necessary to lead a symposium to expose the situation of women and children, who are the first and most severely affected victims of conflict. The Symposium also implemented certain ASEAN Political Security Community Blueprint action lines pertaining to gender mainstreaming and peace building.

The Symposium sought : 1) To surface the situation of women and children in conflict situations, exposing various ways they are exploited in such conditions; 2) To look closely at the recruitment by religious extremists of children and women as future terrorists and society destabilizers; 3) To explore the role of women and children as peacebuilders and peacekeepers; 4) To discuss existing domestic and regional initiatives and mechanisms, as well as to share best practices and models, to help protect and promote the welfare of women and children in conflict situations; 5) To formulate policy recommendations to address the problems arising from the exploitation of women and children in conflict situations.

The Symposium successfully accomplished these objectives. The most interesting aspect of the forum was highlighting the role of women as champions of peace, transcending their being victims of conflict. A few women resource speakers from ASEAN talked about their personal experiences in the face of conflict and how they were able to influence their local communities to get women involved in activities and programs that would not only improve their lot but their families and societies' as well.

The Symposium Program was aptly ushered in by a choral rendition of the popular song, “If We Hold on Together,” which talks about solidarity in the face of difficulty and dreaming of a better world, and the ubiquitous “Let There be Peace on Earth.” The Opening Session featured inspiring words and calls to action of ASEAN officials and external partners of ASEAN, including Hon. Evan P. Garcia, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs and ASEAN-Philippines SOM Leader; H.E. Dato Hasnudin Hamzah, Chairman of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN and AIPR Governing Council; H.E. Stig Ingemar Traavik, Ambassador of Norway to ASEAN; and H.E. Yvonne Baumann, Ambassador of Switzerland to ASEAN. The keynote speech was prepared by Hon. Corazon J. Soliman, Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development of the Philippines.

Session 2 was about surfacing the plight of women and children in conflict situations. Discussions were enriched by the presentations of Dr. Jean D’Cunha, Head of UN Women, Myanmar; Attorney Marilyn Pintor, Regional Director for Caraga Region of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines; Prof. Aurora Javate De Dios, Philippine Representative for Women’s Rights to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children; and Ms. Hanny Cueva Beteta, Regional Advisor for Governance, Peace and Security, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Former Director-General of ASEAN-Philippines Luis T. Cruz moderated the session.

Session 3 was about highlighting the role of women and children as active participants in conflict resolution and the peace process. The testimonies of the speakers were engaging as they were firsthand accounts of their experiences relevant to the topic. The resource speakers detailed the many contributions and potentials of women and children in peace building. The speakers included: Ms. Thavory Huot, Executive Director of Khmer Ahimsa, Cambodia; Prof. Dr. Ir. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, Chairman of the School of Advisory Council of the School of Business and Management Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), Indonesia; Ms. Daw Mary Tawm KD, Co-Founder and Coordinator of Wunpawng Ningthoi, Myanmar; Ms. Ros Sopheap, Executive Director of Gender and Development for Cambodia; and Ms. Agnes Fernandez Lopez, President of People’s Advocacy for Collaboration and Empowerment, Inc. (PeACE), the Philippines. Philippine Representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) H.E. Rosario G. Manalo moderated the session.

Session 4 featured a discussion on the programs and mechanisms to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights and welfare of women and children during armed conflict and/or in post-conflict situations. Resource speakers for the session were either experts or implementors of relevant programs on the ground. They include: Dr. Endah Trista

Agustiana, Technical Lead of Capacity Building, Human Rights and Women's & Children's Rights, ASEAN - U.S. PROGRESS; Ms. Ruengrawee Pichaikul, Senior Program Coordinator for Thailand and Laos of the Asia Foundation; Hon. Laisa Alamia, Executive Secretary of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM); and Ms. Alpha Larga, Head of Planning Division of the Council for the Welfare of Children of the Philippines. Hon. Maria Cleofe C. Sandoval, Undersecretary of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, moderated the session.

Session 5 involved encapsulating the learnings, conclusions and recommendations and closing of the Program.

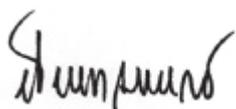
The Symposium was attended by Members of the AIPR Governing Council and other representatives of ASEAN Member States from relevant sectors, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Deputy Secretary General Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, the Ambassadors of Norway and Switzerland to ASEAN, ASEAN Secretariat officers, experts and peace practitioners from ASEAN, UN Women, representatives of a few Philippine civil society organizations, university students and Philippine officials.

I wish to highlight a few of the Symposium's recommendations that are relevant to the implementation of UNSCR 1325:

- *Undertake greater efforts at implementing UNSCR 1325, particularly through the development and implementation of Women Peace and Security National Action Plans;*
- *Promote equal participation of women and other stakeholders, including men, in conflict-resolution and conflict-prevention processes;*
- *For ASEAN to continue efforts at mainstreaming gender perspectives in ASEAN*
- *For ASEAN to support the development of preventive measures to conflict, including preventive diplomacy.*

I would also like to highlight a recommendation from the previous Workshop to establish an ASEAN Network of Women on Peace and Security. It is in fact relevant to the Call to Action for regional organizations in the UN's "A Global Study on the Implementation of the UNSC resolution 1325." The Study calls on regional organizations to "*Establish channels for women leaders and civil society organizations to systematically contribute to the conflict-prevention and peacebuilding work of regional organizations, including by establishing regional advisory bodies of women peace leaders.*" It is my fervent hope that the network with the appropriate terms of reference will soon be formed to benefit our peoples.

Last but not least, the AIPR and the Organizers thank the Governments of Norway and Switzerland for their significant support to this undertaking.



**ELIZABETH P. BUENSUCESO**

Ambassador /Permanent Representative of the Philippines to ASEAN

Member of the AIPR Governing Council

Organizer of the AIPR Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations



Congratulations to the Governing Council of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) for another important initiative to help promote the rights and protect welfare of women under the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint.

Peace, security and the well-being of its people are foremost in the Philippine Government's priorities. These are reflected in the Philippines' participation in ASEAN regional integration. The Philippines is honored to have spearheaded two previous initiatives conducted in March 2015 (Cebu City) and December 2015 (Tagaytay City) that focused on the role of women in peace, peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts.

In 2015, we have declared that we are an ASEAN Community, "an inclusive and responsive community that ensures our peoples enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as thrive in a just, democratic, harmonious and gender-sensitive environment in accordance with the principles of democracy, good governance and the rule of law."

The *AIPR Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations* is a clear manifestation of this vision where the circumstances of marginalized sectors are brought to the fore in order to respond to their needs more effectively.

It is equally important that the findings and recommendations of similar initiatives under the ambit of the AIPR are translated into policies and programs. For instance, ASEAN Member States (AMS) must undertake greater effort at implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325. AMS are, therefore, encouraged to develop their own Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans and to align related national policies accordingly.

The AIPR Symposium also sheds light on the value of preventing conflict. We in ASEAN take pride in the absence of war and major conflict in the region for almost 50 years since ASEAN's foundation. It is incumbent upon us to continue to support the development of preventive measures to conflict such as fostering a culture of peace and rejecting violence and extremism, especially directed towards women, promoting moderation and tolerance in the region through key programs and activities, and promoting respect for diversity.

May I highly commend the resolute commitment of AIPR to carry on its crucial advocacy on peace and for its contributions to a renewed culture of peace in ASEAN.

I look forward to the realization of our ASEAN 2025 Vision of a cohesive, resilient and inclusive community.

*Mabuhay!*



**ALBERT F. DEL ROSARIO**  
Secretary of Foreign Affairs



ASEAN has contributed significantly to the promotion and maintenance of peace and stability in the region for the past five decades. Through the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR), ASEAN seeks to strengthen research activities on peace, conflict management and conflict resolution.

With the establishment of the ASEAN Community, ASEAN is reaffirming its commitment to advance the rights and welfare of women and children in the region. The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 aims to foster an inclusive community that promotes a high quality of life, equitable access to opportunities for all and promotes the human rights of women and children, among others. As vulnerable members of society, women and children in conflict situations are more likely prevented from enjoying these opportunities and reaching their full potential. This AIPR Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations is thus an opportune occasion to discuss the impacts and implications of conflicts on women and children, consider their roles and perspectives in peace and reconciliation efforts, with lessons learned and best practices from the experiences of ASEAN Member States, and explore policy recommendations to help protect and promote the welfare of women and children in conflict situations.

Given the multi-dimensional perspectives taken by the Symposium, it is clear that the collective response of ASEAN should be geared towards addressing the risks faced by women and children as well as engaging them in building more peaceful and harmonious communities. Conflict prevention needs effective synergies of all pillars of the ASEAN Community – political-security, economic and socio-cultural - with relevant sectors such as education, human rights, entrepreneurship and culture working closely with each other. Taking off from the key recommendations of the Symposium, I hope our policy-makers, sectoral bodies and other relevant stakeholders will pursue a more collaborative and collective approach to ensure the rights and welfare of women and children in conflict situations,

as part of our efforts to build a truly people-oriented, people-centred ASEAN Community.



**LE LUONG MINH**  
Secretary-General of ASEAN



**OPENING SESSION  
WELCOME REMARKS  
OPENING MESSAGES  
AND  
KEYNOTE SPEECH**





## **WELCOME REMARKS**

**HON. EVAN P. GARCIA**

**Undersecretary for Policy  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
And SOM Leader  
Republic of the Philippines**

Excellencies, our dear incoming ASEAN Chair, the Lao People's Democratic Republic; the outgoing ASEAN Chair, the Government of Malaysia, Ambassadors, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, friends:

Good morning!

On behalf of the Philippine Government, I wish to thank you all for making it here in Manila and to welcome you to the breezy hills of Tagaytay City to participate in this important activity, the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations.

We would also like to thank the Governments of Norway and Switzerland for their significant support for the implementation of this important AIPR activity.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we are meeting here in picturesque Tagaytay, which is the closest getaway from Manila where one can relax and enjoy the cool climate. You can see from your windows and balconies the scenic Taal Volcano, a complex volcano. The volcano rose out of the lake from the original crater and it is a lake within a lake and a volcano within a volcano.

Like this phenomenon, we are dealing with a complex issue at hand -- peace and reconciliation. In particular, we are about to surface, study and discuss the plight of women and children in conflict situations.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we may have the slightest idea of how war and conflict impact women and children, differently. Corollary to conflict's impact on this vulnerable group is the need to tailor fit humanitarian intervention to address their needs.

According to a UN Women study<sup>1</sup>, which analyzed the effect of gender equality programming on humanitarian outcomes, conflict and subsequent intervention affect women and children differently in terms of health, education and livelihood, justice and security, and peacebuilding and recovery, among other considerations. Kindly take note of the following:

- One in four households of all Syrian refugee families in Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan are headed by women;
- In Mali, more than 50 percent of displaced families are headed by women;
- Only nine percent of landholders in conflict and post-conflict countries are women, compared to 19 percent globally;
- More than half of the world's maternal deaths occur in conflict-affected and fragile states, with the 10 worst-performing countries on maternal mortality, all either conflict or post-conflict countries;
- Approximately half of children of primary school age who are not in school live in conflict-afflicted areas;

In contrast, prioritization of the needs of women and their involvement in the delivery of basic services, resulted in positive outcomes. For example:

- In Mindanao, where pockets of conflict exist to this day, the prevalence of hunger among households was found to be lower by 37 percent where women were prioritized in food distribution;
- In households benefitting from UN programs with high gender equality programming intensity, both boys and girls were 60 to 70 percent less likely to drop out of school than children in households assisted by low-intensity programs;
- Again in Mindanao, the creation of women and child-friendly spaces in evacuation centers, psycho-social support for women and children and child protection measures, among other support services, have increased security among women and girls.

In a nutshell, the study showed that the use of gender lens, gender equality programming, in particular, led to better outcomes for women and members of their households. Where such programs are provided, the economic empowerment of women and the improvement of the lives of their families have been clearly evident.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, just as the geographic phenomenon of the Taal Volcano brought forth a beautiful scenery which we are enjoying right now, it is my hope that this Symposium will be able to unravel the complexities of the effects of conflict on women and children.

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1 Source: <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2015/unw%20effects%20of%20gender%20equality%20on%20humanitarian%20outcomessinglepgsweb.pdf?v=1&d=20150707T185705>

You should not stop at surfacing their plight in times of conflict. You are challenged to see their conditions in a different light and realize how former victims could become, in their turn, champions of peace and reconciliation.

Finally, we are all tasked to be instruments of peace and reconciliation. Let us do whatever we can, through our policy-making duties and in carrying out our tasks as members of our governments, to endeavor to do so. Let us begin by making a difference in the lives of women and children in the ASEAN region.

I wish you all a fruitful seminar. Thank you very much. Once again, good morning!



## OPENING MESSAGE

**H.E. DATO' HASNUDIN HAMZAH**  
**Permanent Representative of Malaysia to ASEAN**  
**Chair, Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to ASEAN**  
**and Chair of the AIPR Governing Council**

**Hon. CORAZON J. SOLIMAN**

Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development

Although she is not here.

**Hon. EVAN P. GARCIA**

Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs and  
ASEAN-Philippines SOM Leader

**H.E. STIG INGEMAR TRAAVIK**

Ambassador of Norway to ASEAN

**H.E. DR. YVONNE BAUMANN**

Ambassador of Switzerland to ASEAN

Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen

*Magandang umaga sa inyong lahat.* Good morning to all.

Of course, the morning is very nice here in Tagaytay, especially, since most of our rooms are overlooking, as Ambassador Garcia said, the beautiful Lake Taal.

Let me also join the Honorable Garcia, on behalf of the ASEAN Institute of Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) Governing Council Members, in first, commending and congratulating the Government of the Republic of the Philippines for organizing this timely and important Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations at this beautiful and wonderful Tagaytay City. Also, my thanks and appreciation go to the Government of Norway and the Government of Switzerland, for their generous support in organizing this Symposium.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the plight of women and children in armed conflict situations remains perilous and requires our urgent attention. When I was asked to say a few words at the Opening Session of the AIPR Workshop on Strengthening Women's Participation in Peace Processes on 17 March 2015 in Cebu, I had emphasized that the absence

of women in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, reconciliation and other related processes, be it peacemaking or peacekeeping, is a recipe for unsustainable peace as they are the majority of the world's population and their needs and interests need to be addressed adequately. Today, as we speak also of the plight of children, we should bear in mind that these children are our future. In fact, they are our greatest treasures. Similarly, also to the womenfolk; they are our greatest treasures as well.

As we, today, converge in this beautiful Tagaytay City, with the objective of putting together our hearts and minds to build a better world, we must put children as one of our highest priorities, in terms of providing them support in times of difficulties. As Honorable Garcia had mentioned, I, too, hope that this Symposium would achieve its set objectives and provide policy recommendations to address the situation of women and children in conflict situations. We need to ensure that all avenues to protect these vulnerable groups of people affected by armed conflicts are identified and pursued robustly. As we support and protect them, we are supporting and protecting our own future.

The first Armed Conflict Survey, published by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in May 2015, highlighted that in 2014 there were 42 active conflicts worldwide which had caused 180,000 fatalities. The study also found that the number of displaced people exceeded 50 million in 2013. It is expected to increase with the continued deterioration of security and political situations around the world as well as the rise of extremist groups such as ISIS and others. While those affected are in the millions and hundreds of thousands, one grim fact remains – women and children are the most vulnerable and affected group in these armed conflicts.

That said, the picture is not at all grim. Testimony to that is that all of us are here to try and make a difference. The report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security of September 2015 highlighted the remarkable impact of women's participation on all areas of peace and security, which leads to a more sustainable peace and enhanced prevention efforts. Some progress has been made. But more can be done. Therefore, the convening of this Symposium, as I said early on, is indeed, timely.

Whatever efforts have been contributed toward that end, we see that these still have a long way to go in fulfilling the responsibility of protecting civilians and vulnerable groups. Therefore, the international community must continue to be steadfast in addressing the plight of women and children. ASEAN itself also needs to play an active role in pushing forward this relevant and important issue. ASEAN may want to do more to provide or establish relevant mechanisms and support measures to ensure that

this vulnerable group of people are not being sidelined, and, in fact, should be able to partake in the mainstream of economic, political and social life, so that all will be benefitting from our efforts, especially as we move towards an ASEAN community.

So, ladies and gentlemen, excellencies, I am sure with all the panelists and moderators who are knowledgeable in this field, we should be able to provide some policy recommendations for the Member States and AIPR to move on, to fulfill our responsibilities entrusted to us by our mandate.

With that, I wish all of you the very best and success of the Symposium and, again, to extend my deepest gratitude to the Government and peoples of the Philippines for the warm hospitality extended to the Governing Council members of AIPR and, of course, to our partners from Norway and Switzerland for making this Symposium a reality.

Thank you. *Maraming Salamat po and Mabuhay!*



## OPENING MESSAGE

### **H.E. STIG INGEMAR TRAAVIK** **Ambassador of Norway to ASEAN**

Excellencies, dear colleagues, distinguished guests, good morning. Dear Ambassador Elizabeth Buensuceso, thank you for taking such good care of us; and thank you to the Philippine government, for receiving us in the best possible way, and even starting with a song and dance. I'm sure we're going to be very successful today.

It's really an honor for Norway to be your partner in this endeavor. It is very good also to have a follow-up. It has only been eight months since we were last in the Philippines to discuss peace and security, so it's very encouraging to see how AIPR and ASEAN are strongly pursuing these themes.

Sadly, the topic we are discussing here is of more urgency than ever, that is, the situation in the Middle East and the rise of the Daesh or ISIL. Their actions are putting a real spotlight on the plight of women and children in conflict, both as victims and also by using child soldiers doing all sorts of horrible things. We also have the situation of migrants, both in Europe and in Asia, arriving or, sometimes, not arriving in terrible circumstances. These are situations that need to be handled in a humanitarian way, and, of course, the root causes of these situations need to be handled.

One issue which is important to underline, I think, is to remember that we're not only doing this out of our good hearts nor humanitarian concerns. We are also legally obliged to do this. Norway and most ASEAN Member States have all signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other important conventions regulating this field. Of course, sometimes, the legality of it becomes a bit theoretical, and so, this seminar is important to gather and to share experiences.

Let me share just one little experience.

Almost exactly on this date in 2002, I was in Afghanistan where I was then Deputy Head of our embassy there. At that time, the Government had declared that the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan was over, so there was a need to redirect funding to reconstruction. Some people in the U.N. and members of the civil society organizations (CSOs) were speaking up that this was not so.

So, at that time, I was taken by a Norwegian Church Aid to a remote location in Afghanistan. We drove for eight hours and walked for two hours. There we met a tribal (nomadic) community, where women and children were dying. The men had gone off to look for work. These people might have been on the wrong side during the conflict. They were pasture nomads from the north and moving south, but they were dying and nobody knew except some CSOs. We managed to save that community with funding from us and efforts from the Norwegian church.

But, to me, the most important lesson in this, is that the successful handling of a humanitarian crisis requires that we all work together. Governments should lead, the UN agencies should be there, but we also need to listen to those who are in the field, the civil society organizations (CSOs).

That is why I am particularly happy that you have invited Dr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto to this seminar. I believe he has led one of the most successful humanitarian reconstruction efforts ever in Aceh. One of the things that they did right was to draw everyone together and got everyone to look at this in a holistic manner, and joined efforts to handle it.

In Cebu, we talked about the importance of women leading and women being put in charge. I'm not going to walk away from that. I believe that is very important.

But, to me, the main message for today is we need to handle this kind of complex situations together. All who are involved need to pull at the same end of the rope. I look at the problem and I see that you have very interesting work in front of you. I'm sure you will be very successful.

As the choir beautifully sang, we are one world and we're in this together. Good luck to all of you. Thank you for your attention.

## OPENING MESSAGE

**H.E. DR. YVONNE BAUMANN**  
**Ambassador of Switzerland to ASEAN**

Hon. Evan P. Garcia; Your Excellency, Ambassador Dato Hasnudin Hamzah; Hon. Noel Macalalad; Your Excellency, Ambassador Stig Traavik; Your Excellency, Ambassador Elizabeth P. Buensuceso; Excellencies, Permanent Representatives to ASEAN; distinguished representatives of the Philippine government; distinguished speakers, panelists; ladies and gentlemen. Good morning, everybody.

At this peaceful, marvelous place, and after this joyful ensemble of the choir in the beginning, it is really hard to speak about tough issues which are on the table today.

Women's participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, as well as protection from gender-based violence, are topics which have recently caught the special attention of the international community.

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

On this occasion, Swiss Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter opened an international conference in Geneva on 9 September 2015. The Swiss Foreign Minister described the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 as a turning point. It is the first U.N. Security Council Resolution to incorporate a gender perspective into matters concerning peace and security. It recognizes women not only as victims, but also as crucial actors when working on peace and establishing security.

In October of this year, the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 2242 that aims to further strengthen the role of women in conflict prevention - and what is crucial also, in the strategy to counter terrorism and violent extremism.

Researchers of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva have concluded a multi-year research supported by various governments, among them were the Norwegian and Swiss. Earlier this year<sup>2</sup> the research showed that substantive participation by women increases the quality and sustainability of peace agreements.

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2 Supported by the Governments of Switzerland, Norway and others.

The topic of this symposium, organized by AIPR and the Philippine government, is, of course, of utmost importance and relevance. We only have to watch the news and read the newspapers.

Switzerland is grateful for the opportunity which we have been given to support this Symposium, and I would like to thank AIPR, particularly, H.E. Ambassador Elizabeth Buensuceso, for the initiative and for the invitation. I would also like to extend my thanks to the Philippine government.

It was dark when I arrived here last Sunday night. I could not take away my eyes from the nice view in the morning, when to my great surprise, found this marvelous view here and this beautiful venue that you came up with to host this seminar. Thank you very much.

Switzerland has a long tradition in peacebuilding, human rights and promoting international humanitarian law. The commitment to the protection of vulnerable groups such as children and women is a priority of our foreign policy.

Switzerland promotes women's participation in peace processes and is committed to their protection in conflict and post-conflict situations and to strengthening their rights.

The Swiss Government has recently decided to increase substantially Switzerland's contribution to the organization, U.N. Women. This also underlines the importance Switzerland attaches to gender equality and to the empowerment of women and girls.

Switzerland puts a high value to the protection of the civilian population, particularly children, in armed conflicts. Children, as has already been said, are particularly exposed to violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law. Today, there are about a quarter of a million children under the age of 18 enlisted in or associated with armed forces or armed groups. As many as 40% are said to be girls.

The Swiss Foreign Ministry has for many years supported the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, which advocates better protection of children. It promotes the improvement of legal instruments and supports the mandate of the special representative for children in armed conflicts.

Switzerland has further a long-standing tradition in providing mediation services and good offices in conflicts, peace and reconciliation processes.

In Southeast Asia, Swiss peace and mediation advisers are currently active in several countries offering capacity building or directly supporting peace and reconciliation processes.

As just one example, I would like to mention the active support to the Philippine government in the Bangsamoro Peace Process, especially through the Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC). Switzerland has the honor to chair the Commission, I must humbly say, upon the invitation of both parties involved - the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

In line with all this, Switzerland appreciates the confidence shown by ASEAN Member States through inviting us to participate in this symposium. It also gives my country the great opportunity to further strengthen our cooperation with ASEAN and its Member States and to show the commitment of Switzerland to this region.

The excellent relations Switzerland enjoys with all Southeast Asian nations are based on a longstanding tradition of mutual trust and respect, as well as increasing trade and investment relations and fruitful cooperation.

The center of gravity of the world, as we all know, is increasingly shifting towards the Asia-Pacific region. ASEAN countries play a pivotal role in this impressive development. Further to great economic achievements, ASEAN as an organization has demonstrated its effectiveness in addressing regional issues as well as providing stability, security and prosperity to its members and the whole region, which is important also for the whole world.

So, I feel very privileged to be here today with all of you, with all these distinguished panelists and speakers, with this distinguished audience, and I am looking forward to continuing and strengthening Swiss cooperation with ASEAN and its Member States.

I wish you an enlightening symposium and very fruitful discussions.

Thank you very much for the attention.



## KEYNOTE SPEECH

### HON. CORAZON J. SOLIMAN

Secretary of Social Welfare and Development  
Republic of the Philippines

Delivered by Assistant Secretary Noel Macalalad

To the Honorable Dato Hasnudin Hamzah, Ambassadors Stig Ingemar Traavik, Dr. Yvonne Baumann, Undersecretary Evan Garcia, to Ambassador Elizabeth Buensuceso, to my colleagues in government, and to all my fellow advocates of peace in the global, ASEAN, and local setting, a pleasant morning.

By mere definition, the term conflict implies negativity, espousing destruction where it lays seeds and grows. Conflict, in whatever form, brings about damage to lives and properties.

And it is common knowledge to us here that conflict, whether internal or external to each of our countries, is ever present in our times.

Thus, today, we mark an important event in our life's mission as we are now gathered for this symposium to discuss the plight of women and children in conflict situations.

I commend the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) for the timely call for this activity so that we may have one voice in addressing conflict situations, especially in responding to the needs of the most affected, vulnerable sectors – the children and women.

As you all know, when fighting occurs, the women and children are the first casualties, having to experience the burden of surviving actual conflict situations and their aftermath.

For children, the situation is sometimes much worse, more crucial, as this sector has been noted to be recruited, and as the other speakers noted a while ago, to partake of and engage in the actual fight.

How many times have we heard of child soldiers? Even here, in the Philippines, we are not spared of child soldiers.

There are instances when the military turns over young boys wielding guns, whom they encountered in their missions. As our Secretary noted,

it breaks our heart in the Department to see innocent minds corrupted by violence at a very early age.

Oftentimes, these children recruited in wars and conflict, do not even know what they are fighting for, which is a very regretful situation.

From January to September of this year alone, the DSWD recorded 27 children victims in armed conflict, one of whom, a female, was noted to have engaged in actual fighting.

These children, upon turn-over to the Department, are cared for and given an intervention inside the appropriate centers. We provide services from counseling to the provision of the most basic needs including education.

Once they are mainstreamed in their respective communities, concerned local government units are being tapped to provide the follow through services.

At present, the Department is supporting the proposed House Bill No. 4557 entitled "An Act Providing for the Social Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict and Providing Penalties and Violations, thereof."

This proposed policy consolidates the needed special protection needed by the children in conflict situations, especially when protecting them from being recruited, made use of, and displaced.

Most importantly, this policy declares the children as zones of peace, enjoining all players in conflict situation to preserve the peaceful integrity of children.

The struggles of women during conflict are no different. The women, whether involved in the actual fighting or not, are at the center of every conflict. The women are the mothers, wives, and daughters of those involved in the conflict, whatever side the fighters are in.

Thus, the women are unwilling witnesses to the conflict.

The Department has ready help for the women victims of conflict in centers like the Haven for Women and other DSWD-run centers nationwide.

Under the able guidance of our social workers, the Department responds to the rehabilitative needs of the women victims through counseling, education, medical assistance, as well as livelihood assistance.

The victims are appropriately assisted until they are declared ready for reintegration with their families and the community.

The focus of this symposium, thus, is an eye opener for all of us who work for peace. It is time for us to focus on the women and the children, not as victims, but as movers of peace. The center of all advocacies must be channeled through the eyes of these sectors who are the most affected. Instead of focusing the response only in terms of protecting them, we now call for a move to empower them, to lead the peace process, through their voices.

In the implementation of our programs, the Department ensures that gender equality and empowerment of the vulnerable sectors are incorporated in the process.

The women should be given equal opportunities at decision-making in our community. This is demonstrated by our program called *PAMANA*, or appropriately termed, *Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan* (peaceful and abundant communities) program which aims at providing micro-level interventions to respond and strengthen peace in conflict-afflicted areas.

DSWD implementation of *PAMANA* programs are also being advocated by other programs of the Department, such as the *Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan-Comprehensive* and Integrated Delivery of Social Services (KALAHI-CIDSS) as well as the Sustainable Livelihood Program (SLP). The Program was implemented in 1,556 conflict affected barangays (CABs) in 16 provinces, 50 municipalities in 8 regions. Resulting from the program and the empowerment of the community were the construction of developmental projects such as schools, health stations, pathways, multi-purpose centers, water systems and the installation of street lights. These, we believe, are the basic infrastructures that must be put up so that the communities will be able to come back from their situation.

The Department also played a big role in conflict situations, the latest of which was the Zamboanga armed conflict in 2012, where thousands of families were displaced, as houses were razed to the ground.

The Department provided for the basic needs of the displaced families for months, and provided temporary shelters, in partnership with the local government units (LGUs), local and international organizations.

But notable in this experience were the children victims of the Zamboanga armed conflict. They required psychosocial intervention through the use of art and play therapy sessions, allowing them to draw and write down their sentiments about what happened in their localities. These sessions were meant to mitigate the impact of the trauma that they had experienced.

The result of that armed conflict was catastrophic, resulting in massive destruction of property and loss of lives. Zamboanga City suffered a major setback in terms of progress, and they are still recovering from the effects of such violence.

We also teach gender equality to 4.4 million beneficiaries of the *Pantawid Pamilya* Program to empower the families and teach them the importance of both genders through the Family Development Sessions.

It is high time that policies ensure that gender equality is practiced even in the peace process, meaning, all sectors, who are at stake must be represented and be heard.

Peace policies must transcend cultural boundaries and provide equal opportunities to all sectors, especially children. Young as they are, they are the best mouthpiece for peace, as they are the main recipients of the dividends of these peace interventions.

We also found out in DSWD that the children sometimes have the best ideas when it comes to their future. The nation just finished celebrating National Children's Month. Notable in this celebration was that Jake Lere, a child survivor of the Supertyphoon 'Haiyan,' locally known as Typhoon Yolanda, was awarded as 2015 Exemplary *Pantawid Pamilya* child. We were all surprised at the depth of maturity of the child about concepts like development and his role in nation building. At the young age of 11, he encouraged his fellow children, the poor children, to never stop believing and continue striving to achieve their dreams. He encouraged them to work hard and continue hoping for a better tomorrow.

It was surprising and enlightening for us in government and all advocates that a child so young had a vision so big.

True to the objectives of this symposium, the peace process must be inclusive. Yes, women and children sectors are the most vulnerable and most affected when fighting erupts. But they must not be viewed as weak sectors, because they are not. The children and the women are potentially the strongest tools in terms of peace-building, peace-making and peace-keeping. So, we need to hear them out. We must give them the proper venue and opportunity to do so.

I believe this symposium is our chance to consolidate the best practices and the possible opportunities we can utilize to achieve that elusive vital piece in development which is PEACE.

With our collective experience as our guide, we must work together to formulate a responsive framework for peace, to be eventually supported by policies and programs to which every ASEAN nation will adhere.

Again, I commend the AIPR for giving all peace advocates like us this chance to scrutinize our existing efforts, and contemplate our next initiatives in the pursuit of a society where peace transcends culture, religion, and class.

Thus, our role is to facilitate an environment for peace through our work as government, as non-government organizations, as faith-based organizations, and as concerned citizens. As workers for peace, it must be our ever persistent goal to create a nation where armed conflict will no longer be part of our tomorrow.

So I end by quoting Albert Camus, a Nobel Prize-winning philosopher, author and journalist who said, "Peace is the only battle worth waging."

Thank you very much! I look forward to a fruitful session with you.





**SESSION TWO**

**SURFACING THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN  
IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS**





**Dr. Jean D’Cunha**  
Head of UN Women, Myanmar

Excellencies, distinguished guests, colleagues and friends, good morning. My name is Jean D’Cunha and I head UN Women here in Myanmar. I wish to thank the Government of the Philippines and AIPR for inviting me to make this presentation here today. I do apologize that I am not with you in person but I am with you in spirit.

My task is to make a presentation on the plight of women and girls in conflict with a particular focus on Myanmar. I wish to draw on a research that UN women had undertaken, together with partners, that is entitled “Why Gender Matters in Peace and Conflict: Perspectives from Mon and Kayin States.” I propose to divide this presentation very briefly into three sections. The first highlights the plight of women and girls in conflict; the second looks at the formal and informal contributions that women have made to peace and the last makes an argument for the inclusion of women and their priorities in all aspects of the peace process here today.

To begin with, as all of us are aware, in Myanmar as elsewhere, conflict afflicts men, women, boys and girls across conflict lines although men, women, boys and girls experience conflict differently. This is mediated, as we also know, by discriminatory gender role and trait stereotypes, which cast men as breadwinners, as public figures, as strategists, as leaders, as combatants whereas women are relegated to the private space of domesticity.

In Myanmar, men make up the majority of the combatants although women have also had their fair share of female combatants. But I must say that our discussions with a very limited number of female combatants reveal that although they had similar training in their recruitment as combatants with men, women often do not play frontline combatant roles. They do not play important roles in decision-making but rather they are relegated to back office roles and engaged in either cooking or provision of health care services and medical services, socialization and education so to speak.

Men are recruited and trained as combatants because combat is seen as the dangerous, risky sphere of male activity and, as combatants, they are most vulnerable as we know to death and disability. What our research has pointed out is that when men die the prominent among them are valorized as martyrs, as patriots, as heroes. Men also suffer disability and if this is serious enough, disability and a loss of employment as a result of conflict. And as a result of this experience, they must endure loss of self – worth, loss of self – esteem, all rooted in their inability to conform to socially prescribed standards of male behavior and conduct.

And this often leads to depression, to frustration, to substance abuse, to aggression, to domestic violence against women and children, and this has significant impact, physical as well as sexual impact on women and on children.

Further, I wish to say that both disability and a loss of employment for men and the death of men in combat and in conflict increase women's work burdens. Women become the lifelines, the economic lifelines of their households, their communities and must provide economically, emotionally, culturally, socially for their families and their communities in very difficult circumstances.

But what happens when women die in conflict? They often die as unsung heroes number one; men often remarry number two; and these families tend to disintegrate when women die. Also, when women are disabled in conflict, our research shows that they are often stigmatized by communities but more importantly, if they are young unmarried women, they find it extremely difficult to find partners in marriage. Another very important condition or concern for both men and women in conflict has been forced portering. Men constitute the majority of forced porters and have often fled their villages because of a fear of becoming forced porters. As forced porters they are often forced to be human landmine sweepers and have lost life and limb as a result of landmine explosions. As forced porters they've been forced to carry very heavy loads of ammunition, food or housing material over vast distances. They've been physically abused and tortured; they suffered disease and often many of them perished. Women have also been forced porters but in less numbers and an additional concern that women have faced as forced porters is sexual and gender based violence.

A third and very important gender based concern is displacement which conflict causes. This affects men, women, boys and girls, but has particular implication and ramifications for women. Women have expressed a very significant impact as a result of loss of housing because the home is a woman's space. She spends most of her time at home, she nurtures in the home, she cooks in the home, there is emotional bonding that takes place in her home. It provides her with physical, social, emotional and even economic security because often women conduct their home-based economic activities from the home. And so, the loss of a home has numerous implications for women and decreases privacy levels for women as well.

She is lost without that space in many ways, and this is what women have reported. Conditions in IDP camps to which women, men and children are relocated are not very friendly towards women. Congestion, being packed like sardines into a very small space, the lack of separate toilets and the

lack of ventilation trigger off sexual gender based violence. It decreases privacy levels for women particularly menstruating women, pregnant women, nursing mothers, young adolescent girls and the like.

Women are often marginalized in IDP camps from the very resources they are supposed to provide for their families and communities. It is very difficult to find paid work, and gender wage gaps prevail when they do find work. They are often marginalized from camp leadership and management. Men tend, as a result of frustration, depression and a feeling of vacuousness, tend to get aggressive and so domestic violence prevails or exists in camp settings. This has emotional and physical impacts on women and on children.

Other common concerns that have been reported by women are the loss of land and of economic assets: the greater difficulty that women find in securing employment as compared to males; gender wage gaps when they do find employment, and the lack of job alternatives often compels them into the worst forms of labor, including trafficking, prostitution or entry into the sex sector. Women are constantly in a condition of trauma and fear as a result of lack of security and safety. There are also severe restrictions on their mobility and lastly as mentioned earlier they face sexual and gender based violence.

I would like to mention that the research found it very difficult to find concrete examples of sexual violence against men. Either men just denied the fact that they experienced sexual violence, or that they ever knew of any examples of sexual violence. Women tended to say that they heard of some anecdotes but are unable to confirm this and this is probably rooted in the fact that this is a taboo issue. Sexual violence is not perceived to be perpetrated against men and perhaps perceived as a threat to masculinity, so to speak.

But the other concerns that women have faced, in fact women, men, boys and girls have faced, is the lack of access to health care. But women, in particular, have found or have experienced lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services.

Lack of access to justice is rooted particularly in sexual and gender based violence and there are several reasons for this. Number one is obvious, traditional justice systems, normal justice system disintegrate in conditions of conflict and in crisis so there is nowhere to go. But even if there is a chance, violence against women in Myanmar is governed by the Penal Code which is very limited in its definition, in its coverage and is quite outdated. Myanmar also has a plurality of legal systems including customary law and practices and these differing standards of legal systems lower standards of protection for women. Third, women

are often inhibited from reporting and there are several reasons for this. Number one, as elsewhere, there is a very high premium that's placed on virginity. Family and community stigmatization arises when women are found to be survivors of sexual violence or any other forms of violence and this inhibits women from reporting. Also, women lack or do not have trust in the enforcers of law and public authorities and in the justice system because there is widespread impunity, so to speak. Thirdly, they faced discriminatory attitudes from service providers whether health providers or law enforcers and this inhibits women from reporting. Fourthly, you have discriminatory rules of evidence which, once again, result in victim blaming because the onus of proof is often placed on the woman and, therefore, there is an exploration or probe of the entire sexual history of the woman which is once again blaming the victim and traumatizing her all over again.

Often times women do not know what to do and how to avail of grievance and redress mechanisms or they are not empowered enough to do so and lastly they fear reprisals and intimidation of perpetrators if they report the case and seek justice.

But I want to say that despite all of these, women are not just victims in conflict situations or in crisis. They are active agents, they are survivors and they bring their unique knowledge, their skills, their experience, their perspectives, their leadership, their social resources, their networks to bear on the situation and to promote peace, to prevent conflict, to resolve conflict, and to build peace in the long run.

I want to dwell a bit on this, drawn from our research. Most women in the research define -- and this is very interesting because this is a vision of peace that women are presenting -- most women define peace as not just the absence of hostilities but a condition of development, justice, freedom, and exercise of human rights. Many more women than men said that they wanted immediate peace because they knew what conflict has done to them and they know of what conflict has done to their families, communities, with severe inter-generational impacts and this is critical, a vision of peace presented by women.

When conflict is brewing, women look out for certain indications such as troop entry into villages, troops milling around the vicinity, sexual harassment of women and girls, gunfire shots, landmine explosions, secret meetings, and the like; and they acted immediately. By word of mouth they spread the message through their social and community networks. They assisted men in their flight from the village; they hid their men, children and elderly, went to the forests or found hiding places for them. In advance, several women sent family members, their children in particular, to their relatives in non-conflict zones; they negotiated on

both sides in conflict with combatants as well as with the military not to fight in the village but to engage in combat in uninhabited areas so as to preserve life and property. Women protected themselves as well and they did this by moving in groups, by staying outside the line of direct conflict, by negotiating with perpetrators and getting out of the situation where they could have been subjected to sexual violence. In all of this then, women displayed a sense of intuition, the skills of good negotiators, the courage to diffuse tensions, of multitasking. All these are very important attributes that they bring to peace processes and to conflict resolution, as well as to the prevention of the immediate triggers of conflict, so to speak.

Lastly, what we also found in the community level is that women were engaged in long-term peacebuilding. They were involved in addressing sexual and gender based violence at the community level; formed NGOs, many women were heads of these NGOs, or they were important and active members of civil society organizations and community-based organizations. They were building women's skills for employment; providing services, health for all, education, peace promotion services and as a result, they had begun to actively negotiate the public space. They were developing management and leadership skills which are extremely important contributions to the peace process.

But I also want to dwell on women's formal contribution to the peace process. In the bilateral peace negotiations between the government and ethnic armed organizations, sixteen (16) bilateral agreements were signed. At least three (3) ethnic armed organizations have women as peace negotiators, although in an ad hoc fashion. In one of the peace negotiations, the government had a woman as a peace negotiator on its team. Also, in the bilateral negotiations in Myanmar, women functioned as technical advisers, as legal advisers, as observers and we've always had a community of women CSOs who have been advocating for peace and trying to advocate with authorities for inclusion of women's priorities in the peace process.

In the recent nationwide ceasefire negotiations and the agreement that was signed, we had two women negotiators, one on the government side and one on the side of the ethnic armed organizations. There was also a woman who was a co-facilitator of the Myanmar Peace Center and a woman who was a technical adviser on the side of the ethnic armed organizations. We are very happy to say that as a result of these women who were at the table and as a result of civil society advocacy and as a result of UN Women support to these women at the table and capacity building discussions with them, as well as capacity building for the wider network of CSOs, and as a result of diplomatic advocacy also by UN Women with strategic stakeholders, the nationwide ceasefire agreement, although signed by only eight (8) of the twenty one (21) ethnic groups,

have three gender provisions in it. One was the incorporation of gender equality and women's rights into the principles of the agreement. The second was the prohibition of sexual violence in conflict and the third was the need to include women in the political dialogue for a longer term peace agreement. And this is a very good starting point.

But what I also wish to say is that Myanmar is on the brink, so to speak, of adopting, if all things go well, a framework for political dialogue. UN Women has partnered with the EBO Myanmar to hold a series of workshops with women, with political parties and with multiple stakeholders who are parties to this dialogue to actually better understand the national dialogue as a tool for peace agreement, to understand the frameworks of political dialogue and what their common elements are and to see what entry points women have. How can women and their priorities be included in the framework for political dialogue and in the dialogue itself? Women have come out with very important recommendations and I'd like to share these recommendations with you.

The first is the need to incorporate gender equality and women's rights into the principles of the framework and the dialogue itself. The second is to ensure that women are represented in decision making- in all committees, task forces, thematic committees, logistics committees, dead locking committees. They've also said that they wanted 30%, at least 30% representation of women in the dialogue and the need for each delegation to have at least one woman represented in the delegation at each dialogue; that every thematic issue discussed in the dialogue needs to be addressed from a gender equality and women's rights perspective and, lastly, long term post dialogue implementation mechanisms, planning and resource allocation need to include women and their priorities. These are what women have actually suggested and we hope that these will be taken on board by parties to the dialogue.

Finally, I wish to say that, against this background, it is critical to include women and their priorities in all aspects of the peace process for a number of reasons. Number one because it is a woman's right to be at the peace table and to seek redress and reparation for the damages and losses that she has suffered which is a moral imperative, so to speak. Secondly, women have endured much during conflict and they are best able to represent their own interest and their own concerns at the peace table having endured so much. At this point maybe it's important for me to highlight what these recommendations and priorities are that women are identifying.

Number one, women have said that they wish to see an operational national strategic plan for the advancement of women and development. There is a plan and this needs to be rendered operational with gender

sensitive targets, indicators, budgets and needs to be implemented. Women would want a national plan of action on UNSCR 1325 addressing women's needs in conflict and peace building.

Women would like to see gender sensitive laws and policies particularly a comprehensive CEDAW-compliant violence law which is underway, adopted soon but from a CEDAW perspective. They would like to see electoral law changed with special temporary measures introduced for women in leadership positions and governance and economic laws being changed to generate decent employment for women, skills training in non-traditional sectors, promotion of women's entrepreneurship in the sectors in which they work and in non-traditional sectors.

Thirdly, women do want to see an end to impunity with respect to violence against them and they are suggesting and recommending an improvement or greater gender sensitization of security and justice sector governance, namely, gender sensitive policies and mandates in the security and justice sector, gender sensitive standard operating procedures in the security and justice sector, gender sensitive service delivery and a culture or gender sensitive culture in these sectors. Women want services for survivors of violence and they want initiatives that prevent violence against them, a change in mindsets with respect to policy makers, enforcers of the law and the public at large, particularly men and boys. Fourthly, women are extremely interested in greater representation, not just in the peace process, but also, at all levels of decision making processes - in parliaments, in the executive arm of the government, as well as in the security and justice sectors.

And lastly they do want equal rights to land, land tenureship, equal rights to ownership, control, and access to land with men, equal rights to land use and land management, more and decent employment, non-traditional skills training so that they get decent work and promotion of women's entrepreneurship including in non-traditional sectors.

With this I would like to briefly revert to the second reason for inclusion of women and their priorities in the peace process. Women have played nurturing roles during conflict and in these nurturing roles they have developed a deep understanding of the concerns and the problems that the disabled, the elderly, the ill children face and they are more likely than men - and this has been demonstrated in Myanmar and around the world - to raise the concerns and the interests of these groups in peace agreements than anyone else. Women have contributed - at community level and the formal level of the peace process - to conflict prevention, to conflict resolution, to peace promotion and to peacebuilding; and they bring this set of knowledge, skills, perspectives, leadership, networks, attributes of inclusion, negotiation, diffusion of conflict, multitasking to the

peace table and these are complementary skills to men that they bring to the peace table that are extremely important to build peace. Lastly, as researches around the world have shown, if we do not include women and their priorities at this stage of the peace process, it is very likely that their priorities would not be included in post conflict mechanisms, planning processes and resource allocation. These would have severe impacts on women because women constitute 52% of the population in Myanmar and not being sufficiently and adequately represented in all aspects of the peace process would really cut the ground from under the feet of the peace process and would put the optimization of the investments that are being made by Myanmar in peace and in development.

We, therefore, would be really encouraged and would hope and aspire for women and their priorities to be included in all aspects of women's peace processes to enhance the sustainability and the inclusiveness of Myanmar's reform, peace and development process.

Thank you very much.

**Atty. Marilyn Pintor**  
Regional Director for Caraga  
Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines

Thank you very much. Good morning to all of us. As mentioned, I am the regional human rights director of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) in the Caraga Region, in the northeastern part of Mindanao.

Before I present to you the situationer on the plight of women and children in conflict situations, may I just introduce to you quickly our organization. The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) is the Philippine national human rights institution. As such, its mission is focused on promotion of human rights. As a manager of one of our field offices, we do field monitoring on the plight not only of our women and children, but of all human beings in general. We do a lot of work in monitoring the situations of women and children in conflict situations, especially those in evacuation centers. Aside from that, we build cases if we receive reports of violations from them while doing capacity building for our clients. I think it is also worth mentioning that under the Magna Carta of Women, or Republic Act 9710, the Commission has been designated as the gender ombud and, as such, we have developed our guidelines on how to discharge this function.

Let me now present to you the situationer that we have gathered during our field monitoring.

Let me start with the children. Armed conflict has basically affected the right to education of our children, a right enshrined in the CRC or the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Conflict has affected both those children who remained in their communities and those who opted to go to evacuation centers with their parents. Now, those who have remained in the communities have temporarily stopped schooling while classes have been disrupted for those who remain in school. There are inconveniences suffered by children, such as when there is armed conflict, most of them would seek to take a safer road from their residences to their schools and back while some children also would opt to find temporary shelter near their schools. Other students are forced to balance schooling with paid work to augment their family incomes which are disrupted by armed conflict. And of course, when there are armed conflicts, classes are usually suspended because of teachers' fear of reporting for work. Displaced children, those who opted to go to the evacuation centers or relocated to safer environments, usually stop schooling for the period of displacement. Another consequence of conflict is that some schools end up ruined or uninhabitable.

Armed conflict also affects the right to health of children, something to do with their survival rights. Children staying in their communities must cope with meager or much-reduced meals because their parents have limited access to their farms or to their usual sources of income. While those displaced suffer from a poor diet, unhealthy conditions in evacuation centers because these are usually crowded and unhygienic, with inadequate health services. Also they are unable to access medical treatments when there are outbreaks of diseases, which spread quite quickly and, as a result also, some children suffer from stunted growth because of lack of access to nutritious food and medical attention.

From our monitoring, we have found children suffering from emotional and psychosocial effects and, again, this has something to do with the survival rights of children. Now, there are children who have manifested trauma, anxiousness triggered by loud noises or upon seeing people in fatigue uniforms. Some children have manifested sadness, anger, and vengefulness after personally seeing abuses committed on their families, friends and neighbors. There are those who manifested stress-related illnesses such as chronic headaches and then constriction of personal space due to parental restrictions on their mobility. Usually, their freedom of movement is affected when they are in the evacuation centers for reasons of their own security. There is also a lingering sense of loss of homes, loss of personal belongings, confusion and deep sense of lack of control over events and distress.

There are children who are under threat and this has something to do with protecting the rights of children. Children who are direct victims have shared with us that some of them were directly accused, threatened, physically attacked and some of them were even temporarily detained because they were interrogated, confined, forced to do errands and act as guides to parties in conflict. There are children whose families, friends and communities are suspected of supporting the enemies or rebels, so there are families and community members who are harassed, accused, threatened and physically attacked.

Now, let's move to the situation or the plight of women in conflict situations. Armed conflict, according to the stories shared with us by women in conflict situations, have greatly affected their economic rights, such as the pursuit of their livelihood. Because of conflict situations, these women must now carry heavier economic burdens having less time working in the farms which resulted in reduced output in their farms and, of course, adverse effects on the family income. Some of the animals of the family were slaughtered, crops were stolen or destroyed and there were also instances where their machinery were damaged. In the recent armed conflict that we witnessed, cooperative stores were ransacked and

inventories in their stores were also stolen. Another effect is that their homes, and including their farms, were destroyed.

As a result, armed conflict has imposed heavier domestic tasks and family responsibilities on women. Women tend to be anxious about the safety of their husbands and, of course, their children. They are afraid to stay outside their homes which means difficulties in fetching water and gathering food so this will result in their limited mobility, needing to ask for a companion or employing the “buddy system” whenever they go out of their houses to fetch water or gather food. Mothers have the natural tendency to keep watchful eyes on their daughters out of fear that something might happen to them.

For women who opted to stay at the evacuation centers, there is an additional effect like, for instance in the Philippines, we will soon have our election next year, so this affects their right to suffrage such as now when they must meet the requirement of the “no bio no vote.” So it’s important for us during the timeframe given to us to register our biometrics. But because of fear to undergo the procedure or even just to leave their homes or centers, there is a tendency to simply avoid voting, especially those in the evacuation centers. This, on top of difficulties, such as, lack of food, lack of clean water, lack of clothes and lack of personal belongings; and more time, of course, is needed to do basic tasks because of poor kitchen and washing and toilet facilities. So, sharing kitchen and toilet takes a lot of time for them to do their routines. Another effect is that caregiving burdens are made heavier by more frequent and unrelieved illness among children.

Another result is that families are fragmented because of conflict so women have less time to care for children or must endure outright separation from them because of having to find paid work away from their families. Mothers are separated from husbands and sons flee to avoid being tagged as rebels. So this is very common in the kind of conflict we have in the Philippines.

Of course, just like children, women’s health is affected, especially from stress-related illnesses and complications from pregnancies. For example in Haran, Davao City, nineteen (19) women staying at the evacuation centers delivered their babies there. Such stressful and unhygienic conditions led to infant deaths and recurring coughs, colds and fever. Also, there were women who shared that they have experienced violence. Women hear sexually suggestive or malicious comments directed at them, either loudly, among themselves or directly to women and girl children. There are also alleged fondling of women or sexual harassment. It’s also common for some women to experience physical violence from

their intimate partners or their husbands and, being in armed conflict situations makes them more vulnerable to trafficking.

Women have also experienced direct threats, such as having guns directly pointed at them and openly threatened with harm. Women have also been accused of supporting the rebels, and are thus illegally detained, forced to move out of their homes or communities, or forced to go into hiding because they were tagged as supporters of the rebels. There are also different forms of direct aggression against communities and families, children and husbands being threatened and hurt, with husbands arrested because they are allegedly supporters of the rebel group. Even entire communities have been accused of supporting either rebels or government; neighbors being killed allegedly for supporting the new People's Army (NPA).

To summarize the current plight of women and children in conflict situations, the evidence is fairly obvious that women and children have experienced violation of their human rights. On the part of both children and women, their stories tell us that they have experienced violation of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Thank you very much for listening to my presentation.

**Prof. Aurora Javate De Dios**  
Philippine Representative for Women's Rights  
ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection  
of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC)

(Delivered by Prof. Jean Franco)

Hello, good afternoon, your Excellencies, Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. I'm presenting Professor Aurora Javate de Dios' paper. Prof. de Dios is unable to be here today because she has to go to another country this morning.

The impact of war and conflict on women and children. Why is it important to consider women's perspective in peace and conflict? Women and children have historically been marginalized politically, economically, and culturally in society; and they're also very much vulnerable in all these processes. In times of war and conflict they often make up the majority of casualties. Women play a central role in keeping families and societies together in times of war. We all know that they also play a crucial role in post-conflict situations. Women have a unique perspective on keeping peace and have an historical tradition of waging peace. Historically, women have been long exposed to peace work: From the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, which opposed all the wars from World War 1, 2 and others; the Greenham Common, which opposed nuclear war; the *Madres de Mayo* in Argentina who defied the Argentinian dictatorship and struggled for peace and for the *desaparecidos*.

Conflict greatly affects women and children. It exposes them to gender-based violence, including sexual violence, aggravates their burden in securing their children, families and those who are injured, displaces them and their communities. And in situations of conflict, women carry the ever-increasing burden of caring and providing for their families, the injured and the wounded, while being, themselves, forced to adopt survival strategies at the margins of war and economies.

Children are also more vulnerable because of their physical weakness, poor health and helplessness. Conflicts deprive and prevent them from going to school and school interaction with other children. Psychological trauma is also the most dominant effect of war among Bangsamoro women, followed by economic difficulties and displacement, deterioration of health, loss of property, death of family members and overall decline of quality of life.

In fact, the ARMM region has the lowest indicators of the human development index here in the Philippines. Trafficking in persons

especially women and children in the ARMM region or Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao is also prevalent. According to the Council against Trafficking, a total of 387 victim survivors of trafficking in persons in the ARMM region was accounted for in 2014 alone. A new site of prostitution sprung up in Zamboanga upon the arrival of the US armed forces sent to fight threats from Islamic groups in the area. There are now an estimated 2000 women and girls in prostitution in that area.

Women and girls are forced to hide or flee lest militia groups force them into slavery. Women in conflict areas live in fear and grave insecurity and also suffer the loss and / or separation of family members, loss of their homes, farmlands, and inaccessibility to food, water and health services for the family. They have also expressed the fear of abusive government soldiers who threatened them and their families. They also suffer from complications due to pregnancy, unsanitary refugee evacuation centers, all as a result of armed conflicts.

Here is a picture of an evacuation center in Maguindanao near the Mamasapano area in 2015.



Here is also a snapshot of the death toll and economic costs of war in the Philippines, starting from the administration of Ferdinand Marcos until the administration of the current president, President Benigno Aquino III.

Administration	Running Total Deaths	Economic Cost
Ferdinand Marcos (1965-1986)	Over 100,000	Php288.4 billion (\$6.25 billion)
Corazon Aquino (1986-1992)	Over 100,128	Php 393.4 billion (\$8.53 billion)
Fidel Ramos (1992-1998)	Over 100,578	Php 491.6 billion (\$10.66billion)
Joseph Estrada (1998-2001)	Over 102,278	Php 547.5 billion (\$11.87billion)
Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (2001-2010)	Over 104,137	Php 548 billion (\$11.88billion)
Benigno Aquino III	Over 104,786	Php 587.1 billion (\$12.73billion)

Source: Rappler (2015). "Infographic: From Marcos to Aquino: The Cost of War in Mindanao." <http://www.rappler.com/move-ph/issues/mindanao/107585-marcos-aquino-cost-war-mindanao>

As you can see the economic cost has risen along with the continued conflict situation. This is a finding of a Bangsamoro Conflict Monitoring System by the World Bank which tells us the conflict incidence and the deaths arising from those conflicts.

WAGI, or the Women and Gender Institute, of which Prof. De Dios is the Executive Director, has also collected stories and narratives of women survivors and their concept of security and safety. Here are some of them. "We are used to war," says Omaina from North Cotabato. Being used to war means running to the forest, dragging rice and livestock. She had thought her kin would be invisible there from the MILF or the Philippine Military until the order was given to burn the woods. She is also used to war as a Teduray; she's 11 years old, who clung to the system of pull out or assuming an identity of an older woman so she could work in Syria where she was jailed for fighting against an employer who did not pay her.

Another woman "used to war" is Naima from Marawi City, whose betrothal to the son of a politician was offered as a peace token and to stop the *rido* or clan conflict that already claimed her brothers' lives. Being used to war also means knowing how to listen to silence as Omen from North Cobato does. To that dead noise and then rushing out when a pelican bird screams to evacuate because she had seen armed men gather captives in the mosque and rape the women or raid the community.

Tina Baral, who counsels young girls, says that this war means counseling girls who are molested and raped by their fathers, brothers and uncles in family tents at the grandstand turned evacuation center after their families fled the Zamboanga City siege in 2013.

Viktor Taylor in his book, *Challenges to Human Security in Complex Situations*, writes that armed conflicts challenge human security and safety on a daily basis. He categorized armed conflict into those that involved secessionist groups, *rido* or clan wars, violence entrepreneurship or banditry, kidnap for ransom activities and their interaction with political activities and governance and other aspects including the rise of Christian vigilantism.

Millet Mendoza has over two decades of peacebuilding experience and is herself a survivor of violence in 2008 while serving Muslim communities. She was abducted by the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan and held hostage for two months. So she says: "When women say we are used to war, it is an indication of survivability and adaptation given the more familiar context they have been born to or grown with. It can also mean resignation or absence of choice unless a feasible alternative is shown in concrete terms."

Women are also more than just victims. They take the lead in crisis management in terms of provision of food, provision of medical care, provision of shelter, counseling and de-traumatization for victims of violence and care for orphans. Women also engaged in peacemaking, traditional modes of community dialogue, building bridges across conflict divides, building consensus around critical issues, and prioritizing needs of the communities, mediation and facilitating dialogue and peace processes.

So in conclusion, Prof. De Dios said that women and children are the casualties of war. Though marginalized in issues of peace and security, women have distinct and unique perspectives on peace and security which emphasizes human security over militarist orientation on security. But women, however, are not just victims, they are also active agents of peacemaking and peacebuilding and possess the ability to initiate and sustain peace processes.

So that's all, thank you very much.

**Ms. Hanny Cueva Beteta**  
Regional Advisor for Governance, Peace and Security  
UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Thank you so much for that introduction and thank you so much for the invitation. It is truly an honor for me to be here to talk about the situation of women and children in conflict situations. In terms of program organization, I think it is good that I come in last -- we've heard about the experiences in Myanmar and in the Philippines in detail and now, I come in with a summary. I come from a combination of global and national approaches, but I also want to make a very quick summary of the UN normative agenda on women and security issues and address mechanisms that have been used here in the ASEAN countries, national-led mechanisms if you wish to call them that, to address women and security issues as a transition to our next part.

As we heard in the morning, this year marks the 15th year anniversary of UNSCR 1325 which was passed in October 2000. I will not linger much on this because everybody has mentioned this resolution. It was the first resolution to both mention women and identify clearly from a security perspective that conflict affects women and children differently than men. And second, that women are also actors in all of these - actors in peace, actors in conflict and actors in post conflict.

There are other resolutions that have also been adopted and I will quickly give an overview on them, because sometimes they are overlooked. The next resolution that was passed was in 2008, Resolution 1820, and as you will see in your print-outs, this resolution was the first to recognize sexual violence in conflict as a tactic of warfare. It was very important in the implementation of international mechanisms to address this. In 2009, two resolutions were passed within one week: 1888 and 1889. 1888 strengthened accountability mechanisms for addressing sexual violence in conflict. However I want to specifically address Resolution 1889. Viet Nam was the President of the Council when this was passed, because it stresses the need to support women in post conflict and recovery aspects, as they are very deprived of the reconstruction roles at the time. I'll return to this later.

In 2010, Resolution 1960 was passed, further strengthening training and reporting mechanisms of sexual violence in conflict. You can see there is a balance between resolutions that are addressing women affected by sexual violence in conflict and tactics of warfare and those addressing women as actors both in conflict and in peace. In 2013, there were two more resolutions: 2106, which created more specific mechanisms for sexual violence in conflict; and 2122. This last one was important because

it was already looking toward 2015 as the year of the commemoration of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 1325. So they requested a global study on the implementation of Resolution 1325 and security related issues.

In that same year, General Recommendation 30 from the CEDAW committee was adopted and these recommendations specifically asked member states to report on situations of conflict and unrest within countries as part of their CEDAW report. So it started influencing both the Security Council Resolutions and the Human Rights Commission. Finally, this year, Resolution 2242 was passed. It created a technical working group in the Security Council to discuss women and security issues on a more regular basis. It also emphasized the role that women play in preventing extremism and countering violence. The global study—which I will briefly present and share a link so you can read it further—has a lot of data in its 400 pages, addressing the importance of understanding women as actors and the situation women face in conflict.

So what have we learned so far?

This is a summary of information presented in the two previous presentations. We know that women play roles in conflict and peace, we know that women can and should play a role in peace mediation and peace building, which the next session will talk about. We also have to recognize that women join armed groups as combatants, or they can also be involved in supporting roles. Women can also encourage or discourage other men and women to join armed groups. This is where countering violence extremism and preventing extremism comes in. There have been some discussions in this region about women joining armed groups or women's roles in preventing extremism, but we must also understand motivations. Some of the research that has looked at women combatants or women related to former armed groups say that the primary reason some women join, although not in biggest proportion, is not because of ideology. Most of them were more attracted to the possibilities of a job, land relocation, or simply a different goal than the one social norms said they should play. So there tends to be the idea of an empowering effect for women joining these groups and we must not forget that is a motivation to join.

This is also why demobilization is complicated. When women are demobilized, sometimes it's expected that they return to the roles society expected them to play before they joined. This is very important to understand, likewise in the roles in preventing extremism, and we must not forget that what we call violent extremism was an extremist or fundamentalist ideology before becoming violent. These ideologies get brewed at home and women, as well as men, play an active role in either

promoting or discouraging it, which many times is intertwined with women having to bear the main responsibility for the livelihood of the household.

I will now summarize the impact of conflict on women and children. We know that sexual violence is an issue. We've seen it in this region; in fact we've seen it all over the world. But we need to acknowledge that sexual violence as a tactic of warfare is not a new issue. In general, when societies have suffered conflict, even within localized areas, there is data to show that this area will have increased levels of gender based violence. It is clear that gender based violence will increase for a variety of reasons that have already been mentioned by both presenters. This means that efforts to reduce gender based violence must be increased particularly in post conflict situations. We know that children growing up in families or in households where there is violence will be prone to violence. There, you see a spiral of violence (especially domestic violence if this is not addressed very early), which continues post conflict. In some contexts, there is also the problem of a large number of children born from rape, who have a variety of identity and integration issues.

Displacement brings about other issues. For example, trafficking and prostitution are not only products of conflict, and estimates are very hard to come by. However, we know that conflict makes it easy for people to be trafficked and sometimes the only solution for women's livelihoods is to adopt sex work. So while we can't say that trafficking and prostitution are caused by conflict, we can say that situations of conflict and unrest multiply its incidence. We also must realize – and I have some data on this – that access to basic services in areas that are suffering from conflict or unrest is usually much lower than in the rest of the country. This affects health, education, access to justice and access to security, which essentially means that we need to address it in a different way and it's not homogenous across or within countries. We must adopt a conflict sensitive lens when we design our policies. Finally, we must use this lens on the issue of livelihood, and households with single mothers or would-be mothers or wives of disappeared persons. Further, the situation can also occur in situations where there are female breadwinners whose partners have been disabled or have migrated because of conflict.

Moving beyond this discussion of the roles women play during and after conflict, or the ways women are directly or indirectly affected, I want to briefly talk about the findings of the global study that was launched in October 2015 in the commemoration of 15 years of UNSCR 1325. I will briefly discuss some mechanisms that can help us address these issues.

One of the first findings of the global study is that prevention is better than cure, which is something we all know. The study was developed through many consultations. In Asia Pacific, civil society members noted

something very powerful: the process starts with women preventing war, rather than simply making war safer for women. We must remember that. Yes, we need to address existing situations and post conflict situations, but we also need to address prevention in a more direct way. While usually there is much discursive agreement on this – the actual priorities expressed by funding tell us a different story. According to World Bank information, the global cost of violence in 2014 was \$14.3 trillion. With the UN peacekeeping budget at \$9 billion and aid for peace and security (with gender equality as a principal objective into 2012-2013) at \$130 million, that's about 2% in comparison. So actual funding trends indicate that security and militarization is where investment is, rather than conflict prevention.

The second big finding of the global study is something that we already know, but it provides qualitative and quantitative data that unequivocally prove that women's engagement in peace and security is key to operational effectiveness. We can see how this translates into three dimensions. First, on post-conflict economic recovery and re-integration, data show that involvement of women (so to ensure beneficiaries include both men and women) will increase impact on households' levels of poverty (when compared to data with little or no women's engagement). This is because women tend to re-invest inside the household. But usually these cases involving women are much more complicated than just inviting them to participate – specific strategies to target them need to be devised. Second, if you engage women in humanitarian assistance, it will increase effectiveness and efficiency. For example, earlier we heard that, in the Philippines, involving women in the education schemes in camps of internally displaced people increased both boys' and girls' attendance in school – between 16 and 95 percent depending on the camps. Involving women in the provision of basic services in the camps will increase effectiveness and also contribute to prevent gender based violence. Third, women's involvement increases the likelihood of successful peace negotiation and mediation – women's involvement increases the probability of a sustainable peace.

At the regional level, I found five (5) different mechanisms that have been used to address women, peace and security issues during or post conflict. First, peace processes and dialogues, and we will talk about it shortly. A second and current one worth mentioning also is the implementation of conflict sensitive sustainable development goals. We are entering a moment where we will start implementation of sustainable development goals (SDGs) and a big difference from the MDGs is that we must go and look beyond the national narratives. So, in implementing the SDGs, it is key to look at the situational realities in specific areas affected by unrest or conflict. We can also learn from the aspect of transitional justice in the region – and this is a third national led mechanism to consider.

Fourth, we have a new General Recommendation that requests reporting on women, peace and security issues, and there are plans and policies developed to work on this. Finally, we need to look at National Action Plans (NAPs) on Women, Peace and Security. We have a couple in this region, let me mention the Philippines and Indonesia and a few more will soon be completed in Timor Leste and Thailand. Beyond these national approaches, regional approaches have been limited, and while there have been some discussions on conflict prevention and resolution, as well as dealing with violent extremism at the regional level, none of these discussions have addressed consistently related gender equality issues. Let's discuss each of these national led mechanisms a bit more.

Regarding national peace processes and dialogues, I would like to flag a couple of quantitative findings from the global study. First, including women in peace processes increases the probability of peace agreements lasting more than two years by 20%. This is no longer just about rights, but about trying to create sustainable peace. If you involve women in peace agreements the probability increases that they will last: it is 20% more likely to last for two years and 35% more likely to last for at least 15 years. So, you see, there is a very effective argument for involving women, namely that they bring different perspectives and different experiences.

In terms of implementing conflict sensitive SDGs, we are looking towards localizing them and building an agenda. We know some things; we know that the ten worst performing countries on maternal mortality are those in conflict; we know that conflict and post-conflict countries are home to 50% primary school-aged out-of-school children. Although we don't have enough systematic data sub-nationally, particularly in this region, we do have some information produced independently. For example, if you compare the local average versus the national average of poverty rate in some conflict affected areas, you will see that in the Philippines, the Bangsamoro area has 1.7 higher levels of poverty compared to the national rate. In Indonesia in Aceh, there are also 1.7 higher levels of poverty. In South Thailand you will see 1.8; these are very similar numbers. In Myanmar, there is one of the most extreme examples, and although it varies depending on provinces, again there is almost three times the level of poverty at the national level.

So, this is some data that I found very interesting in international reports but it gives a little bit of a sense on how conflict and situations of unrest are affecting households at the local level. And it illustrates why, when localizing the SDGs, we must have a conflict sensitive approach, as programming in areas not suffering from high levels of violence or unrest cannot be addressed in the same way than those living in a relatively more secure and peaceful environment. It's not only about providing services, but about developing trust and access to these services. Sometimes the

service may be available, but women don't have enough trust to access it or may be unable due to geographic, financial or even language barriers. In the area of transitional justice, the main message I want to share is that while it is important to end impunity and address perpetrators, it is equally important to have a victim-centric approach. It's not only about putting the bad person in jail, it is also about addressing the needs of survivors, and that includes psychosocial support. It also includes livelihood and finding ways for victims to recover their own lives. It also includes access to health and a way of reducing stigmatization of which women and children are usually victims or through which they are re-victimized.

Through CEDAW reporting, a mechanism that you all know very well, it is not specifically requested to countries that they report on women in conflict-prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. It also makes specific mention that it's not only for countries in armed conflict, which is how Resolution 1325 has sometimes been understood. This General Recommendation 30 specifies that it also applies to political crisis, localized violence and to unrest, and highlights the responsibility of states to protect women's human rights. It essentially requests reporting on normative and policy development, collection of sex-disaggregated information, actions taken inside territory and as international actors and implementation of Security Council Women, Peace and Security resolutions.

Finally, there are National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security. For those that haven't discussed them much, these plans are essentially frameworks for key stakeholders to identify priorities, determine responsibilities, allocate resources, and initiate strategic actions within a defined timeframe, specifically on women, peace and security. They usually address four pillars. The first one is participation, which is not only about peace processes or conflict mediation, it's on all levels. For example, in service provision, it is known that women in the frontline of service delivery, be they nurses or teachers or police officers, will build more trust and access more women or allow more women to access the services. So it's not only about the high levels, it's participation at all levels. Why? And this is not about saying that women are more organized, it's recognizing that women bring different perspectives and capacities and we must understand that many women have different capacities because of their socialization and their upbringing. When women are involved, they will bring these skills.

Second is prevention. The idea here is addressing early response, but in many cases, this amounts to just mitigation. So these pillars could aim for more long term conflict prevention, including promoting a peace culture that recognizes women's contributions to peace and the general society. But also – and you may find this interesting – is that working on gender equality itself is a long term conflict prevention mechanism. Evidence

from the global study indicates that societies with lower levels of gender equality may be more prone to violent extremism. Education is key, but it must be education that addresses peacebuilding and promotes a peace culture.

On protection, perhaps the most important element is that while it should address protection from sexual violence and gender-based violence – it should go beyond that to address protection of women’s essential rights. This includes, for example, physical safety which is linked to mobility. So key actors are the justice and security sectors, but also those providing services for survivors.

Finally, relief and recovery. In this pillar, it is essential to recognize that since women and men are affected by conflict differently, they are likely to have different priorities and needs during the reconstruction and post-conflict time. Which is why specifically designed approaches that deal with these different needs and priorities are needed. It’s not enough to say we will design this policy and we will consider men and women. Unless you have thought about specific ways of reaching out to women, you may not be able to reach them. There is a very good example from Nepal, where the demobilization strategy was trying to target women formerly associated with combatants but it wasn’t designed thinking of the possibilities and challenges of these women, and they were not reaching them. A new tailor-made strategy was developed that included women at the forefront of the identification and selection units, and also delivery of services to the family as a whole instead of an individual basis, among other elements. Essentially, we have learned that just wishing women will be involved in the implementation of policies does not make it happen, it requires specific and targeted approaches. Here, it is very important to think about gender sensitive planning and budgeting. This is the time where communities are rebuilding – and this is not only infrastructure, it’s also the very social fabric that connects them, including their trust. Gender sensitive budgeting and planning allows us to make sure women are also included in these processes.

I’ll leave it here. Many thanks.



## SESSION II OPEN FORUM

MODERATOR: HON. LUIS T. CRUZ  
Former Assistant Secretary  
Office of ASEAN Affairs  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
The Philippines

### AMBASSADOR BAGAS HAPSORO

Thank you Ambassador Luis T. Cruz. I am so happy that you brought these great distinguished speakers together. My appreciation goes also to Ambassador Elizabeth Buensuceso. I thank her for sending us copies of the Report of the AIPR Workshop on Strengthening the Role of Women in Peace Processes and Conflict Resolution held in Cebu City last March. I agree with you, Ambassador Luis T. Cruz. There is no retirement age in the ASEAN circle. We value your legacy in ASEAN matters. It is also a great opportunity to see the presence of Ambassador Rosario G. Manalo, Ambassador Wilfrido C. Villacorta and Ambassador Dennis Y. Lepatan. I am pleased to bring also to Tagaytay, Ambassador Reslan Ishar Jenie. He is one of “our peace builders” from Indonesia.

Excellencies, Chairman and Members of the Governing Council of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR), ladies and gentlemen. Let me thank the Government of the Philippines for hosting this Symposium. I would like to thank you for the hospitality extended to my delegation since we arrived in Manila yesterday. My appreciation also goes to the Governments of Norway and Switzerland for co-sponsoring this important Symposium. My experts are here today. Among them is Prof. Dr. Koentoro Mangkusobroto, who is now sitting next to me. I hope and I am sure that his presence will add to the success of this Symposium.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to convey two points. First, on the new phenomenon in the global scene; and second, on the task of preparing national action plans (NAPs). This morning Ambassador Stig Ingemar Traavik of Norway and Ambassador Yvonne Baumann of Switzerland made good remarks. Both of them mentioned about the current situation in the Middle East, migrant problems in Europe, growing extremism and radicalism in many parts of the world. Ambassador Traavik went on to say, “Who are the real victims? The answer is women and children.”

Just two weeks ago, on the 27 and 28 November 2015, AIPR discussed the issue of radicalization and extremism in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. We viewed this issue from three (3) different angles: (1) How can we identify

the root causes of extremism?; (2) What are the roles of the moderates in advocating intercultural dialogue?; and (3) How to explore ways to build and enhance engagement between government and civil society? One thing that we can add in this situation is how to empower children and women, that is, to maintain their strengths, not their weaknesses. I need to emphasize here that the women and children are agents of peace, because they are “long-term peace builders.”

I am particularly happy with the correlation between the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR), the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights for Women and Children (ACWC), and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), since our subject matter is cross-cutting with the scope of works of the three entities. I will support any notion as long as it is in line with “increasing the fund for conflict prevention, which is better than carrying out a peacekeeping operation.”

At the national level, I think there is a need to have appropriate national policies. In the case of Indonesia, the Indonesian government has great attachment to the protection and the empowerment of women and children in conflict situations as stipulated in Presidential Decree No. 18/2014. The Coordinating Ministry of People’s Welfare has drafted a National Plan of Action to implement the Presidential Decree. Since the inception of the two legal documents, we are still lacking international coordination due to changes in several ministries’ portfolios, including the transformation of the Coordinating Ministry of People’s Welfare to Coordinating Ministry of Human Development and Culture. In this regard, allow me to propose a suggestion to all ASEAN Member States that during the Symposium, we all share our national strategies, national plans and experiences, in accordance with the mandate of the Terms of Reference of AIPR, particularly on women and children. Thank you.

## **HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

May I now call on the Chairman of AIPR.

## **AMBASSADOR HASNUDIN HAMZAH**

Thank you. I want to thank the presenters especially the one who spoke to us all through a video presentation, Dr. Jean D’ Cunha. I think from the three presenters, we see a lot of potential with regard to how we can address the situation and also the approach of moderation as one of the means on how we can achieve the effort. I just want to especially highlight the presentation by Dr. Jean D’ Cunha regarding the situation

in Myanmar, I must say the very presentation noting the fact that 50% of the population are women and a lot of actors are very well taken care of by the government as well as the United Nations in Myanmar. Certainly, I think we all look forward that this could be incorporated to what's in place and I think that is the best to me for ASEAN or for others to come in and assist, because I think that is where they have been experiencing a kind of situation for quite a long while as compared to probably as what the southern part of this nation, in Mindanao, being annotated to address the issue of the lives of women and children. But we cannot say the same for the situation in Myanmar, so I think this is where ASEAN should do more and establish a kind of mechanism, not in anticipation of problems to arise but in situations where we need to be hand in hand to ensure that women, as mentioned by Dr. Jean, to have equal participation and participate in political space and participate in economic and social development of the nation. I also noticed that speakers from Myanmar will also speak on the next session but I just want to say how to encourage and maybe to enlighten us of the situation. Not a question actually but just a commentary.

#### **HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

Thank you very much Datu Hasnudin. Now we go to our colleague from Thailand for his query or comments.

#### **AMBASSADOR KULKUMUT SINGHARA NA AYUDHAYA**

Thank you Mr. Chairman. This is in fact the first time that I joined a meeting concerning women and children. In the beginning, I would like to express that in behalf of the Thai delegation, ASAS to Switzerland, even if she's not here at the moment, and to the host country who made this event a rarity and an enjoyable experience, all together. In fact, after listening to all the three speakers, it's unbelievable that I have experienced the same with what the speakers described to us today.

In the year 2001 I was sent to work in one of the nations and after its conflict, I faced the situation that you explained to us. And I understand better the role of women after the conflict. In fact, it is the nature of the women to try to think of the survival of their family first so that's why the women reach the needs of the family after the conflict. After working in that country for two years, I understand the root cause of the conflict and how women can join in the processes. It depends on the problems of the society especially for the family first. I can see that it's the main problem and I clearly appreciate Hanny raising the concern about income, which she describes in the different areas.

At the same time I would like to join the voice of Ambassador Cruz. I used to be the ambassador to the Philippines before and I understand the Philippines attached great importance to the rights of women and children.

I would like to inform you that we, in the Thai government, put importance and we are finalizing our national action plan on women, peace and security or WPS as well. Right now we are on the third step for the public hearing with the people concerned. We expect the national plan of action for WPS will be finalized this year. In fact, in Southern Thailand, we found the root cause and we are directly increasing women participation and this include an enhanced capacity building program. We would like to train the women in communication skills because such skills are required for active participation in peace process and also the key to promote participation and to strengthen the movement and networking of the whole community. We also think micro-finance can achieve the goal of increasing income. We would like to look closely at the resolution of the United Nations mentioned earlier.

Thank you so much.

#### **HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

Thank you. With the permission of the two speakers, before they respond, I would like to entertain three more questions so that we can avail of the limited time that we have. Of course I would also like to hear from Ambassador Min Lwin who can also speak in behalf of Dr. Jean D'Cunha in the table to join us this morning. So can I start first with the Philippines and then Viet Nam and then our speaker coming from Myanmar.

#### **AMBASSADOR ELIZABETH P. BUENSUCESO**

Thank you Mr. Chairman, I'll be very brief. Diplomats always say that and they speak for a long time, I am not a diplomat at this time. But let me thank all of you for coming out all the way from your respective countries to come to Tagaytay. The trip is long but I hope that you have been rewarded, your travel pains have been rewarded appropriately.

The second point is also to thank the distinguished panel of speakers including the teleconference that we witnessed just now. Ambassador Cruz is a proponent of teleconferencing, in fact he is advocating that next time, summits and ministerial meetings should be held the teleconference way.

The third brief point that I'd like to say is that indeed when we were preparing the concept paper for this symposium, the idea was really for the first part of the session to surface, to talk about what are issues that confront women and children in situations of conflict. And let me at this point acknowledge the very valuable assistance given by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), represented here by Undersecretary Sandoval, please take a bow, who gave very important advice on how to plan the whole symposium. So you have, first, in this session fleshing out what happens to women and children in situations of conflict; we hear about them in newspapers and television programs but here we are talking about people who have really encountered these issues in real life. And then, in the succeeding sessions you will hear about experiences of various ASEAN Member States who are in the field or who have been victims themselves. Later on, we will have stories from previous victims who have become champions or advocates of peace. We have, specifically, two of them but only one remains because the other one is a boy who is in school and doing his final examinations right now and I don't want to be the cause of his failure, he is a valedictorian in his school. So I'm already explaining to you that, unfortunately, we cannot have him, he is 11 or 13 years old and he is going to graduate at the top of his class, a former Bangsamoro victim of that conflict.

But later on we will listen to the voice of somebody who has experienced all these things herself. She has told her story 100 times and everytime she tells her story she cries. Well, women, when memorializing experiences, we cry and macho men cry, as well.

So this is my comment. My little big question is this: I really agree with you that upstream intervention or prevention is really better than the cure. Ambassador Manalo and myself just returned from Auschwitz, Poland, where we attended a seminar on genocide prevention and there we learned that even in times of peace, we should already be making interventions.

I am referring specifically to women or girls who after becoming sexual slaves or victims of rape are ostracized by their very own community. Yesterday, I read a story about the Chibok girls, as they are called, who are ostracized by their own people, by their own community because the terrorists say that they have been implanted with the seed of rape or torture of terrorists; that they will breed future terrorists and the community believes this. So, maybe, if you can share with us how to deal with women, if we are community members, if we are their neighbors, if we are their villagemates, how to confront or deal with such situations.

Thank you very much Mr. Chair.

**HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

Thank you very much, may I call now on the representative from Viet Nam.

**AMBASSADOR NGUYEN HOANH NAM**

First, I would like to, in behalf of the delegation of Viet Nam, thank Ambassador Elizabeth for organizing this Symposium and for the hospitality. I would like to thank the governments of Norway and Switzerland for their assistance to organize the meeting. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair and welcome everyone to the workshop and symposium today. I just want to comment that you all know very well that Viet Nam had undergone a long period of war and we understand very much about the consequences of war and conflict. We agree with the three speakers that women and children are the ones who suffer the most in conflict. In the case of Viet Nam, what happened after the war was there was no education. We had to start from the beginning and you know, the role of women in the family was the same also with tradition in other Asian countries - the women in the family take care about how to feed members of the family everyday and also to earn money so that their kids can go to school, among other things. To solve this problem, Viet Nam adopted regulations in protecting and ensuring a better life for women and children. We joined many other nations in signing international conventions on women and children. In this process, on one hand, we support women and children, but on the other hand, we also called for assistance from various countries to increase their help to Viet Nam to recover from the war and to help the children and women. So I would like to thank the other member countries for their support to Viet Nam in this process.

I totally agree with the message from UN Women that it's better to prevent more than make war safer for women. My question here, is, for UN Women, how is your assessment of the situation regarding this matter?

Thank you very much.

**HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

Thank you. Can I now call on the last participant to give his remarks or query please.

**AMBASSADOR MIN LWIN**

Thank you, Ambassador Cruz, for giving me the floor. First, let me join the previous speakers in thanking the Philippine government for making

this event happen, and also thank you to the governments of Norway and Switzerland for assisting us with this event. Ambassador Elizabeth, I know that you are the major player of this event. Thank you very much.

As you all listened to the video presentation of Jean D’Cunha, the UN Women in Myanmar that she did the study in Mon and Kachin states and most of her presentation reflect the real situation in Myanmar. I think there will be another presentation after this session. She belongs to the Kachin state and she will reflect what’s going to happen in Kachin states.

Our situation in Myanmar is not only with one ethnic group with the army. It’s multi-ethnic clashes, many conflicts, they are all ethnic, major ethnicities like Kachin, Kayin, Mon, so it’s a very complicated conflict that has been mentioned by Jean. It’s very encouraging that we have just signed the nationwide ceasefire agreement but not with all sixteen (16) groups but at least with eight (8) groups and I think this is the kind of success after six (6) decades of dealing with these groups.

I wish to come to the presentation of Ms. Hanny Beteta on peace and displacement of people in Southeast Asia. When you look at these figures, Myanmar has the highest number of displaced persons, 645,300. So when you look closer at the figures on these displaced persons, women and children are the most exposed and vulnerable. We should address this issue sooner, otherwise, they are subject to whatever our three presenters mentioned in their presentations.

I hope that, with the success stories of Myanmar, we are to increase initiatives such as this Symposium. I will follow the footsteps of Elizabeth and, I hope, with the assistance from our friendly dialogue partners, I could manage to have this kind of workshop or symposium in Myanmar next year.

Finally, I would like to mention that, while Myanmar is successful in dealing with this process, it’s discouraging news that ISIS is there in Thailand because Myanmar, as you know is a very close neighbor and there are very fragile areas in the southern part of our country. The ISIS issue needs to be dealt with appropriately.

Thank you.

**HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

Thank you.

## **AMBASSADOR TAN HUNG SENG**

There have been eight (8) resolutions to address the issue, and 15 years later, having seen all the major steps identified in the various National Action Plans, what concrete difference does these make to women and children who are caught in conflict all over the world? Thank you.

## **HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

Thank you very much, now I want to give the floor to their responses and closing statements before we close session today. I give the floor to Atty. Pintor.

## **ATTY. MARILYN PINTOR**

Thank you. Please allow me to make a quick response.

I would agree that there is a need for governments to engage different stakeholders, especially the vulnerable sectors like women and children in our quest to achieve peace or resolve conflict. I'd like to address that question on how to deal with the issue if those affected by conflict are our neighbors, what do we do? On the part of the organization that I represent, which is the Commission on Human Rights, we do a lot of capacity building not only for the vulnerable sectors like women and children. We teach them what their human rights are because we believe that by teaching them, by educating them what their human rights are, they will be able to assert their human rights as women and children. We also help government institutions because, as you know, we are an independent body created by the Philippine Constitution, so we help the three (3) branches of government enhance their capacities in complying with their state obligations to protect, promote and to fulfill human rights.

I think it is also important that we, as part of government, should not see women and children as part of the problem, but we would like to transcend our mindset in giving them the opportunity to become part of the solution, because experience would tell us that women and children have proved themselves to have the capacity to resolve conflict. As we know, women consist about half of the world's population and it's important for us to see them, not as victims, but to see them as part of the solution. If there is no genuine or meaningful participation of women and children, then it will be impossible for us to achieve peace or to resolve conflict.

## **HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

Thank you very much Atty. Pintor. Can I now give the floor to Ms. Beteta.

## **MS. HANNY CUEVA-BETETA**

Thank you so much.

I'm going to start with the last question on what difference does it make. According to the global study, in terms of real life changes, the answer is: not much. This is precisely what we start working on in a more focused way. One thing that has changed is we now have more evidence on how important women are to sustainable peace, and how essential they are in recovery. We have experiences in this region from the Philippines to Viet Nam in different moments or processes. Now, we need to move to more targeted actions, which I think are missing not only in this region, but also globally.

In terms of the question from Viet Nam on conflict prevention, although I don't have the numbers my sense is that the national plans are the same for all regions around the world. I don't think this is either a positive or negative exception. All countries around the world invest more money in security and military approaches, and although I understand it's necessary, you can't ignore that more should be invested in different prevention approaches. One example is education; there are other examples from the Philippines and Viet Nam, as well as existing processes on trust-building strategies in countries such as Nepal. Part of the issue is that sometimes we need to acknowledge there is a problem, which is something that is often missing and must be addressed from a conflict-sensitive perspective. Although I think this is a global problem, an issue specific to this region is that there are a lot of issues that may look small in isolation, but if added together could become bigger.

I am interested in following up on the discussions on violent extremism. I see the promotion of tolerance, which is very important, however, I haven't seen many women involved, which is essential. It is not only uniformed men who should be involved; incorporating women is important because, again, countries with higher levels of gender equality are less prone to violent extremism. Promoting equality is also preventing violence.

On dealing with stigmatization of women in situations of violence and conflict: this is very difficult, because essentially it involves changing hearts and minds. I think of very local experiences of sexual violence in conflict in Eastern Europe; stigmatization has appeared, but it has been addressed, for example, through public apologies. These symbolic

mechanisms to change society show that it's not women's fault. They say: this was a society's fault and we are acknowledging this as an issue so that it doesn't happen again. Although the stigma did not disappear, the action has its value. We also need to provide more services, including psychosocial services; more access to health; access to education; and also services for the extended family. Once a woman becomes a victim of sexual violence, it affects the whole family; it becomes a family issue as it affects her children and her partner.

I think I addressed most of the questions.

### **HON. LUIS T. CRUZ**

Thank you very much, Ms. Beteta.

As parting words from the Chair, let me take off from the last statement of Ms. Beteta, when she said that on the matter of addressing peace and reconciliation processes involving women and the children in conflict situations, we really need to address the more targeted actions and, by that, she is addressing the statement to the members of the Governing Council of AIPR and I am glad to hear that our colleague from Myanmar indicated his willingness to organize the next workshop. I guess his statement is also addressed to our sponsors in this morning session, the governments of Switzerland and Norway and perhaps our colleague from EU who was here this morning.

With that let me thank the members of the Governing Council of AIPR and of course the two sponsors and the participants to this two-day symposium.

Thank you very much.



**SESSION THREE**

**WOMEN AND CHILDREN AS ACTIVE  
PARTICIPANTS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION  
AND PEACE PROCESS**





**Ms. Thavory Huot**  
Executive Director  
Khmer Ahimsa Cambodia

I am Thavory Hout, a survivor of three decades of civil war, genocide, and domestic violence. I am from Phnom Pehn, Cambodia, currently the executive director of the Khmer Ahimsa Organization (KAH), which works to empower communities with conflict resolution skills through informal village structures. To understand Cambodia in the present, it is necessary to look at Cambodia in the past and its people. My life story and experience is one of the thousand stories in Cambodia.

During the 1970s, I could not remember how many times I had taken refuge in trenches to escape from the US bombing, but I still clearly remember that, enraged by the damage of the US carpet bombings in Cambodia, I made up my mind to join the revolutionary communist groups, as many other girls were doing. I and my female “comrades” were trained as the advocates to help further the revolution movement with self – confidence and encouragement. When I say confidence, I am not only talking about making a presentation, I’m talking about being confident as a woman. At night time, a young girl like me travels to the neighboring villages to give speeches about the injustice of US carpet bombings and about the capitalist taking benefits from farmers, to rise against the current regime, the government of Khmer Republic regime and the capitalist suppressors. I witnessed battles between the communist and the Cambodian forces, and also between the North Viet Nameese guerillas and villagers in my village as well as with the Republican soldiers. I also witnessed the death of most of my family under the brutality of the Khmer Rouge in 1975 until 1979. During this time, families - males and females alike- were made to work in agricultural production. I was forced into manual labor, building dams and irrigation channels, transplanting, plowing and harvesting rice.

### **Women and the Tradition**

As a typical characteristic of Cambodian traditional society, women are advised not to speak up nor to express their feelings or ideas under the cover of respect or politeness. This practice is reinforced in the Cambodian educational system as well as within the family. I, an experienced educator, have dedicated myself to changing this attitude since the 1980s. Although I grew up under the *kapok* tree mentality and find it a difficult battle from time to time, I try to identify and isolate any behavior that encourages silence. I am tired of being silenced by other people in the past and I do not want to silence others, my students and children. I was taught to be silent and obedient like the *kapok* tree. Unfortunately the two most

important women in my family, my grandmother and my mother, were silencing me. By suppressing my voice, they felt very powerful in their limited space. Fortunately I have a grandfather who never discriminated against my gender and gave me his room full of books. He listened to his radio channel in China and summarized to us what was going on in the world. So he said, “Be careful, the communists are coming.”

After the Khmer Rouge collapsed, a high number of male casualties of the Khmer Rouge era resulted in a demographic gender imbalance. During the years that followed there were many more single young women seeking marriage partners. This surplus led to the decline of the general status of women and women’s rights. The traumatic events of Cambodia’s conflict period, combined with oppressive cultural norms, have left women and children in Cambodia, particularly vulnerable to discrimination and abuse. A staunchly hierarchical society has re-emerged in Cambodia. Men are generally regarded as having higher status than women and thus more powerful and important.

According to the report titled the Status of Cambodian Women, “the lower social status of women, on the other hand, means that many are treated as mere possessions or objects and are denied their rights and full participation in society.” Young women in my generation worked very hard after the collapse of the Khmer Rouge. They had extra jobs selling things on the street or on the market and worked very hard to help their families; while some men who used to be soldiers were unemployed, had lost their status and gave up their responsibility to their families. Yet, they were still arrogant. Protecting the family name and honor was their main concern.

### **Women Empowerment with no More *Kapok* Trees**

In April 1979, I became a public school teacher in exchange for food. For a decade, I worked in various organizations such as the Project against Domestic Violence (PADV) to reduce domestic violence, including assault with deadly weapons. I worked for the Buddhist Association of Nuns and Laywomen in Cambodia (BANLWC), I also worked for the Working Group of Weapons Reduction to reduce illegal weapons and promote peace.

As you all know, 90% of Cambodian people are Buddhists and women traditionally practice Buddhist precepts at the temples after their duties as housewives and mothers. Under the BANLWC, nuns and laywomen were trained in various skills on national reconciliation and post-conflict resolution. They felt that their participation is vital in the process of maintaining peace and security. They said that they feel rejuvenated and confident that they are able to continue to do this work and that they are

not ever alone. They would never want future generations to suffer the way they, the unlucky older generation, did.

A group of laywomen and nuns developed a plan to visit patients who are affected with HIV/AIDS, both at home and at hospitals, in Phnom Penh. The visits, which include Buddhist chanting, help the patients cope with despair. The group goes to the patients' rooms to offer blessings. These visits are very important for the patients and their families, especially as the time of death approaches. The nuns bring small gifts to offer patients who have no family or have been abandoned by their families. Nuns even joined activities, such as meetings and consultation workshops with Thai and Cambodian participants, for the existing border conflict over Preah Vihear temple. A joint statement was released calling for actions to find a peaceful solution to the border conflicts, for changes in media reporting, and for history telling and education to promote understanding and peace. Through a joint statement, nuns and women wanted their ideas to be heard. Women wanted to show how people at the grassroots feel about conflict and how they want policymakers to consider peaceful solutions. Also, they wanted to show to all Thai and Cambodian people that they are still working together and they do not want to break the friendship that exists between our people.

In 2010, they developed an action plan with activities that included exchanged visits between Cambodia and Thailand and activities for raising awareness. The action plan was created by all the participants, including Buddhists, Christians, Muslims and hill tribe minorities. Villagers, youth, academics, activists, and the media, male and female, monastics and laypeople, all shared their ideas for working together. They clearly demonstrated that nuns and laywomen are especially capable of playing active roles in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.

Then, in April 2008, I became director of KAH, working for peace and justice by empowering local communities to gain ownership and capacity in dealing with conflicts and injustices in a non-violent way. We trained community people, including women, peaceful heart, active non-violence and conflict resolution using non-violent action principles combined with Buddhist philosophy, to enable participants to analyze the root causes of their conflict (for example, conflict mapping or the 'conflict tree' where branches represent the effects which cannot simply be cut off to end the conflict because its roots remain). Participants learned to develop strategies to balance power between the powerful and the community people. It helps participants set strategies to respond to current land conflicts related to the establishment of hydropower dams in the region and the planned new Macao style gambling city near the Thai Border in Koh Kong, which will cause many problems to the living conditions of the villagers because they will not be able to find grass for their cattle or go

into the forest for firewood, mushrooms and herbs but will have to pay for everything.

KAH used techniques such as meditation which helps participants to reduce anger, greed, hatred and delusion in order to develop wisdom and to concentrate when solving problems. Drawing their River of Life and hearing about the concept of the Buddhist Four Noble Truths and Eight Fold Paths helped participants identify problems and reflect on their past situation so that they were able to find methods for peaceful and non-violent conflict resolution. Women and youth also attended some active non-violence trainings annually. Through various role plays and group activities such as crossing a poisonous river and the like, participants learned nonviolent strategies and methods for resolving conflict and reflected on the principle of non-violence as a tool for addressing injustice. Villagers finally said that without non-violent conflict resolution and skills learned from KAH, people would have responded violently to the conflict with the other party.

KAH also trained women to make presentations about their experiences on non-violent advocacy to international visitors. KAH organized and facilitated the International Women's Day celebrations in March, where villagers from different religious groups and local authorities had the opportunity to meet and share life experiences, concerns and the problems they encounter in the society. Women were able to understand the values and the background of the International Women's Day. Not all of them were well-educated because their fathers told them that it was not necessary to enroll in school as in the future they would be married and become housewives who stay at home looking after the children and doing the housework. A Cambodian girl used to be compared to a cotton wool, while a boy to a diamond. A diamond, when dropped into mud, can be washed as clean and sparkling as before, while cotton wool can never regain its purity once it has been dirtied. The traditional beliefs about the two sexes are deeply rooted in culture. Longstanding and deep – seated gender stereotypes, limited educational opportunities and increasing demands to manage agricultural production alongside household, child and elder care responsibilities, hinder political participation and efforts to sustain women's participation.

Since 2012, KAH has been addressing challenges for women's participation in the political sphere. In partnership with the Institute for Peace and Justice (IPJ) at San Diego, U.S.A. KAH brought together women from the main political parties who work in different public and private capacities across the country. These cross-party trainings in conflict resolution, advocacy, communication and negotiation skills have been the impetus for breaking down barriers, creating alliances, finding common interests and goals. Moreover, the trainings have provided a

platform to enhance and strengthen the skills and confidence of women involved in politics, and build an understanding of the integral role women play in governance and peacebuilding.

In Muslim communities, members advocated successfully for their land rights against powerful people, addressing even the Prime Minister during the pre-election period in 2008, who promised in public that 60% of the land should remain in the possession of the community. In practice, the problem continues as community people now need their land titles which in some case they do not have. When the powerful people continued to enlarge their area and constructed buildings on community land, the Muslim group, supported by neighboring Buddhist people, tried to stop them. Because of their knowledge of non-violent methods, a violent confrontation could be avoided, but one member of the Muslim community was arrested and sent to Koh Kong provincial prison. Community people continued to advocate not only on the district level but even traveled to Phnom Penh to address the Prime Minister. Forty military police and police forces violently stopped the group along the road and sent them back home. Many people were injured, some women were also affected to the extent that they had to undergo abortions. Men had to leave their families and to hide because more arrests were planned by the authorities. Later, during a Mosque inauguration in Phnom Penh, Muslim women complained about the wrong accusations and the arrested Muslim was released although he was warned to stop his advocacy activities.

## Conclusion

In every movement of any kind in this world, no good progress will be made if women are left aside, because nature has put *ying* and *yang* together. Therefore, where there are men, there should be women for balance. Today, the younger generation of women, like my daughter, they are lucky. They can receive higher education and work outside or raise a family, or do both if they can manage to do so. They have alternatives. Not like us.

For fairness and effectiveness, good governance needs the active participation of women at all levels. Women are generally seen as more capable of solving problems peacefully and honestly. They hope that working together in harmony, women will accomplish their goals more quickly. Women and children change their mindsets for a peaceful society and have taken important roles in politics, society, religion and in the household during and after war time. Through participating in workshops on issues ranging from domestic violence to land advocacy, I hope this type of education might undo the tendencies towards violence that I have

long witnessed and help women more actively participate in the solution of conflicts.

Thank you very much!

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A Report on the Status of Cambodian Women

**Professor Dr. Ir. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto**

Chairman of the School of Advisory Council of the School of Business and Management Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), Indonesia

Thank you so much, Madame Ambassador Manalo, for the very nice introduction. What I'm going to do now is basically storytelling with regard to the rebuilding of Aceh post-tsunami 2004, where for four years I was the Director.

I'm so happy to be here because, since 2009 when I left Aceh, this is the first time there's an event to which I was invited. That's why I am here now to address the role of women. In the past, everytime I presented my experiences in Aceh, it's always about something but never about the role of women as victims of tsunami. So I would like to thank you for inviting me to this very special event.

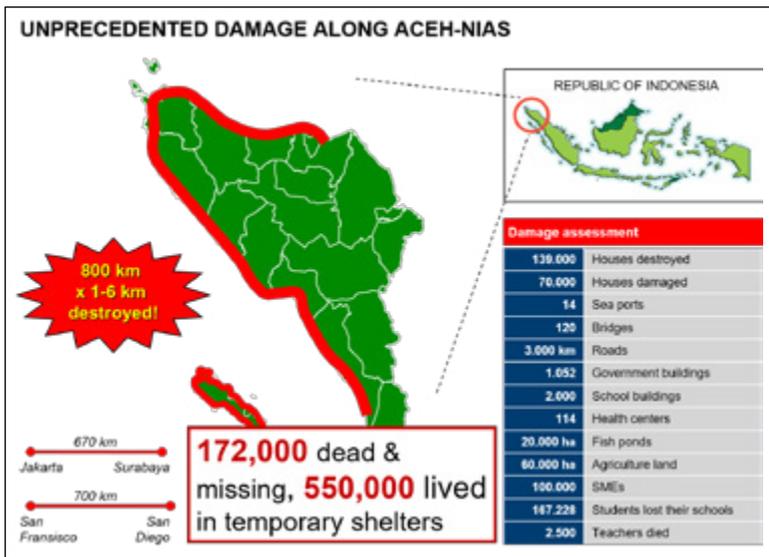
The tsunami hit Aceh in December 2004. It was a huge tsunami, a coastline of more than 800 kms, and if you see that particular part of Aceh it looks like this. Totally damaged and also the coastal line in certain areas collapsed between 30 centimeters to 50 centimeters, in certain area it reaches 1 meter such that the water made inroads inland.



Three months after the tsunami we were able to clear the area and it looks like this in the presentation. So this was how villages in this area looked like. So you can still see the slope, pavement of the roads but there used to be a village here. The clearing looks like this. And this is just one spot in the coastal line of Aceh.



The whole red area from this part up to this part was more than 800 km. A total of 172,000 dead and / or missing and half a million people were displaced. This is the magnitude of the disaster and I am not going to take you to the statistics but you can see there how many houses have to be built, how many schools and we have to do this in four years' time.



Bear in mind that, Aceh, before the tsunami struck, was the number four poorest province in Indonesia; so it is not a rich province. Such a poor province hit by tsunami, so, you can imagine how the local government reacted to this. I can say that the local government was basically almost totally paralyzed, such that we have to create a new agency to support the restoration of this area.

This picture is a very special picture because we had thousands of tents like this and I really hope that nobody will be living ever in this kind of tent for more than one month, because it's so terrible to live in this kind of environment - no water, no toilet, a family in one tent. One week is already unbearable, one month is unbelievable and the majority of the people had to live for more than one year in this kind of environment. Those who mostly had to stay in these tents were the women and the kids. Why? The men were going out to find jobs, so those who mostly suffered were usually the women and children.



But as I mentioned, besides natural disaster, it was also conflict and the conflict was happening already for 25 years. So, at the same time in Aceh, as we were rebuilding, we also had to support the peacebuilding. Well, people say that, luckily, there was a tsunami. Otherwise the conflict will continue. So these were the things that were happening.

When it comes to the tsunami, two-thirds of the fatalities were women; there was a high number of widows, assets lost and not inherited. This is not the Islamic culture or Indonesian culture but is the local culture or subculture that if a woman lost her husband, the property will go to the

husband's family, so a poor woman has nothing, they become the poorest women in the world because they lost everything.

When it comes to children, the highest among groups are those between 0-9 years old, who at that time recorded 21.1% dead. The result of the 25-year conflict was there were so many widows, about 15,000 of them, you can just imagine how many women were suffering because of the loss of their husbands. Some 460,000 women became heads of the household. The effect of a very long conflict was sexual and domestic violence. So that's why, although conflict resolution was not part of my job description, but in order to make it happen, we had to support the whole process. Such that, when we built so many trauma centers, it was not only for the victims of the tsunami, but also, for the victims of conflict. Hundreds of such trauma centers were built.

Some 11,000 children experienced disrupted schooling, so this is the effect, joint effect that had been happening in Aceh.

We had to build and rebuild Aceh. This was the sad thing before it was cleaned up, so many debris and the smell lasted more than two months because between the debris were bodies of animals and people. It was very difficult because if you wanted to clean it, you had to bulldoze it very fast and, for sure, the human corpses would be destroyed. So these were the conflicts that we were having at that time.

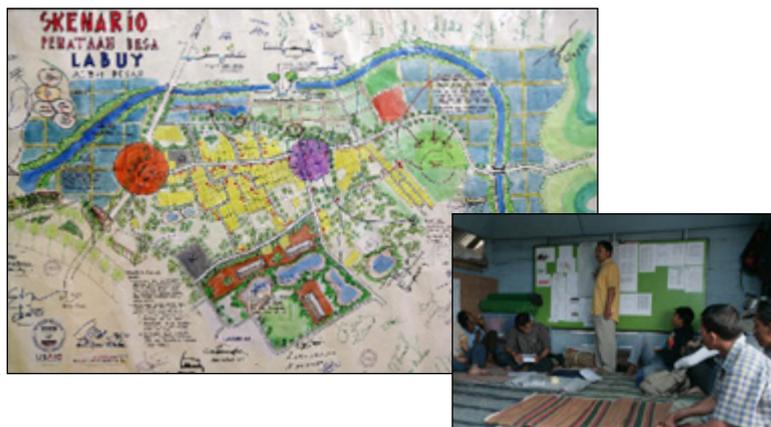
The first thing that we had to do was to give people jobs. How did we do that? Cash for work and the women were the target because they had to go out from the tent. Cash for work for women involved cleaning the debris, cleaning the paddy field, whatever they had to do to get them out from the tents because living in this kind of situation was unbearable. By giving cash to the women, for sure, they will use it for their family; unlike the men who, of course, will buy cigarettes.

In trying to do this we had to have a good international cooperation. We were fortunate because the scale is so huge such that 60 countries were helping us; more than 750 NGOs and international organizations and more than 8000 volunteers were there in Aceh helping us. So, we were very lucky and we had them with us in trying to rebuild Aceh. Here you can see a number of organizations, you name any religion and they were represented in Aceh. People say that Aceh is a very Islam province, but we had Jewish organization, the Orthodox Christian and Catholic organization also working there, so it was a melting pot of all cultures there in Aceh for four years. Well, thanks for that, otherwise we would not have reached what we achieved in four years' time.

Let me take you to the strategy. These were the strategies that we put in place in the beginning and I am very proud of these strategies because you can see, first thing that we had to do is housing development and land titling, and then infrastructure and economic development. I am going to take you to focus on the housing development and also on the economic development.

This is something that's really interesting to look for, women in housing development is simple, they live in the house, they had lived in a tent and once they were out of the tent they wanted to live in a house. You take them out of the planning process, then you have a disaster. Why? Because they make decisions on anything that has to do within the house- where the toilets should be located, where the kitchen should be and how or what they're going to do once the house is finished,. So this is the story of the village people. In the beginning, things were very slow, because of the cultural norm that only males can attend meetings. So it was becoming very slow, they cannot come to a conclusion because everytime they went home, they got complaints from their wives.

And then we changed strategy and invited the wives so it became very fast. And this you can imagine, this layout of the village was made by them, by themselves.



This is the only document in their village and one thing I'm very proud of up to now, ten (10) years after the tsunami there is no horizontal conflict between villages. Why is it so? Because everything that comes from the charter is a decision made by the people and they have to put their signatures here. I told them, "Before you put your signature in this map, know the construction will be done and the signature should be witnessed by the wife." So this was a joint process, the men put the signature but it had to be witnessed by their wives otherwise I am not going to do anything.

About the housing, it was tough. When the women were not taken into the process of building houses, all these houses were basically donated by NGOs or Red Cross or countries, but when it came to the design, the women made the decision as to what kind of house should be built. The NGO donor should have a discussion with the housewife first before making decisions on the type of the house to be built. So you see different types of houses. The wife who lived in the house decided the location of toilets, some wanted it inside their houses, some wanted it to be outside, attached to the house but outside and looking at the kitchen. So we can see that after this process, the houses would look like this, this type of house but you can see that this house on the stilt is different from the other house. Why? Because the housewife had a plan to build a small grocery or small shop below it. So they had a midterm plan that after building the house, they are going to have their own business below this house. So these are the things that were happening and in Aceh you will see different types of houses and basically these houses were decided by the wives, by the women.



One thing that I've already mentioned was about land titling and house ownership. If the husband died, the widow lost all the assets. All the properties go to the husband's families. How did we defend this? We did this through joint land and house titling. It meant husbands' and wives' names were literally in the certificate with their signatures in it. This has never happened in Indonesia that we had this kind of certificate and the most difficult to convince were the capital city and the *Ulamas* (Muslim religious leaders) because the leaders were actually the ones who made decisions regarding the rights of women. So this was the first time in Asia

that you have a joint land titling, joint husband and wife, so this is the picture of the certificate of the new house they own.



*Joint ownership of land and building by husband and wife*

So innovation is something that's really important from the conflict and from natural disaster, you come up with creative approaches. Innovation is something that's really important. Another thing you see in the statistics is that there were so many orphans. So many children had lost both their parents- fathers and mothers. So what do you do with them? Never in Asia did it happen that children were given the title of the house and land. Here in Aceh, it was the first time that children have the certificates in their names for the houses donated to them. This lucky boy, lucky because of the house, unlucky because he lost his parents, this house is owned by him and no uncle or aunties can take over it. And again this has never happened before in Indonesia. So there are two innovations, major innovations when it comes to land titling project.



*The 100,000th house was given to a 13-year-old orphan.*



*Women were involved in the discussion of land ownership and titling*

And out of this, the whole thing moved very fast, we were able to build a lot of houses. In September 2008, almost one year before the end of the whole reconstruction program, there was a big push from the housewives to push for economic activity. So we had a program to develop the soft skills of the housewives. After so many years of conflict, they had lost their soft skills and their capability to do small businesses; so we trained them to engage in small sales at the time and you can see that more of the activity as our major program. And, again, there were so many people with good hearts coming to help us. One of my champions in this effort was Sara Henderson, a rich lady from New York, who spent two years with us and taught the women how to develop small businesses, including *batik* weaving. Sara also helped the women on how to operate small grocery stores. It is important to give them their confidence back and once the confidence is there, then things start moving very fast. You cannot believe how fast!

Also, in healthcare, one thing that's really important is to take care of children. We built temporary schools with the help of UNICEF. The number of schools that we should be rebuilding was 23,000 but, in reality, it was only 14,000, because schoolchildren were missing such that for two semesters we did not have to rebuild exactly the same number of schools as before and also the structure of the schools. So this was something that was seen after the school was rebuilt and we can see happy children and at home we have the mothers knowing that their children are given appropriate schooling.

The lesson learned from this, is that, inclusivity is the most important factor. Although we have to respect the local culture, everybody should be involved, especially the women. They should be informed of any decision with regard to rebuilding of the area.

Sustainability matters and, when it comes to sustainability, it's the women who count. Cash and food are important but soft skills are valuable to sustain livelihood.

You have to innovate and you have to be brave enough and have the guts to do changes; to do something that was never done before like the introduction of joint land titling or land titling for children.

So that's it, thank you so much for this opportunity.

### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Thank you very much Professor Dr. Kunturo Mangkusubroto. The professor discussed the experience of Aceh in 2004 when a massive tsunami displaced at least half a million people. The situation was rather complicated by the fact that for 25 years there was armed conflict in Aceh, thus rendering women and children even more vulnerable.

The Aceh experience in so many ways draws a parallel, I would say, that we have something like this, last year in Tacloban, but the difference being that, in the case of Aceh, you had a problem of a natural disaster and a conflict and, in the case of the Philippines, we have the problem of a natural disaster and the advancement of trafficking of our women and children. Both are a no-no for any decent human being.

Empowerment of women, as entrepreneurs, health professionals, educators and community development workers, is indeed critical in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of any community rebuilding program; and I'm very impressed and, also everybody here, with the professor for the creative approaches that you have been able to do, which moves you away from the rumor that Muslim fundamentalism has come into Aceh, but granting that it may have, the Indonesian people have done something about believing the victims of tsunami and conflict particularly women and children deserve to live normal lives.



**Ms. Daw Mary Tawn KD**  
Co-Founder and Coordinator of Wunpawng Ninghtoi  
Myanmar

I would also like to say thank you so much for giving me this chance to present. This is very important for the ASEAN community. I'm Mary Tawn and I come from the northern part of Myanmar, specifically the Kachin state, which recently experienced conflict in the area. I am very impressed by Dr. Kuntoro for his work on the impacts on women and children with regards to natural and man-made disasters. I will present the man-made disaster happening in Myanmar that began five years before.

To present the situation of women and children as active participants in the peace process, I would like to introduce my country's context and provide key background data.

Our country, Myanmar, is a multi-ethnic based country and we had the 1947 Panglong Agreement on co-independence and formation of a genuine democratic federal union led by Kachin, Shan, Chin and Bamar. Then we had independence in 1948 and several ethnic armed groups fought against the central Myanmar government for equal rights and non-discrimination. At that time, the Kachin Independence Organization/Army (KIO/A) started the revolution of 1961. From 1988 to 2010, in a military regime, a ceasefire agreement with several armed groups was undertaken. It was like a gentlemen's agreement, but there was no political dialogue. Then, in 2011, the semi-democratic government was established.

Now I would like to present the context of the conflict. KIO started the armed revolution against the Myanmar government in 1961 due to its ignorance of the Panglong Agreement. Then the KIO signed the ceasefire agreement in 1994 without a political dialogue framework. After 17 years, armed conflict resumed between the Government of Myanmar and KIO in 2011. A series of peace negotiations between the Union Peace Working Committee and KIO with a Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT) was undertaken but no ceasefire agreement has been reached except a seven- point agreement in May 2013.

So, from June 2011 until March 2015, a ceasefire and peace process is ongoing, as His Excellency already explained this morning, with the 21 ethnic armed organizations in Myanmar, but among them, only eight (8) armed groups signed nationwide ceasefire agreement last year. Other major ethnic armed groups, such as the MNDA (Mon National Defense Army), KIO/A (Kachin Independence Organization/Army), KNPP (Karenni National Progressive Party, SSPP (Shan State Progress Party/Shan State

Army), which were considered politically strong ethnic armed groups have not signed yet. There are efforts from civil society organizations to ask these four strong ethnic armed groups to sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement.

As you know, Myanmar has been congratulated by many ASEAN countries and abroad for having successfully held elections in 2015. Aung San Suu Kyi's NLD (National League for Democracy) won in the election, but, sad to say, only 2% of women have been elected in the parliament. So, in terms of women's participation in peace and political decision making, you can imagine that we might have a lot of challenges of women's participation, not only in the parliament, but also in decision making in all stages or levels.

On December 2, 2015, a meeting among our President, the NLD and the most important entity in our country, the military took place. We have transition challenges in the next three months. Honestly, as a CSO and also as a woman, I really worry whether the results of the elections will hold and whether the NLD or the new President can order the military to stop the war. Will they listen to the new President if s/he asks them to stop the war and sign the national ceasefire agreement?

On the ground, the conflict between the KIA and the Myanmar Government Army has been going on since 2011 until today. Fighting continues, not only in Kachin and Northern states, but also in Shan. There are 120,000 IDPs from 24,000 households in 168 camps in Kachin and Northern Shan States.

So within this period of the conflict, this is the second time of some IDPs to run to other places. As you can see in these pictures



*IDPs walk for days to reach safer grounds*

The IDPs walked two nights and three days to reach to a safe place and also you can see this girl, she had been walking, running and feeling very tired, just slept on the road. This woman was running and when we picked her up in a truck on the side of the road and she told us, "Please find my son, I can't see my son, please!" We also found a mother of a two-week old baby and she cannot breastfeed because of exhaustion from all the running. Just last month, conflicts broke out and the number of IDPs has, again, been increasing.

So, together with other nongovernment organizations (NGOs), we have been doing protection assessment since 2012. The final assessment was done last August. Some findings in the assessment report included the following: there's a protracted displacement and education situation. Imagine this, it has been four and a half years already, if a child was 16 years old at that time, she would have been educated and at 19 years or 20 years she would have graduated already. But IDPs from the Kachin and Northern Shan states, who would mostly likely be in Grade 10 or Grade 11, because of the long civil war, have lost their opportunities to be educated. So, in this conflict situation, school drop-out rate is a serious concern, caused mainly by the parents' inability to pay for school tuition which resulted in students falling behind and, ultimately, dropping out and succumbing to pressure to contribute to the family's income. A key concern in the KIA-controlled area is that the students cannot transfer to any school in government-controlled areas and are barred from access to university. More specifically, 2500 of students have lost their chance to avail of higher education.

Protection is also a main issue in protracted displacement. Generalized psychological trauma resulting from war-induced displacement, uncertainty, dependence on others, inability to provide for themselves. We have been asking the IDPs how this can be addressed and most of them answered: 45% said put an end to the conflict, 19% said go back home, 17% being self-sufficient, 13% need counseling and 6% mentioned others, while 8% say end violence against women.

Since the conflict, there have been over 30 cases of human rights violations that have happened in one village. Last 2012, there was a case of disappearance of a woman. Also, last January 19, 2015, two teachers were tortured and killed in a church compound. There were also rape cases and these have not been solved.

Women, in particular, have become increasingly vulnerable as targets of rape and sexual abuses as well as victims of human trafficking. As we already know in normal situations, many people, not only in Myanmar, but also other people have been trafficked to China, especially in IDP camps located in the China – Kachin border.

On the other hand, funding trends are decreasing. As stated in a UN report, only 48% of the humanitarian needs will be covered in 2015. This is the challenge for us. In the face of the humanitarian crisis, we continue to assert that people have the right to livelihood and security. But in the recent situations in the Kachin and Shan states, we cannot even provide for basic needs, because it has been four and a half years and funding has decreased. IDPs, at least two hundred a day, have been leaving. Lack of income, family burden and low possibility of return and resettlement were some of the reasons.

So we have a recommendation to the ASEAN and also to the stakeholders. As Asha Hagi Elmi Amin asserted: "Women participation in peace process is not optional, it is a requirement." I think this is very important. Ensuring protection and promotion of women's and children's rights, particularly during conflict situations and the peace process, are also important. Children's education in conflict areas must be improved. Special attention for the promotion of women's leadership at every level, even during conflict situations, and ensuring implementation of Women Peace and Security Action Plan, UNSCR 1325, are essential. So that's it. Thank you. Chyeju Grai Kaba Sai.

#### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Thank you Ms. Tawn. Ms. Tawn highlighted how conflict and protracted displacement impact negatively on education and social development and how these heightens the vulnerability of women to sexual abuse and exploitation. Inclusion and participation of women in peace processes are fundamental principle towards ensuring the viability and durability of the peace.

**Ms. Ros Sopheap**  
Executive Director  
Gender and Development for Cambodia

Thank you very much. I would also like to thank Her Excellency, Elizabeth Buensuceso for inviting me to join this very important event. It's not easy to be in the last session, but I hope your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, still have the remaining energy for the last session.

What I'm going to share is not much different from what the other speakers shared today . I would like to highlight a little bit about how Cambodia is working for peace and the involvement of women and children

After the Paris Peace Agreement in 1992, democracy in Cambodia remains fragile: Technically, the political set-up is called multi-party system, but in practice the state was ruled by a single party that leads to absence of justice. I am quoting from a source, Good Governance from the Ground Up: Women's Role in Post-Conflict Cambodia. This is a research that was conducted eight years ago.

Political conflicts do not impact the ordinary life of people, but it is still a tendency for other disputes, particularly related to natural resources. Conflicts are rooted in the national landscape which is connected to power.

What is the women's role in conflict resolution in this connection? Despite these challenges, women play an important role. Women are leading many key initiatives to promote peace building, via civil society, in collaboration with the government and local authorities. Women expanded democratic freedoms and demonstrated a respect for the rule of law and reflected a desire to strengthen the legal framework of the country. If you look at the research, there are many names of women working in NGOs and civil society. We formed a Women's Committee Plan to call for peace in society, because even after the Khmer Rouge, peace was still fragile.

After the 2014 National Elections, there were a lot of conflicts between political parties, particularly, between the ruling party and opposition party .The women called for peace by preparing petitions and brought these to the different embassies for support. Young women's groups brought this to the National Assembly. We held a Peace Sit-in in front of the palace to read the Constitution and worked to bring peace to the country. While there had been conflicts between civil society and the police in the past, because women led these peace activities, we did not encounter any conflict between the women's groups and the police.

Cambodian women also aspire for peace; they are good at negotiating, more honest, less violent and adept at solving conflicts. They brought discussion rather than violence. I still remember back in 2008 when there were a lot of conflicts arising from companies that were cutting trees and taking lands from the people in the northern provinces (the mountainous areas in Cambodia). At that time, men and women changed roles. Men stayed home at the community, while women went to Phnom Penh to talk with the policymakers to request for the resolution of and/or intervention on these issues. Men themselves took care of the children, livestock and the house. This was a contradiction in the culture. Men in Cambodia taking care of household will not be called strong men. The culture in Cambodia will not allow wives to be far away from home, but the reality brought about this transition at the community level

The Domestic Violence Law had been formulated since 1996, but it was adopted only in 2005. Because of conflicts at home, women started to discuss with the Ministry of Women Affairs (MOWA) the need to have a Domestic Violence Law and started to write a draft. It took about 10 years for the law to pass. However, law enforcement is still a challenge until today.

While at the national level, we engaged policy makers and researchers to further figure out the barriers of law enforcement, we also looked at strategies and the role of the family and local authorities in ending violence against women and children.

Gender equality brings about the opportunity for women and men in demanding for peace. We found out that if people don't talk and there is no venue to talk, it's really frustrating, so we opened the space for people to speak out. We built the ability of the community people to share; to be confident so that they are able to share about their stories. We provided them a safe space; where there is no right nor wrong - a safe space for them to express themselves. They were also able to build a network in the village to share about their issues. At first, women were hesitant to speak, because they didn't know how and even if they did, who would help them?

Also sharing openly about yourself is against the code of conduct (women code of conduct), because when they share about themselves, they are 'bringing the fire from inside to outside.' It is against tradition, as well, but in doing this, we bring about a positive result where community people, particularly women, are able to talk about issues. This is really about peace, because in peace you need space to speak.

How about the men's role? I think men also need a space to speak, as well. Sometimes we say that men are strong, but in reality, this is not so. Men and women are the same! I think men who try to defend themselves and

their masculinity are afraid of something. If you declare your weakness, it means you are willing to improve. It means you are strong.

We also work with violent men. Meeting with violent men is not easy. They don't want to talk; they hide themselves. But we don't talk about their faults. We make them feel trust and relief. We start by making them feel peace in their minds, their families and society. In that way, they gain respect. That is how we build men role models who we call "champions." So men started to understand.

In Cambodia, we have many cases of men - and I'm sorry that I share about this reality. We asked them if they talked to their partners about sexual relationship? Some couples raised up to eight children, but they have not really talked about sex. They never share housework, so women work really hard to earn income for the family, while men go out for drinks and come back home and demand for sex. So, who enjoys this? Women don't . So, when we bring this to the discussion, the men started to understand.

I see our Cambodian Ambassador is shaking his head. He is ashamed. Everybody is ashamed, but, Your Excellency, reality is reality!

We also help women who are entertainment workers to speak out and teach them to negotiate with clients not to beat them. So this is the best practice that we bring women to speak about their stories. We don't bring experts to the group to influence the discussion.

We established Gender Cafés, where women from different groups come together to share. They are really amazing women!

We form Village Women's Core Groups that have been elected by the community people. They assist women to file cases at the provincial court level and village commune levels.

We also have a Men's Core Group that discuss and share about men's concerns and issues.

I would like to share a case study about the role of women and children involved in conflict resolution at the family level. This is a couple in Kg. Chhnang Province where our organization is working on a project. They have one child. Husband and wife have shifted their roles because the wife was working as a factory worker. She worked overtime and came home at 9:00 p.m. everyday. So the role of the husband included taking care of children, livestock and cooking dinner. In the morning, the wife prepared breakfast and packed lunch that she could bring to the factory. But at nighttime, she expected that the husband would prepare dinner.

One day, she came home and look at the rice pot and saw that it was empty. She started cooking rice and went out to look for her husband and she found her husband was drinking with other men. She said, “Darling, I expected to have dinner by this time, but you didn’t do it, so please come home and help me .” After talking to her husband, she returned back home and continued cooking. Unfortunately, her own brother followed her home and beat her. One thing I felt so proud of was her six-year-old daughter ran to a family next door and called for help because her uncle was beating her mother. The reason why the brother beat his sister was because he was the one who invited her husband to join the drinking. He felt like his sister had power over her husband. And this was a break in the culture and he didn’t like it.

In my generation, if I see somebody hit my mother, I wouldn’t know what to do. I feel this girl really did something and girls are starting to get involved in solving the issue at the household level. The husband had joined the men’s network meetings in the community, and so didn’t initiate violence against his brother-in-law. This is an important story I want to share. There are tons of cases of how a person can transform into a good role model in the society.

Thank you very much.

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**Ms. Agnes Fernandez Lopez**  
President of People's Advocacy for Collaboration  
and Empowerment, Inc. (PeACE) in the Philippines

*(Note: The real surname of the speaker has been altered for the purpose of the publication to protect the identity of her immediate family members.)*

Excellencies, to the different representatives of government and NGOs present today; Her Excellency, Elizabeth P. Buensuceso, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the Swiss Confederation and the prominent speakers and lecturers to the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR), my deepest gratitude for organizing this event. To everybody present today, special mention to the AIPR Secretariat who I witnessed working up to the wee hours of the night, *pinakamataas na pagpupugay po sa inyong lahat* (my highest salute to all of you).

I am not only delighted to participate in the AIPR Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations but also I am relieved to know that governments worldwide have committed to take actions on how to empower us. Taken into consideration that many of you travelled long distances to be here serves to remind me just how important is our advocacy and commitment in promoting women as peace builders. Thank you for inviting me to share with you my experiences.

Ladies and gentlemen let me start with this. "There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing. In truth, women are the builders and molders of a nation's destiny. Though delicate and soft as a lily, she has a heart, stronger and bolder than that of a man. She is the supreme inspiration for humanity's onward march to achieve a just and lasting peace."

I am Agnes Fernandez Lopez. I was once a young and naïve student who later became a member of a front organization and eventually a member of a rebel group, the New People's Army, which is wreaking havoc in my beloved country.

Let me recount the horrors of wars that I witnessed and, worse, I myself committed. On Nov. 29, 1983, I officially became a member of the New People's Army. In the deep forest of Consocep, Ocampo, Camarines Sur, there were 15 edgy and anxious children, ages 13 to 16, surrounded by hard, mean and nasty looking fighters of the NPA.

A little before 4 p.m., we took our oath, after which the crowd became jubilant, clapping, dancing and singing the "Internationale." That officially heralded our entry as "candidate member" of the NPA. I was given the

code names of *Ka Tina*, *Ka Yolly* and *Ka George*. On that day, my real person vanished; Agnes was lost! I became a different person, no longer a naïve 13 year old girl but a livid and fuming student.

From that day on, we were students by day and NPA by night. From a meek and timid 13 year old girl to a dyed-in-the-wool urban activist, I became a hard, tough, callous and vicious NPA cadre. The transformation was so abrupt. Before I became an LFS member, I was only a by-stander and an observer with a wait-and-see attitude. But after the oath taking, everything about me changed. As a candidate member, I was given higher tasks - to recruit students from different schools and universities all over Bicol region, to lead a team of students doing OD-OP (Operation *Dikit*-Operation *Pinta*, or postering and graffiti painting) (technically this is vandalism), to serve as team leader in an agitating team assigned to mass protests and demonstrations and other tasks as a “white area operator.”

Then came March 1985. The higher organ of Front Committee 75 decided that I was ripe to work hand in hand and live among the armed group in the boondocks of Caramoan Peninsula in the Bicol Region. The very day that I left my mother and our home was only a week or more after my graduation from the Ateneo de Naga University. Elation overcame my whole being. I said to myself, “This is it!” It was the pinnacle of my young dream; the apex of my vision as a “change agent.” In the mountain, I was assigned as the political officer (PO) of a platoon, and as a PO, I was confronted and came face to face with so many issues against the government, valid and legitimate issues; issues that gave me more leverage in agitating the people, issues that put a wedge between the people and the government. Those issues fueled my revolutionary spirit. I despised and loathed everything that is and for the government.

The continuous and constant feeding in the mountain of godless and anti-family ideologies transformed a once obedient, subservient and God-loving student into a callous, ruthless and thick-skinned “freedom fighter.” It didn’t matter whom I killed, it’s a matter of my life and the other person’s life, especially if the encounters involved soldiers and police whom we believed were the real “roots and causes” of the poor people’s misery.

I silently endured all the hardships that I experienced because of the credo that we have to follow by heart “*simpleng pamumuhay, masigabong pakikibaka*” or simple living but with an intense will to fight. The countless days and nights that we had to walk long distances and the nights that we had to sleep without eating made no difference. The days when we had nothing to eat were considered a sacrifice. Sleeping with wet clothes on our back is irrelevant, enduring the bites of mosquitoes or *niknik* (fleas), the risk of snake bites and scorpions and so many dangers in the mountain, not to mention my share of bloody encounters, raids,

ambushes, bombings and arsons. The higher organ made us believe that those sacrifices and tasks were essential to wage a revolution, the means to liberate my people.

But all of those gradually changed....

In mid-1989, everything that I hoped for, everything that I believed about the movement as “savior and protector of the people” gradually crumbled before my very own eyes. Bits and pieces of discoveries of injustices, inequalities, sexual and psychological abuses, and discrimination led me to a “poignant awakening.” The never-ending abuses against the very same people that we vowed to protect and fight for were the dry faggots that gradually dimmed my revolutionary spirit. It was at that time that I started questioning the very “upright and principled tenets” of the movement, questions to which, up to now, I could not find the right answers.

In February 1993, I decided to lay down my arms and avail of the amnesty offered by the Ramos Administration. For almost nine years, I decided not to concern myself with my country’s security situation. However, in 2000, I could no longer ignore the force within me, the aspiration to help transform my country, my people and my situation. I again vowed to become “part of the transformation.”

My first step was to heal myself, and after that I started to look around me - where can I contribute, where to start, and, most especially, how am I going to start?

That was when I decided to work inside the military institution, and from then on, I have told my stories to students, workers, parents, the community and to whoever cared to listen to me.

During the course of my stay with the Philippine Army, I organized a group who are composed of former rebels like me with the help of the officers and the men and women of the Philippine Army, specifically, the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff led by Colonel Ramiro Manuel Rey, where I am presently assigned and attached. Please allow me to mention one officer who was pivotal in assisting me to organize PeACE, the late Brigadier General Daniel A. Lucero, AFP; most especially the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process under the leadership of Secretary Teresita Quintos-Deles. With their support, we were able to gradually restore our self-confidence. I would like to make special mention also of Undersecretary Maria Cleofe Sandoval, Assistant Secretary Jennifer Santiago Oreta; and two of her staff, Ms. Jo Tolibas and Ms. Mic Espinas, who believed in me, in all of us; who didn’t let us down, who were always there to listen, to assist and to guide us. Apple, Gettie - thank you. Your efforts definitely gave us back our dignity and humanity.

As a former rebel, I believe that the healing must start from within. We must first learn to accept who we were and who we are now. I believe that talk therapy is one way of healing ourselves, because through the re-telling of our stories, we claim our right to be accepted again as part of this government and of this universe. We need you in this time of our healing as much as you need us. I acknowledge and I am grateful to my government from the past administration to the present for helping us and I want to extend my deepest gratitude to them. But, please, I am advocating that we must work together. Let's come up with a process that will truly address our psycho-emotional healing because that is the first step. I am begging from each one of us here, let's ensure that whatever we come up on these two days will not only remain on paper. Let us come together and make certain our respective governments will implement our plans.

To all the governments present here, to the participants and to the lecturers, that on the two days of the symposium, please, may we find ways to achieve our goals. I am requesting from all of you, please remind yourselves that we are not only mere beneficiaries of government programs. Deem us as your active partners in nation building; not just mere observers, but active actors in promoting peace. In behalf of all my members, those who are still struggling to change, the living and especially those who were killed and executed, my presence in this worthy endeavor is to honor them. I am praying that, through our stories, our plight, our struggle, our advocacy and our commitment, may the marginalized and exploited find their voice to demand attention to their plea for acceptance, justice and equal treatment.

I find it very hard to go back to my life. You know, I have been telling my story a hundred times. I was telling Ma'am Apple and Ma'am Gettie, this is a different body. I had been telling my story, most of the time, to students, communities and parents. This is the first time that I am telling my story for an audience from the international community. I hope our story will open your eyes.

Also, I just want to balance the weighing scale. We have been talking since this morning and I am very very glad that we are talking about women and children in armed conflict situations. However, I would just want to point out that there are also women involved in combat; we were there in the middle of the combat. I was there; I was the one who gave the command to the fighters to burn bridges and buses; to ambush soldiers.

When I was able to get out of the movement alive, I vowed that I will offer my life, my stories to young students, specifically those sitting at the back. I hope that they can get bits and pieces of lessons from my life. We have problems, yes, but revolution will never solve the problem. It's only

education- study hard, finish your studies, help your parents, become productive and we will become a strong nation.

Thank you very much!



## SESSION III OPEN FORUM

### Part 1

**MODERATOR:** AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO  
Philippine Representative to  
the ASEAN Intergovernmental  
Commission on Human Rights (AICHR)

#### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

With these three speakers I will now open the floor for questions from all the participants. The three speakers may be addressed. In the case of Dr. Franco since she was not around this morning maybe some of you may wish to ask something about the paper she presented.

We have now our friend from Lao PDR, you have the floor, sir.

#### **AMBASSADOR LATSAMY KEOMANY**

Thank you Madam Chair, and since I'm taking the floor for the first time, I would also like to join the others to thank Ambassador Elizabeth, my sister, and especially the Government of the Philippines for the warm hospitality and also for the excellent arrangements for this symposium. My thanks also go to both Ambassadors of Switzerland and Norway for your generosity in making this symposium possible.

Madam Chairperson I listened attentively to the case studies of Cambodia, Indonesian Aceh and Myanmar, they are so enlightening. I would also like to share Lao's experience. This morning I listened to the presentations and I totally agree with them that the impact of conflict or war is huge and almost never ending. In the case of Laos, the war from the 1960s up to the present date, has carried over the impacts, such as unexploded ordnance. To date, it has disabled many Lao people -- almost 60,000 -- and every year the casualties caused by these UXOs increase. Therefore, I would encourage also other donors or organizations to also give us a hand in this regard.

My second comment is on inclusiveness and the importance of engaging all stakeholders in Lao society in national building. I would like to give you two figures relating to the policy of the Lao Government towards gender equality and also equality and opportunities for multi-ethnic groups. Out of 132 parliament members, 33 are women; this is 25% of the total number that is so important for our country. Another figure on ethnic equality

and opportunity, consists of three members, who are women, out of 10 powerful politburo members. Some 30% are women out of 10 higher and middle-level leaders. The president of the national assembly is a woman and she is also one of the 10 politburo members of our government. There are also ranking ministers from the ethnic minority or ethnic groups. Thank you Madam chairperson.

### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Thank you. Any others who would like to take the floor? Our friend from Cambodia, please.

### **AMBASSADOR NORNG SAKAL**

Thank you Ambassador Rosario Manalo. First of all, allow me in thanking, on behalf of my delegation, Ambassador Elizabeth and the Government of the Philippines for the excellent management of this meeting. Secondly, I would like to thank all the four (4) speakers who have shared all the points. We have noted the briefing made by our distinguished representative from Cambodia. She highlighted that, from wartime until the present time, gender equality has been promoted by the current Government of Cambodia. We recognize that women have an important role and not only as victims. Of course we know that women are most vulnerable in times of conflict, but at the same time, many women have risen in many aspects of societies, in peace and security, and so on.

At the same time, children are most vulnerable and we recognize the important role of our children in generate ones to come and for the society's peace and security.

What I want to highlight, is that the Government of Cambodia has introduced a lot of efforts to promote the role of women in the country. Promotion of gender equality and rights of women and the protection of children in Cambodia have been prioritized.

We recognize that the efforts in involving women's greater participation in society is stemming from conflict or from disasters, as highlighted by the representative from Indonesia. These include efforts, not just to enable them survive, but also to address economic challenges.

My final point is the need to know the next steps to be done, especially by countries in the region and other countries on such inter-related issues. Of course, each country has its own concrete policies to address the

issues but, at the same time, at the regional level or ASEAN level, we have been doing a number of these in common to address these issues.

In this regard, I would like to thank our partners in Switzerland and Norway for their help in organizing this important event to find a common approach to addressing the needs of the people in the region. We are looking forward to these kinds of symposium in the future as Ambassador Min Lwin expressed this morning that he wants to organize a similar symposium in Myanmar in the future.

### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Anybody else who wants to take the floor? Indonesia.

### **AMBASSADOR REZLAN ISHAR JENIE**

Thank you. I listened with great interest to the four (4) great speakers this afternoon and I'm particularly interested in what Ms. Huot has referred to as her advocacy to promote non-violence. I think it is important in helping to build a culture of peace and also trying to avoid certain conflicts or disputes in the future.

My question is, in this kind of advocacy, who are the target, in terms of age group; and do you believe that this kind of advocacy in some form could also be useful if it's included in the curriculum of education?

For Dr. Kuntoro, who very interestingly explained the challenge he had experienced in building back better in terms of reconstruction, and at the same time, facing the challenge of peacemaking in Aceh. Maybe you can elaborate a little bit more about how the ex-rebels signed the peace deal, which contributed towards the reconstruction. Was there any role for them in building back Aceh better through reconstruction? Thank you.

### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Thank you. Please sir.

### **AMBASSADOR TAN HUNG SENG**

Thank you, Madam Chair I just wanted to follow up with two questions for Dr. Kuntoro. It has been very interesting to listen to your account of the successful rebuilding of Aceh. My first question is, in your assessment,

to what extent has the tsunami been a factor in building together the factions of society that was very active in the 70's? The second question is, it has been some years since the tsunami and the reconstruction of Aceh, how has the status and the condition of the women and children in Aceh changed? Are there changes that you witnessed? Are they lasting? Sustainable? Have they brought difference to the lives of the women and children in Aceh? Thank you.

## **PROF. KUNTORO MANGKUSUBROTO**

Thank you so much for your very interesting questions. First, in general, before you do some programming in reconstruction, politics is of utmost importance. Based on my experience in Aceh, and also, given some experiences from other countries in Myanmar, Philippines, and recently in Nepal, politics is very important.

Number one is, how does the host government accept international assistance? In the case of Aceh, from day 1 after we realized the damage caused by the tsunami, the Government/President thought that for sure, we cannot rebuild by ourselves, so we opened up our economy, our territory to anyone who wanted to help us. It was the first time that defense forces coming from all over the world and had participated in World War II, such as Germany and Japan, were there in Indonesia. All together, 38 countries were there. We opened up our economy to non-government organizations (NGOs) from all backgrounds -- whether religious, cultural, you name it -- they were there. This was the number one consideration -- how were we going to treat those who were willing to help us?

Number two, is the political structure of the country. If you don't have the power, then it becomes very complicated. In the case of Aceh, understanding that the damages were really serious and the national government in Jakarta could not do it alone. We, therefore, pleaded with the national agencies to lessen the bureaucratic process in reconstruction work.

Then, those were willing to help you will ask what you plan to do about conflict? In a way, the tsunami was a factor in creating the peaceful resolution of conflict between the warring parties. So, the question was, how do you maintain the process such that it could lead to what you call a good conclusion. This is the first time in an international forum that I'm going to share with you some confidential data. I was only in charge of rebuilding of Aceh. I had nothing to do with the conflict. But realizing that I have 8,000 foreign workers helping in the reconstruction of Aceh, I wanted to make sure that the ex-combatants, who had no jobs, would not shoot anybody who was there to help us.

So, can you imagine, if a foreign volunteer was shot by an ex-rebel, whether it was intentional or not, there would be a commotion and for sure the whole thing would stop. So that meant I had to take care of the ex-rebels. How did I do that? I trained them to be leaders because after 10 years or 15 years in the jungle, they might not have any skills. So it was very important to give them skills training – bricklaying or even papaya farming and other construction skills. We also provided them with construction materials so they can jumpstart their livelihood.

This was the same with women, so we built trauma centers. Training in soft skills were also important. So these were the things behind the scene that we had to prepare. The ex-rebels were made a part of the reconstruction, otherwise, they would become troublemakers and perpetrate violence. I had to do this to maintain the security of the 8,000 foreign workers who were there with a good heart to help Aceh.

How are the women in Aceh now? Excellent. So people say that it is the land of Shari'ah. I can say that Shariah trains people who do not behave in the Islamic way; they are scared of getting caned by the Shariah police. But, definitely, things are not that bad. For the first time, we have a woman mayor in the eastern part of Aceh. We can see all those small shops run by the women. Women manage and operate small to medium scale businesses. So I guess these things are good.

Politically, there are challenges, after the conflict. These ex-combatants now have to learn how to manage a province like Aceh and that is not easy. So I give them 15 years. Thank you.

### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Thank you, Professor. I will now give the floor to the ASEAN Secretariat for comment and questions.

### **DEPUTY-SECRETARY GENERAL VONGTHEP ARTHAKAIVALVATEE**

Thank you, Madam Chairperson, Ambassador Rosario Manalo. This is the first time I'm taking the floor so I'm taking this opportunity to thank the Government of the Philippines in organizing this very important workshop, particularly to Ambassador Elizabeth, who has played an important and active role in the realization of this workshop. Also, the same goes to the Ambassadors of Switzerland and Norway for the support of their Governments to this exercise.

Today has been a very interesting discussion and I am here to learn a lot from the points of view expressed by many speakers and colleagues around the table. I would like to refer to the point made by Ambassador Hasnudin in his opening statement this morning in which he mentioned that ASEAN has a big role to play. In fact, ASEAN should play a more active role in this area. He also emphasized that in his first intervention that there are lots of potential and I could not agree with you more. I think that it is important in having more active role in this area.

I just want to offer some observations and possible ways from the ASEAN Secretariat, because at the end of the day, we would like to see what will happen, especially in relation to the ASEAN Community, what can we think about moving forward in that context? The recurring theme that I have been hearing since this morning, obviously, is that one of prevention is better than cure. So I look at this as a point of departure in our discussion because as you know when we talk about peace, the first thing that comes to mind is action on the ASEAN Political and Security Committee (APSC). I would like to emphasize that, in fact, the role of the prevention approach has a lot to do with how we engage our youth and children in education so that is the why the point raised by our colleague in Indonesia is significant, though I wish he emphasized the role of education and particularly, here he mentioned the phrase, culture of peace.

I think that really strikes a chord in our discussion so far. In fact, this has always been the point that we might want to take a closer look at that and it is the responsibility not only for ASEAN, as a region, but it is a global responsibility. In order to look into what has been happening in the world now as we all know, how are we going to tackle the problem and the root causes? Sustainable peace cannot be achieved if our countries remain susceptible to war and, of course, we talked about access to justice, education and mediation and all of these issues have to do with social development.

What I wanted to, perhaps, reflect on for some time was to take advantage of this intervention to refer to the previous presentation this morning by UN Women, about the aspects on peace and human rights in approaching the concept of women, peace and security, and I think that was one of the questions, to talk about because we have been passing too many resolutions for over 10 – 15 years, but what is the real action?

Of course this is not an easy thing to achieve but the point is, it has something to do with the need for a more integrated approach to respond to this problem. In addition to peace and human rights, I venture to ask what has been done in strengthening the rule of law, criminal and justice system? Whenever we talk about peacebuilding where women

have a very important role in that aspect as what we have heard from the presentations this morning, but, going further, after the conflict, it is crucial that we need to have a fully functioning and efficient criminal and justice system in such a society. For that, I think we might need to look at the presence of women. I think that, in addition to all this security resolutions, we might want to look at some of the particular issues and that has something to do with UN standards and norms on elimination of all forms of violence against women in the field of justice. In addition to CEDAW, local bills should be passed regarding this.

We would also like to inform you that during the ASEAN summit last month, the leaders also adopted the recent action on women and children. There was the discussion about the idea of gender mainstreaming within the national action, I think this is something that we need to be congratulated for but also as we move forward, we might want to think about including legislative reform and I think the role of parliamentarians is very important. We need to engage them to fully understand the role of women, human rights and education and all that.

So without taking too much time, Madam Chair, I would just like to close with recommendations for the workshop. Maybe, the time may have come for us to go from the perspective of ASEAN to look into some of the global work into the culture of peace and how can we bring in or how can we mainstream all these discussions in terms of gender and child friendliness and sensitivity into the whole discussion of education. And I think someone mentioned human rights education. This can be thought about on how do we educate our next generation on the concept of lawfulness, human rights and culture of peace. That can be through a program of activities not only in the field of education but also of culture. My last point is that, I think we need to see more of the inter-pillar linkages and this can build a more integrated program of activities in these areas and I think that would be more helpful or contribute to the work in these issues. Thank you very much Madame Chairperson.

#### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

I will give the floor to the representative of Myanmar. Your Excellency, you can take the floor sir.

#### **AMBASSADOR MIN LWIN**

Thank you, Your Excellency, Ambassador Manalo, for giving me the floor. I thank Ms. Thavoury Huot for sharing the heartbreaking story based on your experience and what you have done; and to Professor Kuntoro, you

are a very good storyteller and it is heartening to know how all of you have rebuilt Aceh from the disaster, especially the success stories on women's participation. I have to admit that we should learn a lot from you and your sharing of your secret experiences.

Also to our fellow countryman, Dr. Tawm, the civil society representative explained the very important role of CSOs in reaching out to the different regions, especially the IDP camps. Note that most of the IDP camps in Kachin state are at the border of China and Myanmar. We have listened to the experience of Mary Tawm; I would also like to share what the Myanmar Government, particularly, the Ministry of Social Welfare which has taken the lead, has done in IDP camps. The psycho-social support teams went to the IDP camps to ease the feelings of the victims and also gave training to them, especially the women and orphans at the camp. The social welfare department also established the child-friendly space that will make the orphans happy in the camp. I know that it is not good enough but it is, at least, better than nothing. These assistance were provided with the support of UNICEF and UNFPA.

I also wish to highlight the question raised by Mary Tawm on whether we should call for a nationwide ceasefire agreement or not. It is my personal view that the elected government is trying very hard to initiate the peace process. The intention of this nationwide ceasefire agreement is meant for all the groups to sign the agreement but it cannot hold with just the half of the groups signing. But this is not the end. Let me put forward that it is just the beginning and we need to continue the peace process. I request all participants and the experienced panelists and speakers to guide us on how we should go forward.

On the issue of the camps at the border, I want to note that it is not only the refugee women who are trafficked. Many women, because of poverty, also fall victims of trafficking to the Chinese as wives or slaves, not only because of the conflicts or the clashes, but also because of the one-child policy of China, there is less women in their population. While this is an issue in the Kachin states that really needs to be addressed and focused on, for me it is also an international issue, since not all of the trafficked victims come from Myanmar. In the western part of country, about 80 – 90% come from out of Myanmar. That is why when we discuss the two issues, we need to tackle the one in the northern part of Kachin states first, but we also need to take care of other parts of our country. I share this situation to the participants so that they will understand better why we are seen as slow in tackling the issue of the Kachin state.

## **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Thank you very much. Before I announce a break for coffee, let me just address certain points, if you will bear with me please. I would like to thank His Excellency, the representative of Lao PDR for what he has shared about his country and the rise of women in leadership, particularly in the political arena. Thank you for that information and we welcome it. Having been a one-time chairperson of CEDAW, anything that has to do with the advancement of women, I always feel elated that a system has gone up. Let me tell you a story about a conversation I had with a politician from a Southeast Asian country. This politician showing male chauvinism said to me, "...But Madam, in my country, the women reign and the men rule." And I said, "I'm very glad to hear that, Sir, but I am not completely happy, because it will be better if the woman reigns and rules in very concrete ways. Thank you sir."

Now, when it comes to the question of our friend from Cambodia, what are the next steps; what are the interrelated issues? With the series of workshops like this, I can tell you, you will find something coming out to move us forward to instill in the region the meaning of peace and why it should continue, carrying all the peace processes everywhere in Southeast Asia. When we do that, we contaminate the rest of the world. We must just have patience, persistence, tenacity and prepare the younger generation to learn more about human rights which should be included in the education curriculum of all the member states from elementary to secondary to collegial level.

That also said, I would like you to know that, as the ASEAN secretariat has said, along with issues concerning peace and reconciliation, getting women to participate in all the aspects, particularly in the economy and adopting an integrated approach, will contribute to the prevention of war. The economic growth of ASEAN is owed to the rise in entrepreneurship and 90% of entrepreneurship in ASEAN is carried out by women. It is being studied; I can bring that to the ASEAN to let you know how significant the women's role is in peace, in reconciliation, in economic growth, in security matters.



## SESSION III OPEN FORUM

### Part 2

#### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Thank you, Ms. Sopheap, and thank you Ms. Lopez. Ms. Sopheap mentioned the involvement of men in peacebuilding and work on gender equality. This is noteworthy, as we most often forget the role of men in the pursuit of our advocacies. Let us keep this sharply in mind, as inviting the support of men is critical in eventually eliminating gender-based issues, such as violence against women, as well as in mainstreaming women's participation.

Ms. Lopez highlighted the push and pull factors of why women and children are recruited by armed forces. In crafting our interventions, psycho-social factors need to be seriously taken into consideration.

This reminds us that our exercise is ultimately aimed at according the rights and dignity of individuals -- our people in the ASEAN. I now, open the floor for your questions.

#### **MS. LILY PURBA**

I note that, since this morning, we have been exposed to different and critical things on conflict resolution and also peace processes, that is, gender-based violence, how we are going to mainstream gender; and also, how we are going to increase the participation of women in peace building and also conflict resolution.

The thing that I need to share is, what we are going to do after this? Let's say, for instance, when we say that we are going to mainstream gender in peace process and conflict resolution, meaning that, we really want to have a good mechanism in doing this and also allocate budget for this.

As the representative of Indonesia to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and the Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), let me share with you that we really want to include Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and gender, peace and reconciliation in our planning of initiatives and activities from 2016 to 2020. So, this is a very important issue to us in the ACWC and we are going to start to tackle this issue in 2016. In terms of peacebuilding, I think, increasing the number of women in peace processes can be seen now as already feasible, as well as increasing the involvement of women CSOs, especially if this is taken in the ASEAN setting.

My concern is, all ASEAN countries have pluralism in their justice systems - in their customs, state laws, religious laws. Sometimes one type of law is not benefiting women. For instance, In Indonesia, normally, if there is a conflict, the resolution is done through customary laws, meaning the perpetrator has to give something, in terms of money or other things to the victims. But the thing is, the compensation does not go directly to the victim but through the uncle or other family members. It does not totally resolve the problem.

So I'm thinking if, after this, it is possible for us to set up a mechanism on how we are going to put women's perspective in handling conflicts and also in making peace. This is very important. Since this morning, we have heard about gender mainstreaming, of putting a gender perspective into conflict resolution. We also want to talk about how our governments at the local and provincial levels put their money where their mouth is.

It's really an action plan that we need. So, I think for now, I will just recommend that, we, as ASEAN member countries, really put the allocation of budgets on peace and reconciliation, starting from our respective countries, and also at the regional level, that would advise our strategy and program. This is especially true if we have a program in ACWC, I hope that we could consult AIPR on this case.

## **MS. ROS SOPHEAP**

Thank you very much for your comment. I do agree. In Cambodia, we have many laws and policies, but, as I said, these are not enforced well. One concern is about the budget. The Domestic Violence Law states that anyone who sees any form of violence about to happen, or you see that it is going to happen, you can bring this to the police. In reality, no one is going to do that because in dealing with the law, you have to have money and the police would say that they do not have money to bring the issue to court. When you go to court, you have to pay for services. Victims have problems because they are living below the poverty line. The other thing is, there are very few lawyers, especially women lawyers. In Cambodia, courts are located at the provincial level. If the case happens in remote areas and the road is difficult and the victims do not have transportation, it is really difficult.

Secondly, of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Goal number 16, which is "Peace and Justice Strong Institutions," talks about resources. Budget did not really come from the top. The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) started from the national level and the international community decided to put in some money. In the SDGs, the international level decided but the money is at the national level. In a

country like Cambodia, we have a lot of challenges about budget at the national level. So, budget is really important.

Thirdly, we need politicians who are willing to make it happen. The decision-making level is male-dominated. Bringing in some women in policy-making will show a difference.

But it's just not only numbers that will solve the problem. I agree with the presenter from the UN Women, Hanny, this morning, that we need 50-50. But also we need to consider that all those at the decision-making level need to be accountable to the people; not push the people to be accountable to your position. This is my observation. If you're accountable to the people, then, the needs have to be addressed. Gender equality is already addressed. But if you make the people accountable to you, it's not going to work out for peace and conflict resolution.

### **MS. AGNES LOPEZ**

In my Government, in the Philippines, I am not asking for special treatment for former rebels like me, specifically from the different government agencies. Only the OPAPP knows about my advocacy. At first, I did not really know what to do. When I went back into the fold of the law in 1993, nobody helped me. It was only my family who helped me. There was no help from Government at all. I just received my amnesty papers and after that, I coped psychologically by myself. Sometimes the paranoia is very strong - the doubt, the feeling of rejection -- frustration sometimes creeps in. Sometimes the hatred comes back. It is really the healing from within that is needed.

I recognize the fact that the Government of the Republic of the Philippines wants to help us - that we are creating a different mindset. It's not about money. This is all about accepting us, as persons, as human beings. Yes, we committed a mistake, but then, again, we are trying very hard and exerting a lot of effort so that you can, at least, recognize us and accept us as human beings.

The first step that I am requesting is to find a different term so that we will not be called "former rebels" or "former combatants." These terms always remind me of who I was and what I did. It pains me a lot. Sometimes, aside from the terminologies, I also encountered condescending looks. Every time they know that I had been a member of the New People's Army (NPA), they would look at me as if I come from planet Neptune. Sometimes, they would ask me questions like, "Did you really go up to the mountains? Why is it that you have fair skin?" Oh, I surrendered in 1993,

of course, When I first got back into the fold of the law, I was dark-skinned and very thin. I looked like an Aeta from the Bicol region.

When I surrendered in 1993, I was also incarcerated. I'm not asking for money, but for services. Just last week, the 102nd Infantry Brigade, through Colonel Ronald Villanueva, crafted a program wherein the former rebels (FRs), some 151 former rebels, attended an FR Summit. They invited the regional directors of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Education- Alternative Learning System (ALS), The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) distributed papers for us to develop our business action plans. The best part of all, was, we were able to hit two birds with one stone, because the facilitators of the FR Summit (I'm sorry I still have to use that term) were the youth leadership seminar (YLS) graduates. The two sectors had realizations. The youth realized that revolution will never solve the problem; and then, the FRs realized that they still have another lease on life.

#### **AMBASSADOR TAN HUNG SENG**

Thank you, Madam Chair. I also want to thank Agnes for sharing with us your very personal experience. The question that I have is -- after all these years, what are some of the measures that the Philippine State or Government and the Philippine society have taken to discourage young people from going down the path that you had taken? What are some of the concrete measures that have been introduced to make sure that young Filipinos do not go down the same route that you have?

#### **AMBASSADOR MIN LWIN**

Thank you, Madam Moderator. It's a follow-up to the question raised by the Ambassador from Singapore. In Myanmar, we are now in the process of making peace with insurgencies. For Agnes, you have this whole experience. In 1993 when you came back to the legal fold, what was the main expectation of your group? In the case of Myanmar, the ethnic groups wanted to have the support from the Government and international assistance because they fought for a long time and did not have any income. What form of assistance should go to them? What do they need in terms of support? Regardless of feeling of healing from the inside -- what are the material and physical support that are needed from the stakeholders?

## **DR. ENDAH AGUSTIANA**

Thank you very much, Agnes, for sharing. It's hard to listen to your experience, particularly, because I spent a lot of time in Poso, Indonesia; and six years in Timor Leste, so your experience really reflected what the people there experienced as well.

I want to bring up the positive side, as well. In Timor Leste, for example, in the government side and also in parliament, there were mostly fighters with different experiences. At that time I spent almost everyday with the combatants, and with the peace activists, as well. As you know, one thing that makes me proud about being a woman, is that their activism is very different compared to those coming from government peace building initiatives. So, these combatants and peace activists worked together. And they said, "We cannot look to the past anymore. We have to move forward." The same thing is also true for Timor Leste. The women peace activists said, "We have to build our country." You don't need to tell them what women's rights are because they already experience it in their daily lives. When I was working in Timor Leste, as well, people would ask, "How come you work for the Government of Timor Leste?" I was then the adviser to the national parliament. And the Timorese, they would say, "We are sisters; Indonesia is our neighbor." So this is the positive side -- the healing process, as well, that came from an outsider. Thank you very much.

## **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Thank you. For everybody's information, Dr. Endah Trista Augustiana established the first-ever regional forum on women's leadership and peacebuilding in Indonesia, together with women peace activists in Maluku, Central Sulawesi and North Maluku. She has actual experience, like our dear friend here, Ms. Lopez.

## **MS. AGNES LOPEZ**

I want to answer first the question from the honorable Ambassador of Singapore on the measures that the Philippine Government has undertaken to discourage young Filipinos from joining the rebel movement. I think we need stronger and stricter laws. Front organizations have been vandalizing and blatantly using and overusing the word democracy. If they want something and the Government cannot immediately give it to them, they will, again, resort to the streets and shout, "Down with the Government." I had been shouting that since 1980. There is no

government to put down. Our country is in a quagmire. There is only one Philippines.

I don't have the power to influence our legislators. But maybe telling my story to different universities and colleges would make a difference. I even experienced being taunted. They conducted rallies everytime I was invited, particularly at a university in Taft, which was the first university where I was invited to share my life story. A women's front organization barged inside the gymnasium and grabbed the microphone from me. I could not do anything about it. We don't have stricter laws that state that students from the underground movement can be incarcerated.

Actually, if I am asked, I want Republic Act 1700, or the Anti-Subversion law, to be implemented again. The Human Security Act is not that strong. It is not for the government; it's for front organizations. That's the reason why they have to destroy the image of the Government. That's the reason why they have to get and grab the students. They want to recruit the students and youth, bring them to the mountains, because they want the country to become illiterate. *Tatagalugin ko lang po* and I will explain that later. *Gusto nilang manatiling mangmang ang bayang ito, dahil ang taong mangmang, madaling lokohin.* (I'll say it in Tagalog. They want this nation to remain ignorant, because an ignorant person is easy to fool.) That's the main reason they recruit students! They opened the door, the ceiling and windows, when they passed the National Service Training Program (NSTP) Law. They banked on the issue of Mark Welson Chua of UST. I don't know what's happening to my country now. I'm sorry but I have to be blunt and brutal. Now, we are being cowed by these people. They are in the mainstream of the political arena. They are even now in sensitive positions of government.

But my question is, if we are still going to kill one another, what will happen to us? Imagine young students, graduates of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), OCS and OPC; and students who had been kicked out from the universities and they meet in the mountains and both sides have guns. What will happen to them? I just hope that we could open their minds.

Sometimes, I told myself, how I wish I am an ordinary mother. How I wish I was not a part of that bloody revolution. It's not a revolution. That's the reason why I hate to call them *Ang Bagong Hukbo ng Bayan*, or New People's Army, because we are only romanticizing what they're doing. I want to demystify the myth that they are there to liberate the people. For 10 years, I was the oppressor. *Kakainin na lang po ng isang mahirap na magsasaka, aagawin mo pa. Bababa po ako sa bahay ng isang mahirap. "Maganding gabi po, makiki-kape man po!" Kahit walang kape, pagbuksan ka ng tahanan*, because Ka Tina was there holding an M-203,

*matataranta yung tao sa paghahanap ng kape.* (A poor farmer is about to eat his food, but you snatch it away from him. We say, “Good evening, could we have some coffee?” Even if the family doesn’t have coffee, when they open their doors, *Ka Tina* was there holding an M-203, the person would be frantically looking for coffee.)

I had a lot of questions. If I wanted to help the poor people in the rural areas, why was it that I could not tell them my real name? I was not *Ka Tina*, *Ka George* or *Ka Yoly*; I am Agnes Fernandez Lopez? Are we really going to help them?

We need stricter and stronger laws. I just hope our legislators in Congress will not waste their time bickering. I hope that they will focus on passing laws that will protect women and children, specifically students, in the rural areas. I hope the ASEAN Community will also help us, not about laws, but by giving us the chance and accepting us.

To answer the question of the Ambassador from Myanmar regarding support from the government - what I’m asking for is for government to capacitate us. I’m not agreeable to giving of money because that’s a one-time deal. If we are capacitated, taught skills, help us to go back to school again through scholarships and grants, it would be better for us. I believe in the saying that if you want to help the person, you have to teach him/her how to fish. Assistance is not always in the form of financial assistance, but more of opportunities, capacitating us and, before giving us the benefits, again, the psycho-emotional healing. That’s the first step, because that’s what I did. I experienced that. *Kung бага po sa Tagalog, may konkretong batayan.* (As they say in Tagalog, there is a firm basis.) I have concrete evidence - myself!

## **AMBASSADOR NORNG SAKAL**

This is not a question, but I just want to add on to what Madame Ros Sopheap had presented on the issues that she raised about Cambodian society. In each society, there are issues which the authority has the role to address. But, all these can’t be addressed at the same time while steps have to be undertaken effectively. On the role of women in Cambodia, as you can see here, we have women from the capital who are, in a way, influential in society.

Corruption is one of the issues. Having been told by Madame Sopheap that, sometimes, the people bring out issues and the police cannot do something about it. This has nothing to do with compensation. This is something that the Government has focused on. Corruption issues are

rooted in the past. But now, things have been improved in our society . This is what I want to highlight.

While we recognize the role of women in society, there is need for men and women to reinforce each other. Regarding the role of men, we do recognize it has to complement women's role in peace and even in small ways. It has to be balanced between men and women. So, that's all.

### **AMBASSADOR ROSARIO G. MANALO**

Gender equality does not always mean equal sex. Two or three Sundays ago, I went to Kuala Lumpur to attend a workshop on the Youth and Human Rights. I was assigned the topic, reproductive rights of women, and, of course, we started with CEDAW on the health of women and the related topics thereat -- legalized abortion, sex education for the youth, family planning and protecting the integrity of the female body. When the details of these were asked by the youth, the males said to me, "Why are we, males, not involved in CEDAW?" And I said, "This is a welcome development." We, who have been in CEDAW, welcome the participation of men in the Experts' Group in CEDAW in Geneva (before it used to be in New York). When you want to know more about CEDAW, there are 17 substantive paragraphs in there, which you must learn, and not just reproductive rights." A collective groan was the answer I got from the young men and young professors in the Asia-Europe Institute of the University of Malaya, that was not limited to the Malaysian youth; it was participated in by the youth in ASEAN. Anyway, the moral of the story, is that, my dear friend from Cambodia, equality means many things, beyond just sex equality, as you have just said it.

I wish to thank you, Agnes, for what you have contributed in this discussion this afternoon. If it's any consolation, I can give a little reply to the question raised by the Ambassador of Singapore about what the Government is doing about the situation. Agnes went into the New People's Army (NPA) when the situation was at its worst under the Marcos regime. When President Corazon Aquino took over and democracy came forward, every effort was done to discourage the NPA from growing. And, now, in fact, the rebel group runs down to only around 3,000. That's the most. Why do I know that? Because I am a fellow in the Strategic Study Group of the National Defense College of the Ministry of Defense and I help them in doing research.

I have also brought in to my university (and I didn't know Agnes was the lady who had been involved in that demonstration), the School of Diplomacy, where there are currently enrolled 19 military men. One of them is the spokesperson for the Philippine Army and he is finishing his

masteral degree. Another military man had been sent to Israel for the issues concerning the Palestinian people and Prime Minister Netanyahu. The other one has served in Haiti. They all said that they have realized the necessity to have further education.

The Philippine Government has also been tackling poverty and we have had economic growth that now raises the level of capacity to fight poverty. We have to fight corruption to bring in much more support. There is also the issue of unemployment, which is being tackled by the Government, particularly in infrastructure development -- connectivity, as we say it. Of course, education is being built throughout the country to help every little person, the poor in the rural and urban areas, so that with education, they are capacitated and are less influenced in joining the NPA.

On this occasion, I also wish to give thanks to the Government of Norway. The OPAPP, under the Office of the President of the Philippines, has been carrying on negotiations with the NPA, as well as the Bangsamoro people, to bring about peace. The Government of Norway has served as a neutral place where they could meet to discuss these various issues.

And I will promise you one thing, my dear Agnes, since I'm still being called quite often by the National Defense College, I will talk to some influential people to do away with calling you ex-rebels; and to give you a name that you deserve, as a constructive citizen of the Republic of the Philippines.



*Participants amid the backdrop of Taal Volcano and azure skies*





*Faith Family Foundation Choir opens the Symposium with heartfelt songs*



From top left clockwise: Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Hon. Evan P. Garcia; AIPR Chairman and Permanent Representative of Malaysia to ASEAN H.E. Hasnudin Hamzah; Ambassador of Norway H.E. Stig Traavik; Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development Assistant Secretary Hon. Noel Macalalad representing DSWD Secretary Hon. Corazon J. Soliman; Ambassador of Switzerland H.E. Dr. Yvonne Baumann.



*From top left clockwise: Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs former Assistant Secretary Hon. Luis T. Cruz moderates the second session of the Symposium; Atty. Marilyn Pintor, Regional Director for Caraga Region of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines delivers her presentation; Participants listen to the video message of Dr. Jean D' Cunha, Head of UN Women, Myanmar.*



*From top left clockwise: Philippine Representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) Hon. Rosario G. Manalo moderates the third session of the symposium; Ms. Hanny Cueva Beteta, Regional Advisor for Governance, Peace and Security, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Prof. Dr. Ir. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, Chairman of the School of Business and Management Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), Indonesia; Ms. Ros Sopheap, Executive Director of Gender and Development for Cambodia; and Ms. Thavory Huot, Executive Director of Khmer Ahimsa, Cambodia, share their personal experiences in times of conflict and participation in peace processes in their country.*



*Deputy Secretary General for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, H.E. Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee speaks about ways to alleviate the plight of women and children in conflict through inter-ASEAN pillar and cross-sectoral cooperation.*



*Ms. Daw Mary Tawm KD, Co-Founder and Coordinator of Wunpawng Ninghtoi, Myanmar*



*From left to right: Dr. Endah Trista Agustiana, Technical Lead of Capacity Building, Human Rights and Women's & Children's Rights, ASEAN - U.S. PROGRESS; Ms. Ruengrawee Pichaikul, Senior Program Coordinator for Thailand and Laos of the Asia Foundation; and Undersecretary of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Hon. Maria Cleofe C. Sandoval.*



*Ambassador Elizabeth P. Buensuceso, AIPR Governing Council Member of the Philippines and Permanent Representative of the Philippines to ASEAN, summarizes the Symposium's conclusions and recommendations.*



*Ambassador Hasnudin Hamzah, Chairman of the AIPR Governing Council and Permanent Representative of Malaysia to ASEAN, delivers the closing remarks.*



*The Symposium also involved a community singing of songs of peace.*



*Ambassador Buensuceso leads the group in singing.*



*Participants let their hair down in during the welcome dinner.*





*Participants with famous sculptor Ramon Orlina*



*Sidetrips of the Symposium included a visit to the Puzzle Mansion and Orfina Museum in Tagaytay*



**SESSION FOUR**

**PROGRAMS AND MECHANISMS TO ENSURE PROTECTION AND  
PROMOTION OF THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF WOMEN AND  
CHILDREN DURING ARMED CONFLICT AND/OR IN  
POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS**



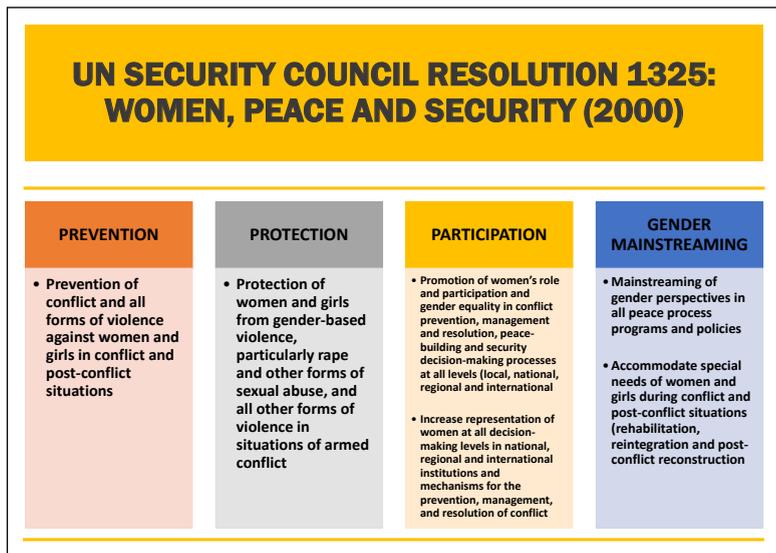


**Dr. Endah Trista Agustiana**  
Technical Lead of Capacity Building, Human Rights  
and Women's & Children's Rights, ASEAN - U.S. PROGRESS

Good morning. Thank you very much. First of all, I would like to thank AIPR, most especially Ambassador Elizabeth, for inviting me to this very important symposium. I believe that everyone had a good sleep last night after the dancing, except me, because I had to change my presentation to the programs and mechanisms on women and children, focusing on the experience of Timor Leste.

The United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, as we know, is the landmark resolution that acknowledged the importance of women's participation in peace negotiations, humanitarian planning, peacekeeping operations, post conflict peace-building and governance.

The UNSCR 1325 has four pillars/areas, namely: Prevention, Protection, Participation and Gender Mainstreaming. The area on prevention focuses on all forms of violence against women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations.



What has Timor Leste done and what have been the achievements in the promotion and implementation of UNSCR 1325?

The Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste is considered as one of the best constitutions in terms of integrating human rights. In the constitution, gender equality is guaranteed, especially in Articles 16, 17 and 63.

<b>RDTL CONSTITUTION</b>	
<b>GENDER EQUALITY IS GUARANTEED BY THE RDTL CONSTITUTION</b>	<p><b>Article 16:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guarantees the principle of equality and non-discrimination for all citizens regardless of color, race, marital status, gender, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, political belief or ideology, religion, education, and physical and mental condition.</li> </ul> <p><b>Article 17 :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guarantees equal rights and responsibilities for men and women in the household, political participation, economic, social and cultural affairs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Article 63 :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• equal participation between women and men in politics is fundamental to the practice of democracy in Timor-Leste</li> </ul>

In terms of international legal and policy framework, you can see them here – Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Convention against Torture, and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRNW), International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights (ECOSOC), Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - these have all been ratified and adopted by Timor Leste.

This is how Timor Leste translates the international commitments and the constitution into their strategic development plan in 2011- 2030. It states that, “nation-building and peace-building are national priorities that must be addressed in order to achieve other social and economic objectives;” “ by 2020, Timor-Leste will be recognized as a model and reference on regional conflict resolution and peace-building;” and “in 2030, Timor-Leste will be a gender fair society where human dignity and women’s rights are valued, protected and promoted by our laws and culture.”

This morning, I would like to focus on two (2) institutional mechanisms on the government side and also on the side of parliament.

As you can see, on the government side, there has been an evolution of the women/gender machinery. Beginning in 2002, the Office of the Advisor to the Prime Minister for the Promotion of Gender Equality was established. Then, it was strengthened to the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Equality (Promotion of SEPI) in 2008; then, again, changed to Secretary of State for the Support of Socio-Economical Promotion of Women (SEM) in 2014. This is based on the progress that they have already made and they think it is important to move forward to economic empowerment of women in the economic development of the country. Besides that, to help the Secretary of State, the government also established the National Gender Working Group in all ministries. Basically, they also learned from the Cambodia experience the importance of establishment of this National Gender Working Group. They also established gender focal points in all thirteen (13) districts. So, this is the gender mainstreaming work on the government side.

In terms of women's leadership in Timor Leste, women hold very important positions in the current government. While in other countries, women handle soft issues like social welfare, in Timor Leste, women head the following ministries: Minister of Social Solidarity, Minister of Finance, Minister and Vice-Minister of Health, Vice-Minister of Education, Secretary of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Secretary of State for Arts and Culture, and also, Secretary of State for the Support of Socio-Economical Promotion of Women (which was formerly called SEPI). So, as you can see here, women hold very important and strategic positions within the government.

In terms of integrating gender perspective in the security sector, Timor Leste promoted gender-balance. As of 2011, 20% out of a total 3,157 police officers are females – this is above the global average in terms of the number of women police officers; in the military force, 104 (8%) female military out of a total 1268. Timor Leste also appointed a woman district police commander; established Vulnerable Persons' Units (VPUs) to handle cases of sexual and gender-based violence headed also by a female. They also established a Gender Affairs Unit in the Timor-Leste National Police (PNTL) and integrated a gender perspective into the Police Standard Operating Procedures.

There is also the capacity development/training program for security forces, that is, the National Police (PNTL), military forces (F-FDTL) and officials of the judicial system. Timor Leste was also funded by the Irish government on a cross-learning initiative on UN Security Council

Resolution 1325, where they shared their experience on prevention, protection and how to increase women's participation.

One of the outcomes of this cross-learning initiative was the development of a National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325. I think this is still being developed. In the parliament, there is a Commission on Defense and Security. At first, there was no woman so the Parliament took the initiative to put one woman in that commission. During the early part of 2008, there was still a number of IDP camps, so they also established women's committees in all these camps. They also adopted a National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence by the Council of Ministers; and, as I mentioned earlier, the development of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

What about the conditions and achievements in promoting women's leadership in the parliament? There has been an increase. Before, in the previous administration and during the 2007 elections, women already composed 29.2%, almost 30%, the second highest in the Asia (the first was Nepal), but now it has increased to 38.5%, the highest in Asia and 16<sup>th</sup> among 140 countries (I believe the second highest in Asia is Lao, at 25-30%). As for the number of women in Parliament from the different parties: CNRT(the biggest party)-10, Fratilin-9, Fretilin Mudansa (a new party representing the young generation of the Fratilin Party)-2 and Democratic Party-4. If you look at women representation by commission or standing committee, women also hold chair positions in Commissions A, B, and D; while holding Vice-Chair position in the Commission C on Economic Affairs). Human rights is very important and its commission is headed by a woman. They also created a Commission on Gender Equality. Before it was under Commission D, together with agriculture, fisheries and environment; now it is under Commission F mixed with health, education, veterans and social affairs.

The women parliamentarians in Timor Leste also formed a group called Grupo das Mulheres Parlamentares de Timor-Leste (GMPTL), or Women's Parliamentary Caucus).

Established in 2006, through a parliamentary resolution, in response to the invitation and the need to become a member of women parliamentarians' caucus of CPLP (Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa), or Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, but was revitalized through a parliamentary resolution in 2007. Members are across party lines.

GMPTL adopted its Statute on 16 March 2008 and the following are their objectives:

1. Support women's participation in various activities and cooperation;
2. Support women's participation and representation in politics;
3. Share and exchange experiences and best practices;
4. Create a network of women MPs.

What are the achievements of GMPTL?

In terms of gender-sensitive legislation and policy, they integrated gender into the penal code and domestic violence is now considered as a public crime, so everyone is obligated to report domestic violence cases to the authorities. They also drafted the gender equality law. The initial experience they got from the Philippines. In 2009, they came to visit the Philippines to learn how to draft the gender equality law. They also changed the electoral law. Before, it was mandatory that one in every four candidates of the party-list must be a woman, but now, it was increased to one in every three candidates. So that's why the women representation in parliament increased significantly from the previous election. They also adopted the Parliamentarians' Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and adopted the implementation of Gender Strategic Action Plan.

In terms of gender-responsive budgeting, they learned that nothing could be done without money. In the beginning, they pretty much relied on different partners, but that (is now) gone. In order to ensure that the policy and law is implemented totally, they felt it necessary to adopt gender responsive budgeting. So this is mandatory for all ministries, with the approval of Parliament.

Most importantly, they also established the Parliamentary Gender Resource Center, which is now the Center for Capacity Building and Information on Gender Equality (CEGEN). It was initially funded by the governments of Norway, Australia and Sweden. It was originally project-based, but now, it is fully integrated as a permanent division in the Parliament. The mandate of the Center is to do awareness raising, capacity development, research and training, partnership and networking, knowledge and information sharing.

So this is what the parliament of Timor Leste and the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (GMPTL), through the Gender Resource Center, has done:

- Development of Gender Strategic Action Plan;

- Capacity building on gender responsive budgeting for women and men parliamentarians and secretariat staff;
- Public dialogue and awareness raising on CEDAW to civil society.

Another mechanism that is very important also is the establishment of a coordination mechanism between government, parliament and civil society through regular monthly meetings to discuss gender issues and problems that can be acted upon during the plenary sessions.

In international institutions and mechanisms, as you can see, this is Maria Paixao de Costa, she was chair of GMPTL and a leading gender advocate, but now she has been appointed by the government of Timor Leste to serve as the ambassador to Portugal. There are also other female ambassadors to the Peoples' Republic of China, Vicky Tsong; more recently to Singapore, Adaljiza Magno; the United Nations, Sofia Borges; CEDAW Committee, Maria Helena Pires; Consul-General of Timor Leste for Bali-Indonesia, Teresa Maria de Carvalho. So, mostly, the women who are appointed in international affairs are coming from the GMPTL or women parliamentarians group.

So that's all. This ends my presentation. Thank you very much.

**Ms. Ruengrawee Pichaikul**  
Senior Program Coordinator for Thailand and Laos  
of The Asia Foundation

Thank you to the organizers and, in particular, to Ambassador Elizabeth Buensuceso, for inviting me here. Today, I am pleased to share some programs and mechanisms provided by the government, civil society organizations and international donors to protect the rights and welfare of women and children in Southern Thailand.

I would like to, first, give you an overview of Southern Thailand. Down there, the Malay-Muslim population is a local majority, while Buddhists are a minority but compose the majority at the national level.

Since 2004 until now, over 6,000 people have been killed and over 10,000 injured. Around 50-60 people have been reported missing and until now their whereabouts are not known; 123 children have been killed and 634 injured, most of them victimized as collateral damage; about 431 women killed and 1,651 injured; 5,000 children became orphans and over 3,000 women became widows. During the past 11 years, there were 3,121 bomb explosions. Among these were 44 car bombs often detonated in public areas; and over 100 incidents of bombings and shootings took place in the railroad transportation. These violent incidents took place in three provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and four districts of Songkhla provinces. These provinces are adjacent to the Malaysian border.

In January 2015, the current government resumed peace talks and this time, as it used to be, Malaysia served as a facilitator. Three trust-building meetings were convened. In September 2015, both conflict parties presented pre-conditioning proposals, such as creating safety zones, immunity for exiled insurgency representatives, and both pledged to engage local people in the process.

So, I am presenting two components of programs and mechanisms - the first one provided by the Thai State and implemented by the Southern Border Provincial Administrative Center, or SBPAC, which is the frontline government unit working in the southern part of Thailand. The second component is implemented by civil society organizations and international aid/donors, including my organization, The Asia Foundation.

There are four (4) themes under the government programs: reducing risks, promoting resilience, aiding community recovery through political settlement and peace negotiation.

On the civil society and international aid side, the programs include: reducing grievances, promoting equal access to justice, transforming victims to peace activists, and supporting sustainable peace processes. As you can notice, government and nongovernment have relatively distinctive programs and mechanisms. There are some overlapping areas and, very often, they complement each other.

I probably cannot cover everything that has been done by the national government and SBPAC. On reducing risks and increasing security in the area, the Thai State, since 2004, has deployed security personnel in the deep south provinces aimed at protecting the rights and security of the local citizens, especially vulnerable groups, such as, monks; escorting teachers to school and also safeguard the roads. If you go there, you will see a lot of checkpoints in all the three (3) provinces. In terms of combating criminal activities, the Thai government has been able to curb criminal activities successfully, particularly, crimes involving drugs and human trafficking. Recently, the Thai government tried to decrease regular soldiers and replaced them with locally recruited self-defense volunteers. Sometimes, this kind of practice raises concerns that it poses greater risks of exposing the villagers, since these volunteers are also armed. Women are also recruited to work in security duties, however they are assigned to lighter work, such as public relations and social functions in communities.

In promoting resilience, SBPAC is the front unit of government working directly to protect the rights and welfare of women. So far, this unit has been providing comprehensive care for victims of violence, particularly women and children, especially after their family members were killed or injured. A number of local women organizations volunteer to also help the government in handling victim care programs. The government provides student scholarships to families of victims. Affirmative action for vulnerable families has been applied such as a quota system for nursing students. Up to the present, over 3,000 young women were provided nursing student scholarships. Also, jobs for new graduates program was created to stimulate the local economy. The comprehensive care for victims of violence covers economic and mental assistance. Monetary compensations from government were given to victims of violence, especially in cases of suspicious deaths while in the custody of authorities. The budget for this type of compensation is even as high as US\$200,000 per case. Family members of those killed as a result of security related causes also receive monetary compensation. Additionally, health professionals are assigned to regularly visit the families to provide mental support.

Regarding aiding community recovery, government activities include receiving and responding to local complaints through hotlines and

community justice services. Economic development has always been the main focus of the government, with policies that include small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) and micro-finance schemes. Healthcare services are implemented based on a comprehensive research conducted by professional doctors of medicine. These series of researches happened to be supported by the Swiss embassy in Thailand.

The last is promoting peaceful resolution. There has been a very clear legal and policy framework focusing on peaceful resolution. The southern development plan focuses on political settlement rather than military oriented solutions. The government shows its commitment by resuming peace talks, stating clearly its plans for promoting pluralism and a multi-cultural society, and exploring programs for reintegration of thousands of ex-combatants back into communities.

There are three levels of working committees (sorry to say that there is no woman in there) on peace talks. The oversight level is headed by the Prime Minister; the middle level is a negotiation team and the local one is to increase community trust building. I mention this because whatever has been done in the peace process it impacts women's rights and security directly or indirectly. If peace has been established, then, women's lives would be safer.

Civil society and international aid organizations focus on reducing grievances. This is something which government has not done much, since some activities include promoting Malay cultural identity, multi-cultural activities and historical dialogue. You may understand that, sometimes, the history issue is used as a provocative tool in persuading new combatants to join in armed groups. Other activities include: restoring Buddhist- Muslim relations; victim empowerment, legal redress, economic and emotional support programs; strengthening the network of vulnerable groups like women and children. In violent situations, men are under close watch by security personnel, so, women have more freedom to mobilize, to join rallies and street demonstrations.

Civil society organizations have contributed a great deal in promoting access to justice, with these programs mainly supported by international donors. Activities include providing legal assistance and quick responses to security-related cases initiated right after the break out of violence in 2004. Target clients of legal aid program are Malay-Muslim males who are affected mainly as security-related suspected/accused persons. Increasing capacities on international practices on forensic evidence collection and use in prosecution cases, especially security cases; training multi-disciplinary justice officials to meet international human

rights standards; and providing legal and civic education to local people are programs that have been undertaken in the last ten years.

Currently, the concept of transitional justice is being introduced into the area. For example, 11 local truth seeking committees were established by SBPAC to investigate cases where authorities were suspected of being involved in the murders or killing of ordinary people. The government has begun to take new justice initiatives to reduce punishment and release security-related suspects or prisoners. Non-blanket amnesty is being explored to strengthen the peace process as well. It is evident that after over ten years of working, the number of arrests and prosecutions decreased while the conviction rate is increasing. In the past, before this reform bore fruits, suspects were detained and had been waiting for the courts' decision for a long time, sometimes, for as long as eight or nine years.

The final program is supporting sustainable peace processes through peacebuilding, community participation and forums. Actually most of these activities - community forums, cross cultural-group dialogues, peace media, community radio, TV and publications, and peace journalists - have been supported by international donors. The most recent activity undertaken on November 25, 2015 was a public campaign initiated and performed by a women's group called Women's Agenda for Peace (PAW). The march marked the call for all armed parties, including government and insurgent groups, to stop using violent means in public areas, especially markets, roads and schools, the places where women and children spend much of their daily lives on.

I conclude by giving you some challenges and recommendations. When I was doing this presentation, I found it very hard to find information related to gender data. In one of the data bases on violence monitoring, they have disaggregated data about Buddhists and Muslims, races and everything; but not by gender. To establish and support reliable gender data and statistics should, therefore, be a priority of the Thai government and the SBPAC.

In the peace process, the government and the people responsible for the peace process should increase greater women's participation by applying gender quota/affirmative action measures in all levels of peacebuilding bodies. Right now it is zero, so we have to fight for that.

Secondly, every unit of the government must respect human rights and take serious action to combat impunity. There must be a full investigation of missing people; harassment of peace activists, especially, accusing them as trouble makers, must be stopped. This is very discouraging!

The government must end discrimination against groups with different ethnicities, beliefs or social status in remedy and compensation programs, especially, between security-related and non-security related incidents. There has been a big gap in compensation between these two groups.

Grant funds to local diverse cross-cultural groups to implement their peace-building initiatives must be provided.

Lastly, equal access to justice, especially in applying forensic evidence and reduction of impunity, must be improved.

Thank you very much.



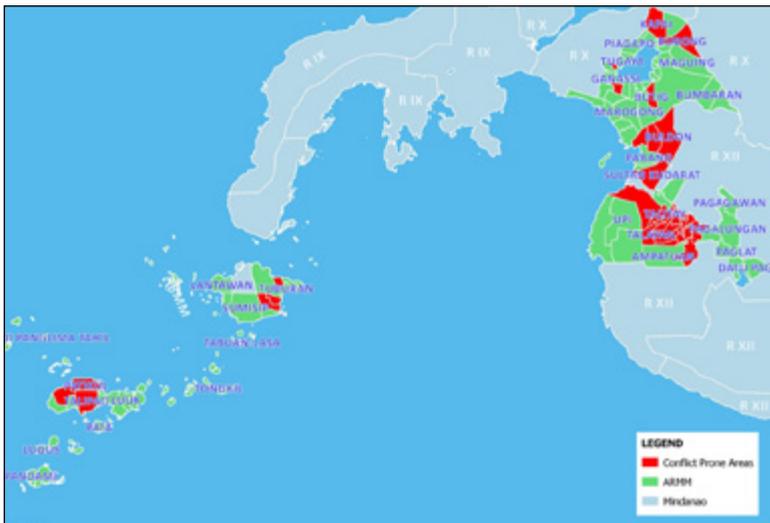
**Atty. Laisa Masuhod-Alamia**

Executive Secretary of the Government of the Autonomous Region  
in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)

*Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatu!* Good morning, Your Excellencies. It is my honor to be here to make a presentation on the situation in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) with respect to women and children. Part of my presentation is to show the lived realities of the people living in the ARMM, with particular focus on women and children, before I present some of the mechanisms and policies that are enforced in the ARMM that promote and protect the rights of women and children.

**Profile of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)**

The ARMM is found in the southern part of the Philippines; it is called the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao because majority of the Muslim Moros are found in the area. It is composed of 5 provinces, 116 municipalities, 2 cities and 2,490 barangays. Its farthest province is Tawi-Tawi, which is very near Sabah. Some indicators we will find in the area: for one, it is a conflict-affected area; the conflict in ARMM is one of the longest running conflicts in the world (except perhaps if we compare it to the situation of Palestine). In this part of the world, it is the longest-running conflict. We had a peace agreement before with the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front), but now, we still don't have that law that's supposed to implement the peace agreement between the government and the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front).



Because of the recurring conflict in the area, we have a very high poverty incidence rate. The latest poverty incidence rate for this year is at 48.7%. Around 49 out of 100 households are poor. It's a dire situation if you go the conflict-affected areas in Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur and some areas in Sulu. We've looked at data and situation on the ground and out of the 116 municipalities, 30 are prone to armed conflict, 36 municipalities are prone to natural disasters and hazards, such as typhoons and floods in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur; and the island-provinces are prone to storm surges and even tsunamis.

Plus we have a problem on governance. The ARMM is now 26 years old, but there's been a backlog of programs, activities and projects (or PAPs) for the past 25 years. This is because of a lot of structural problems between the national government and the way the law, Republic Act 9054, which created the current ARMM, has been implemented.

On top of that, we have a displacement situation in Tawi-Tawi, Sulu and Basilan where many Moros and Filipinos who had migrated before to Sabah were either deported or displaced. If you remember, there was a conflict in Lahad Datu in Sabah a few years back which caused a lot of displacement of people, and until now, the deportation continues. Unfortunately, people still go to Sabah, especially those who traditionally come from Tawi-Tawi and Sulu.

These are just some pictures of the latest displacements that occurred in the ARMM, particularly, in the second District of Maguindanao, which is the stronghold of the MILF, right after the Mamasapano Incident.



Supposedly, this year, the ARMM should have been abolished and we should have turned over the government to the new entity-- the Bangsamoro Government, if the BBL (Bangsamoro Basic Law) was passed. However, in January 2015, the infamous Mamasapano Incident occurred, and as a result of that, national government, particularly the military, conducted law-enforcement operations in Maguindanao and these caused a lot of displacement -125,000 IDPs (internally displaced persons), most of them women and children. You can see them in the pictures.

I've already said that ARMM is the poorest region, but we've had some headway when it comes to the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP). In the entire country, it is the ARMM that has the lowest GRDP, mainly because the ARMM is 65-70% agriculture- and fishery-based. We produce raw materials and products, but there's not a lot of processing in the area and, so, we have a problem on the income of people. GRDP was negative 0.3% in 2011.

When the last Regional Governor, Andal Ampatuan of the infamous Ampatuan Massacre, was removed, the President appointed an OIC. From that time on, the national government, under President Noynoy Aquino has been helping to institutionalize reforms and this has resulted to an increase in the GRDP of 3.6% as of 2013. We've also had an increase in investment in ARMM. However, the development challenges in the area remain, because of the intergenerational cycles of conflict, insecurity, and displacement in the region since the 1970's.

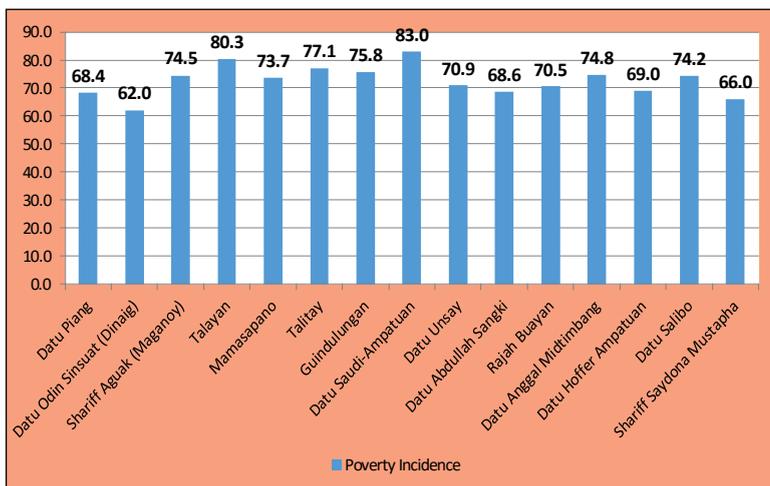
In terms of population and growth rate in the ARMM, we have a total population of 3.25 million. We have the highest population growth rate at 2.20% in the entire country. If you look at sex-disaggregated data of the ARMM household by age group and sex in 2010, the population is quite young; most of them are females. At the same time, the population belonging to the reproductive age is very high, it's around 55.54%; while the older ones are only about 1.61%. This implies that for every 100 persons aged 15-64 years old, there are about 74 dependents - 71 are children and 3 are senior dependents, which means that you have a very high dependency ratio.

So you have conflict, you have displacement, you have a high population growth rate and a high dependency ratio.

In terms of Philippine poverty incidence among families and per capita poverty threshold, comparing ARMM with the rest of the regions, ARMM has the highest poverty incidence rate among the population, among the families, and with respect to the poverty threshold in 2012 at 20,517.

If you go by province, you will find that in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, where the conflicts are, that's where the poverty incidence is very high. Basilan and Tawi-Tawi have improved on their poverty incidence rates. The table below shows the 15 municipalities that were affected this year by the law enforcement operations which caused the displacement of 125,000 people. You will find that the poverty incidence rates in these municipalities are very high. In Datu Saudi Ampatuan, it's 83%, that means 83 out of 100 households are actually poor. The lowest is at 62%.

**Poverty Incidence by Municipality, 2012**



Source: NSCB-PSA

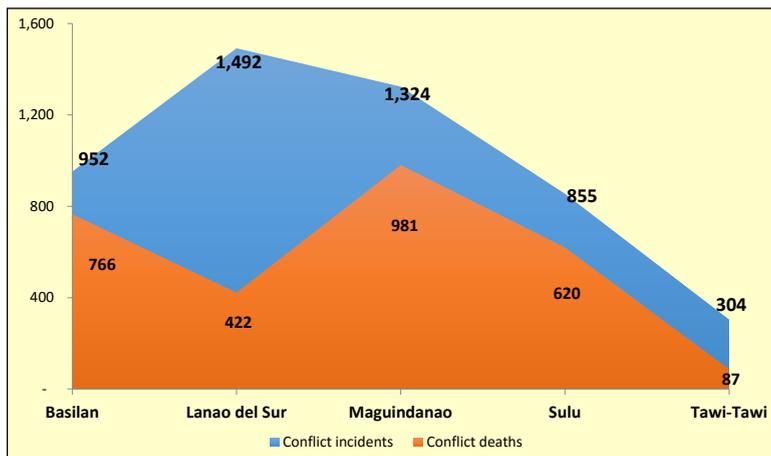
Poverty incidence rate persists despite government spending, i.e., the budget that has been provided for development programs in the ARMM. From 2008 to 2012, despite government spending, the poverty incidence rate has increased from 39.9% in 2009 to 48.70% in 2012. What does that mean? It implies that even if a lot of investments is poured on development programs in an area which is conflict-affected, unless the conflict is resolved, then all that support will just go down the drain. People will still be poor.

Status of employment is also not very good. Although statistics show that ARMM registered the second to the lowest unemployment rate among the country's 17 regions, we don't think that it's that way. Data is also a problem.

Another study conducted by the World Bank - the Bangsamoro Conflict Monitoring System (BCMS) - talks about violent conflicts in the ARMM. The study reviewed data from news articles, government agencies and

police stations from 2011 to 2014 which showed that the highest number of violent incidents were found in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, as shown in the graph below:

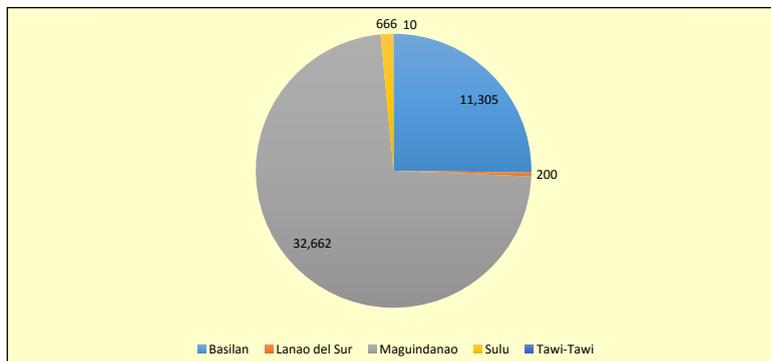
### Violent Conflict in ARMM (2011-2014)



Source: Bangsamoro Conflict Monitoring System, World Bank

A look at the orange-colored area shows that the most number of people who died, as a result of conflict incidents are found in Maguindanao, the center of the conflict. These data corroborates and confirms the data that we have. A very high number of displaced households are found also in Maguindanao.

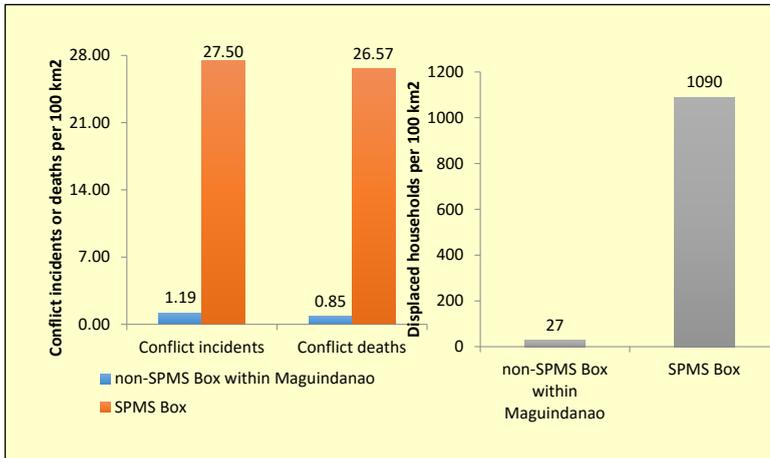
### Displaced Households in ARMM (2011-2014)



Source: Bangsamoro Conflict Monitoring System, World Bank

A comparison of the conflict density in the ARMM, particularly in Maguindanao, was also made. Comparing the areas found in the SPMS Box, which is a military term referring to the strongholds of MILF, BIFF (Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters) and some terrorist groups where the Mamasapano incident occurred, and areas outside the SPMS Box, one will see that most of the conflict incidents are found in the SPMS Box; and most of the deaths and displacements also occur in the SMPS Box.

### Conflict Density (2011-2014)



Source: Bangsamoro Conflict Monitoring System, World Bank

## Lived Realities of Women and Children in ARMM

### Peace and Order

Let us review the lived realities of women and children in the ARMM, and, in particular, the peace and order situation, so that we can understand the context.

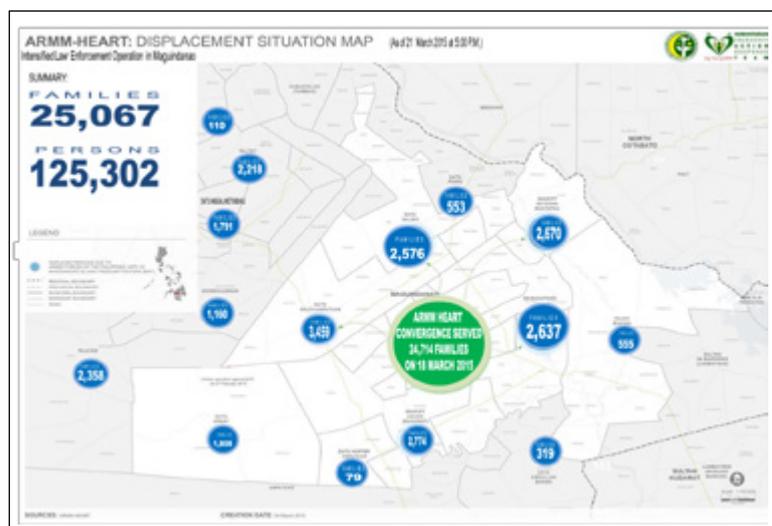
There have been waves of displacement in the ARMM since the 1970's and 1980's. Let me just focus on the recent displacements. In the Year 2000, as a result of the "all-out-war" of the national government, at least 982,000 persons were displaced. Then, there was a renewed AFP operations in the Buliok Complex, also in Maguindanao, in 2003 and that resulted in a figure of about 400,000 IDPs. In 2008, another conflict occurred when the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD), the result of the peace process between the government and the MILF, was declared as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. At that time, the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC) reported

an estimated 728,659 IDPs uprooted by the fighting; and the latest is at 125,000 people. Looking at those figures, one will see that majority of the displaced persons in the ARMM were women and children; and most of them are victims of recurrent displacement and chronic displacement, with no durable solutions until now. They get displaced as a result of floods; the next week when they go back to their homes, they become displaced again as a result of the conflict. So, it has become a way of life for them and it happens every month, every year, and so, the very high poverty incidence rate.

Maguindanao suffers the most because it is disaster-prone and also because of the conflict. Even during the Marcos regime, a large segment of hostilities was focused in the Maguindanao area. From 2000 to 2010, four out of five households were affected by displacement.

The second district of Maguindanao is home to various revolutionary armed groups where most of the conflicts occur. As I speak now, there is a conflict between two MILF commanders in one municipality within the SPMS Box. This may not be related to the peace process, but because of insecurity, when it comes to peace in the area, these occurrences are happening.

This is just a map of the number of IDPs and where they were located at the time that the conflict occurred this year.



At the heart of all of this displacement, and “*rido*,” or what we call clan conflicts - political conflicts between and among political families - at high

risk in this ritual of revenge are the women and children. The norm is not anymore the protection of women, or not involving women. Women are now affected; they are kidnapped or taken hostage as a way to dishonor or get back at the opponent's family, and this one is happening in the five (5) provinces.

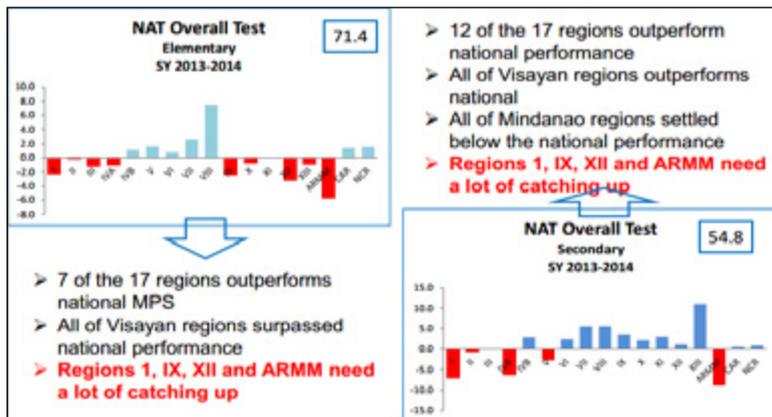
So, over-all, women and children are affected by the Abu Sayyaf kidnapping and the “rido,” or clan conflicts. Furthermore, because of the unresolved Moro claim to the right to self-determination, agriculture and homegrown industries continue to decline as a result of the conflict, even if we've been providing development programs for them.

### Education

In 2008, the ARMM had the lowest functional literacy rate. Because of the high incidence of conflict and the effects of natural disasters, many school children are dropping out of school. So, we have a very low enrollment rate, a very high drop-out rate, and very low survival rate in schools. Many of the girls become overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), working as domestic helpers in Middle East countries, or they are trafficked

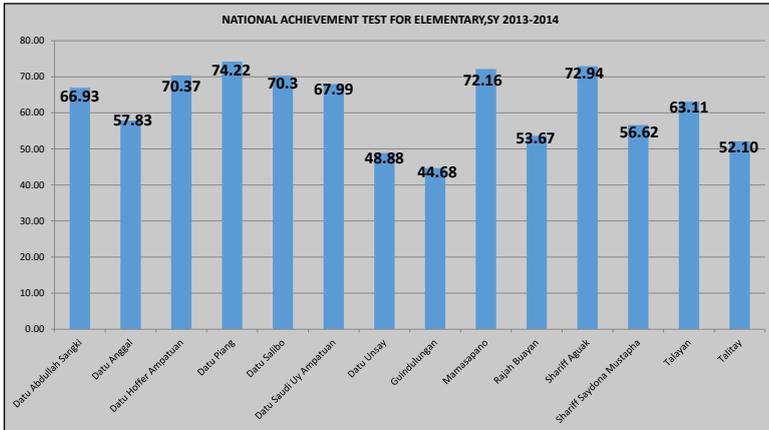
In the National Assessment Test (NAT), which all students all over the country are required to take, the ARMM fared the lowest, along with Regions I, XII and IX.

### National Assessment Test (NAT)



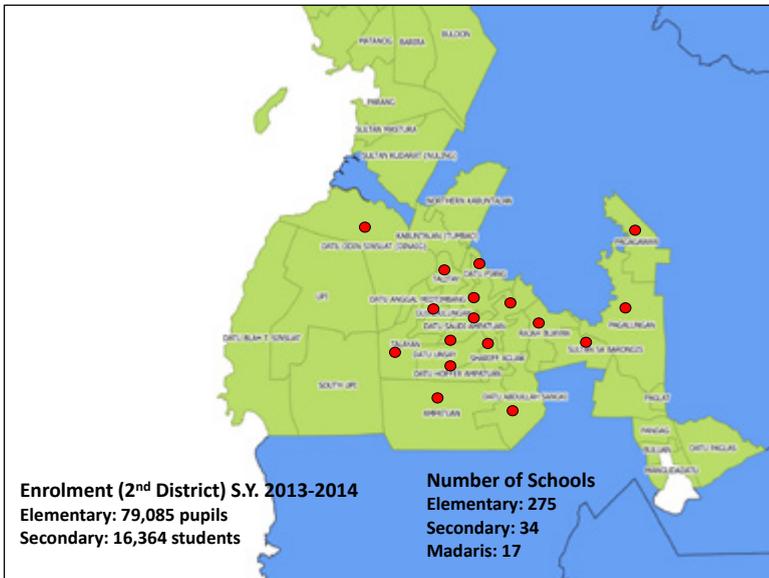
This is the NAT percentage score, which shows how low the NAT result is in the fifteen (15) municipalities mostly affected by conflict in Maguindanao. It's very, very low!

## NAT Mean Percentage Scores



Source: DepEd-ARMM

This map shows schools commonly used as evacuation centers.



Because there are no or limited number of evacuation centers, people go to the schools every time there is a conflict, and so the children are displaced. They cannot anymore attend classes. We have a number of schools that were used as evacuation centers – 275 elementary schools and 34 secondary schools. Even if the national government has school

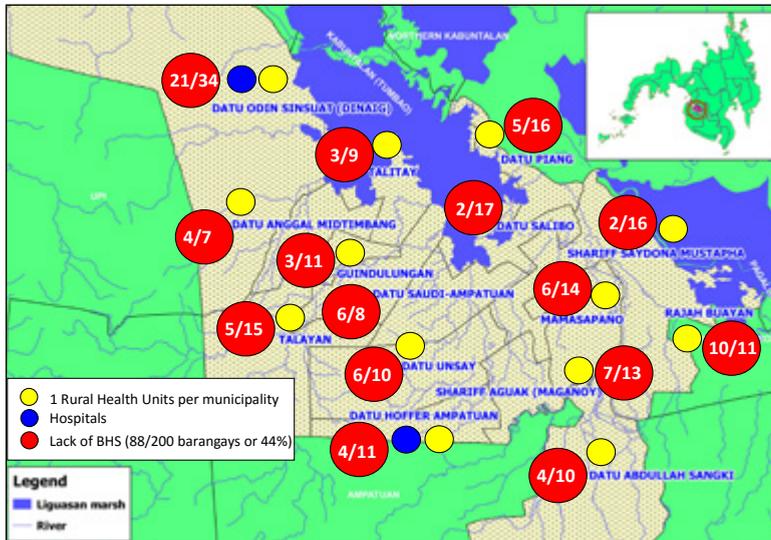
buildings and rehabilitation programs, there are a lot of dilapidated school buildings in the area.

## Health

Maternal mortality rate (MMR) is very high due to lack of access to health facilities. Infant mortality rate was at 23 per 1,000 live births in 2013. That's why we've been lobbying the national government to provide more funds for barangay health stations that would become birthing facilities.

There is a national government program called the HFEP, or Health Facilities Enhancement Program, that involves construction of barangay health centers or stations. When we combined all of the budgets for health from 2011 to 2015, we found that the total amount covers only 38% of the gap. There is a gap of 62%, meaning 62% of areas in the ARMM do not have budgets for health facilities or barangay health centers. This is a map showing the number of health stations found in the conflict affected barangays.

**Gap in Health Facilities (as of 2015)**



For example, in the municipality of Shariff Saydona Mustapha, out of the 16 barangays, only 2 barangays have health centers. So you can just imagine, there is displacement and they don't have access to health facilities and services.

Then we also have problems with water and sanitation We have a high percentage of households without sanitary toilets, or no access to safe drinking water.

### Fatwa on Family Planning

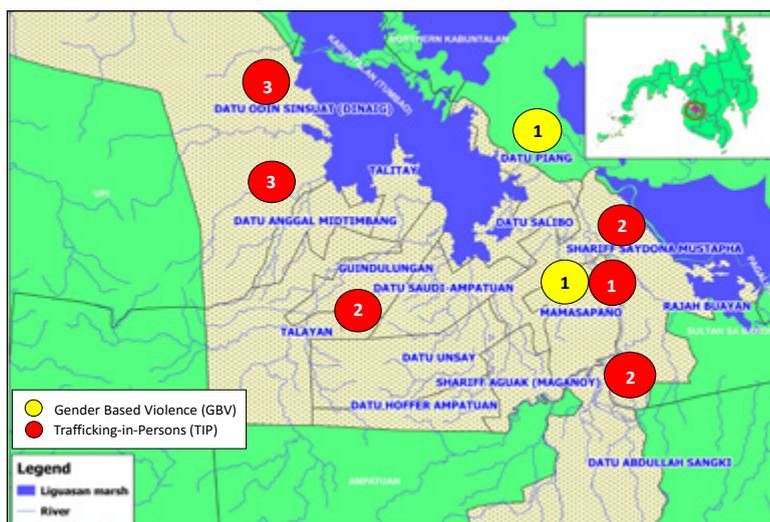
But there are some positive developments. In early 2004, the Assembly of Darul Ifta, issued a national *fatwa* (religious decree) on reproductive health and family planning. It's a breakthrough towards improving family planning practice, and hopefully, the implementation of this will be continued.

### Social Welfare and Protection

There is a connection between conflict and trafficking in persons and exploitation. Because of the conflict and high poverty incidence rate; because people are very poor, they grab on to any source of income or any promise that will be given to them by the traffickers and the syndicates. So there is a high number of cases of trafficking in persons. In 2014, there were 387 victim-survivors of trafficking, 198 of them were women. In 2015, as of this month, there is a total of 57 survivors; 42 of them are females. So, as you can see, most of the trafficking victims are women.

We looked at the map of the conflict-affected areas, and you can see that there are a number of cases of trafficking and gender-based violence in the conflict-affected areas of Maguindanao.

**TIP and GBV Cases, 2013-2015**

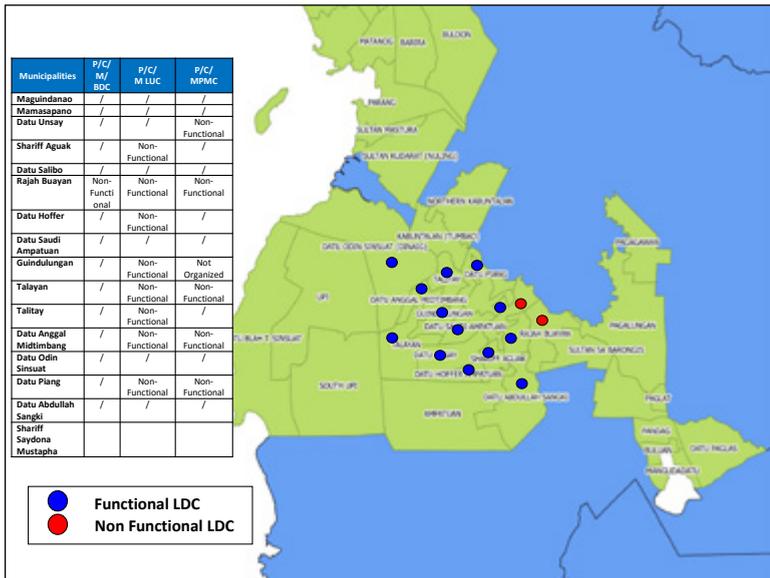


There is also child labor, because of the conflict and poverty, some end up working as dishwashers, waitresses, overseas Filipino workers, or they end up or get trafficked into prostitution.

### Governance and Security

Because of the insecurity, it's very difficult to see the presence of mayors and barangay (village) officials in the area. This map shows which are the local structures that are present.

**Local Structures in the Affected Municipalities**



There are practically no women and children's protection desks, except in the hospitals that have been set up near the area. Other local structures- the local school board, the local development councils - all those are supposedly present in the law, but, in reality, these are not functioning in the conflict-affected areas.

One look at the mapping of police stations that are present in the area, and you will find the reason why the Ampatuan or Maguindanao Massacre occurred. There are only a number of police stations present in the conflict-affected areas; and in most of those police stations, only a few police personnel are present. That's why the military is also there. This goes, as well, for fire stations and fire trucks.



## **Major Development Challenges**

What are the major development challenges, then? I've just tried to show, in summary, what's the situation in the ARMM.

A major development challenge is the suspended deliberation and passage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL). We also have some problems on the current version that is found in the Senate. It should be noted that the President, himself, has been very emphatic about having a law passed

There's recurring conflict in the ARMM areas; there's a huge number of IDPs. Economic activities as a result of the conflict are affected. There's a high poverty incidence rate; and we have the effect of El Niño and La Niña.

## **Programs and Mechanisms to Ensure Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Welfare of Women and Children**

What are the programs and mechanisms that ensure the protection and promotion of the rights of women and children in conflict? The Philippines fares very well and has excellent score when it comes to incorporating the UNSCR 1325 and all of the UN Conventions that protect women and children. All of these women- and children-friendly policies and laws are incorporated in our laws.

These laws are also incorporated in the ARMM, as well. We have the localization of the national action plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325 (Women, Peace and Security). We have an ARMM Gender and Development (GAD) Code and Reproductive Health (RH) Code. We recently passed a law on the Free Birth Registration law, which requires all local government units (LGUs) in the ARMM to provide for free birth registration, because most of our people do not register births and deaths.

So, we have all these women and children laws, on top of the national laws, such as the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children (Anti-VAWC), Anti-Rape Law and all other laws that protect women. The challenge, however, lies not on the passage of these laws, but in their implementation, or whether we are able to actually have outputs or outcomes and have an impact on the lives of women and children in the communities. But, right now, in the ARMM government, we are trying to do our best.

For example, under the ARMM GAD Code, we were able to incorporate advocacies of civil society to increase the age of marriage. There's a national law, the Code of Muslim Personal Laws (CMPL), or Presidential

Decree (P.D.) 1083, which allows the marriage of children below eighteen years old. In fact, the allowable age there is the age of puberty for girls. Compared to predominantly Muslim countries, it's one of the lowest in the whole world. Worse, in this national law that applies to all Muslims in the whole country, even babies can be betrothed. So, betrothal marriage is allowed in the country. Within the Moro communities, traditional cultural practice allows for arranged or forced marriages of children, even of babies. So, what we've done in the ARMM GAD Code is that we've incorporated provisions there to make it very difficult for young boys and girls to get married. Part of the GAD Code is an advocacy against early marriage.

Early marriage is not just a cultural practice; it is also a gender issue. Because of poverty, the dowry is seen as a source of economic salvation for the family, and so children are married off. In evacuation camps/centers, one will find so many girl-children as IDPs. The DSWD, which is the agency that provides for the welfare, particularly, food coupons to the IDPs, gives out one food coupon for each family. This is not enough if there are more than six in the family, let's say, if there are ten (10) children. So, because of this situation in the evacuation camps, they are now forced to marry off their children, even if they are still so young, so that the family can get more food coupons. Unfortunately, this is what is happening.

Under the GAD Code, we have provided for mandatory pre-marriage counseling, more safety nets for child marriages as well as polygamy. The Code also mandates the government to provide services, including reproductive health services, anti-violence against women and children (VAWC) and anti-trafficking services to women; and mandates the local government units (LGUs) to implement the 5% GAD budget requirement. Here lies the tricky part. Although it's in the law, LGUs are not implementing the 5% GAD budget. We're trying to do our best to require them to implement this.

Then there's the National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325 or Women, Peace and Security in ARMM, which we were able to craft, together with OPAPP and women civil society organizations. It's now underway. In fact, national government has provided the funds to set up Women and Peace Centers in 5 provinces and at the regional level, which is currently being institutionalized. There are guidelines that are currently being brought around the provinces of ARMM on how the Women and Peace Centers will be operationalized.

We also looked at good governance conditions. Solving issues concerning women and children should not be seen at a microscopic level; we have to look at it in a comprehensive manner. Women and children would

continue to suffer if there is no good governance. So, we have instituted programs that target good governance at the LGU level, where they are required to implement the Seal of Good Local Governance, as well as the Full Disclosure Policy, which requires them to fully disclose that they're utilizing the 5% GAD Budget for women. They are also required to set up women and children protection desks; and craft their own GAD plans that should be implemented. As to whether we are successful in implementing these, as I said in the beginning, that's the challenge.

Then, there's also women's economic empowerment. One way of empowering the women is to make them economically independent. We can teach them about their rights, do capacity building, but if they're hungry and don't have a source of income, they will forever be exploited and disempowered. So, we have increased investments. A glance at the budget of the ARMM that's provided by the national government for women will reveal that there are more jobs and livelihood programs for women, community-based programs where women can take part as active members of accredited cooperatives.

We have also professionalized the education sector.

The strategy that the ARMM government is using is the convergence approach. It's not just the agency dealing with women, such as the Regional Commission on the Bangsamoro Women (RCBW), or at the national level, the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), that is working on women and children issues. All departments and agencies need to mainstream and incorporate gender and development (GAD) in all programs that they are implementing. Under the convergence approach, we've clustered agencies, based on their mandates and services. We've also clustered the LGUs together with the agencies that are mandated to provide services. Third, and more importantly, we did peace and alliance-building with civil society organizations (CSOs). We've proven that in the ARMM, which has suffered from weak governance for 25 years, working with CSOs on the ground, is very important. I cannot overemphasize the role of CSOs as third-party monitors who would report to us what is happening on the ground. They would tell us that, "Hey, your government agency is doing it wrong. You should do it this way, when it comes to women and children."

There are other programs currently being implemented in the ARMM that also target women. We have the ARMM HELPS Program (Health, Education, Livelihood, Peace and Governance, and Synergy). I'd just like to emphasize that the health component under ARMM HELPS is implemented at the barangay level. So, the aim is to transform the barangay into a working and functioning unit. What is significant here is

that we transform these barangay health centers into birthing facilities to reduce maternal mortality and infant mortality rates.

Another program is the ARMM BRIDGE Program, which is a livelihood program using the community demand-driven (CDD) approach, at the household level. There is an anti-poverty program that we are implementing called the “*Apat na Dapat*,” which addresses the four (4) basic needs provided at the household level, with the women receiving the livelihood program. At the same time, there is a food sufficiency program. We also provide disaster-resilient shelter, with water and latrines or comfort rooms as well as solar panels.

The program that we are implementing together with the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), is the *Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA)*, which is a program for conflict-affected areas. For Maguindanao alone, we have the Humanitarian Development Action Plan (HDAP), that focuses only on District 2 of Maguindanao, particularly, the 15 municipalities that I had shown earlier, to be implemented by January 2016. It has a livelihood program for women and MNLF communities and groups. There is also a community security management program, to be implemented together with OPAPP. Wifi services that can cover a radius of around 50 kilometers within all five (5) provinces of ARMM will be set up. Scholarships for children and relatives of MNLF combatants will also be provided.

There are livelihood programs from the various agencies on agriculture and fisheries, as well as small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) that also focus on women as beneficiaries. An annual infrastructure program that targets production and eco-tourism areas also indirectly benefit the women.

Capacity building on women’s human rights are also implemented by the Regional Commission on Bangsamoro Women (RCBW) and the Regional Human Rights Commission (RHRC).

The program that we are implementing with respect to governance is the PINTAKASI for Peace and Progress Program, which also uses a convergence approach and will be implemented beginning next year.

If the BBL was passed, it would have provided for a higher form of the exercise of the right to self-determination; higher than R.A. 9054, which created the ARMM. The original draft of the BBL that was based on the CAB would have been better than the ARMM - more power, bigger share, more opportunities for real autonomy. Under the ARMM, there is no real autonomy because most of the powers exercised by the national government have not actually been devolved to the ARMM. With the BBL,

we are hoping that the powers already with ARMM will either be continued or enhanced/improved in the Bangsamoro.

There are specific provisions in the BBL as well as the CAB and FAB on political empowerment of women and policy against violence against women; and that's a good thing. With respect to gender quota, in the Philippines or in the ARMM, we don't need a quota, because women are already part of all the processes and committees, from the negotiating table down to the implementation of programs and projects. Just to inform you, in the 25-year history of the ARMM, this is the first time that there is a female Executive Secretary. So from the beginning, this position had been reserved for men. So, this is the first time that there is a woman who is the Executive Secretary. So that tells something about the way gender and development is incorporated or mainstreamed in the Philippines.

There have been policies passed and issued in the ARMM which are women-friendly and we hope that it will continue to be in effect or may be enhanced in the Bangsamoro. There is a political party of women for women and represented by women - I need to emphasize that, because there are some cases where it's a political party for women, but they are represented by men.

There is drafting and implementation of the Shari'a Law; and we hope that women will participate in these processes.

Now for the challenges, there is still a long way to go! The bill has not been passed. In the meantime the ARMM government is here. We're here and we hope that we are able to provide stability, while waiting for the passage of the BBL.

We hope that the role of women will be clearer when the BBL is passed and implemented. We need to ensure that these questions are answered: *Where will the women be in the new Bangsamoro?* The answer to that and the challenge lie with the WOMEN themselves - the Bangsamoro women.

Then, at the national level, the legal battle on the RH Law has an impact on our RH Code in the ARMM. With the enactment of the BBL that would empower the Bangsamoro parliament to craft a Shari'a Law, this will need to be reconciled with the Code of Muslim Personal Laws (CMPL), which is a national law.

Finally, the last challenge is that poverty still persists in areas in the ARMM. So, the work is cut out for us, with a lot of things that still needs to be done in the ARMM.

Thank you very much. *Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatu!*

**Ms. Alpha Larga**  
Head of Planning Division of the Council for the  
Welfare of Children, the Philippines

It is now time for the children to participate and present what we are doing. Good morning to all the Excellencies and members of the country delegations. Thank you, too, to Ambassador Buensuceso, for inviting us to present what the agency is doing for children.

Just a brief introduction of the agency; it's called the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC). CWC is the focal inter-departmental government agency with the mandate of formulating and advocating policies and programs; monitoring and evaluating policies and building strong networks and partnerships. So, it is in this context that we operate and these are our initiatives when it comes to children in situations of armed conflict:

- First, is in operationalizing the monitoring, reporting and response system on grave child rights violations in situations of armed conflict, or what we call the MRRS–GVRVSAC;
- We also implement Executive Order No. 138, or the comprehensive program framework for children in armed conflict;
- We also propose legislation focused on children in armed conflict.

The MRRS–GVRVSAC was established in response to the recommendations of the SRSG Special Rapporteur on children in armed conflict when she visited the country last 2008. The MRRS is an improvement of the UN MRN. As mentioned in UNSCR 1539 and 1612, “note that the Philippines has included the response aspect in the system,” because we are not only interested in monitoring and having timely reporting of cases or incidences of grave child rights violations, but we also look at how responses were given to children. Usually, this is the aspect that is not reported even at the international level. So, we know that there are local level programs and services that are in place and respond to the needs of children in situations of armed conflict; and these responses happen simultaneously with the monitoring and reporting aspect.

The CWC Board issued Resolution No. 2, series of 2009, which states that the CWC is the focal agency for MRRS. As such, it leads in the operationalization of the system and serves as the focal agency for the database of cases and incidences on grave child rights violations. The agency developed the protocol of the MRRS, which provides for the standards in monitoring, reporting and responding to cases of grave child rights violations that should be observed by the different agencies

involved in implementing programs and services for children. It also gives a common understanding of the different terms that are usually used related to children in armed conflict so that there would be no different interpretations. It also provides for the roles and responsibilities of the different government agencies. I would like to inform the body that the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines are members of the inter-agency team working on children in situations of armed conflict.

CWC also conducted a series of orientation workshops to make sure that the protocol is presented to the local service providers, what it is all about and how to use it. We started conducting the workshops in 2003 until this year. We have already conducted the orientation in 33 out of 81 provinces, 117 municipalities and cities; and a total of 517 participants composed of local workers, social workers, health officers, teachers, school supervisors and superintendents, police at the local level. As a result of these orientation-workshops, reports on grave child rights violations have been forwarded to CWC. Since 2013, we have received a total of 85 reports of grave child rights violations, out of which a total of 38 incidences have been validated, meaning it was confirmed whether these cases reported were true or not. Reporting of grave child rights violations are done through texts, emails, and phone calls ; while validation of these cases is done through the networks and different agencies where we usually refer these cases.

In terms of the implementation of Executive Order (EO) No. 138. This EO reaffirms the government's commitment to respond to the issue of children in armed conflict. It superseded an earlier issuance - EO No. 56, series of 2001. The new EO reinforced the earlier provisions and reconstituted the Inter-Agency Committee on Children in Armed Conflict (IAC-CIAC), a structure within the CWC. It streamlined the membership by identifying those with critical roles to respond to the issue of children in armed conflict. Previously, with EO56, it used to be a very big group; it's as if almost all the government agencies were members of that inter-agency committee. Now, with the new EO, the membership is streamlined to those agencies with critical roles responding to cases of children in situations of armed conflict.

The IAC-CIAC provides the venue where policy issues and implications for handling of children involved in armed conflict, are discussed; guidelines are formulated and programs are developed, in coordination with concerned agencies. The IAC-CIAC also monitors and documents cases of capture, surrender, arrest, rescue or recovery of children involved in armed conflict by government forces. It also provides for the forging of a new memorandum of agreement among the members of the IAC-CIAC, which spells out the delineation of roles and responsibilities of

each of the members. It also provides us with the source for monitoring what each agency has already done. The EO also formally established the MRRS. While the CWC Resolution gave the imprimatur to organize the MRRS, the EO gave the MRRS a legal basis, such that it compels the member agencies to carry out their roles and responsibilities, as stated in the memorandum of agreement.

Now let's go to the proposed legislation on children in armed conflict to be known as the "Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act," to fully implement the standards set by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol. Salient features of the bill include:

- Immunity from suit of anyone who ensures the safety of and provides assistance to children involved in armed conflict;
- It also declares children as zones of peace; criminal cases against children involved in armed conflict shall be immediately dismissed.
- These children shall be referred to the local Social Welfare and Development office, which will assess the child, determine the release to the custody of the parents or refer the child for intervention, rehabilitation and reintegration.

This proposed legislation also declares unlawful acts of killing, torture, intentional maiming or rape of children, cruel treatment, abduction, using them as hostages and recruitment of children in the government armed forces and other armed groups. It also prohibits the denial of humanitarian access and other assistance to children; attacks on public structures or places where children are usually found; hamletting, food blockade, intentional armed conflict delays and false reporting of a child in custody, and false labeling or branding of children as children involved in armed conflict.

In terms of challenges and ways forward, as stated earlier, the policies are in place, but the challenge is in the implementation and operationalization of all of these systems. One of the challenges is to make sure that MRRSs are localized, meaning, we want to see similar structures from the provincial and down to the municipal and city levels. We also would like to have the automation of the database, because, right now, all cases that we receive are manually inputted in excel file. When you ask for the report, it's there, but the challenge is to develop a software to generate the report. We also would like to set up an MRRS hotline, so that reporting could be facilitated, where cases in the Mindanao area could easily be reported here. And then the continuous lobby for the approval of the CSAC bill.

I would like to end this presentation by quoting Nelson Mandela: “Safety and security don’t just happen, they are the result of collective consensus and public investment. We owe our children, the most vulnerable citizens in our society, a life free of violence and fear.”

With that, thank you very much!

## SESSION FOUR OPEN FORUM

MODERATOR: MARIA CLEOFE GETTIE C. SANDOVAL  
Undersecretary, Office of the Presidential  
Adviser on the Peace Process

### AMBASSADOR KULKUMUT SINGHARA NA AYUDHAYA

Thank you, Madam Chair and colleagues in this meeting room. In fact, I would just like really to complement and complete the information to support what was already presented.

According to the history of the country of Thailand, people from the Middle East came to visit Southeast Asia to bring trade from the 16th until the 18th century during the reign of King Rama V. Muslim brothers asked to stay in the south of Thailand and King Rama V gave them permission to stay in the country as long as they wanted. In fact, Thai Buddhists and Thai Muslim people in the south lived in peace and harmony all the time until 1970 when we had the problem of insurgency. This group of people we call insurgents stayed in the southern part of Thailand at the border between Thailand and Malaysia. So that's why my country and Malaysia joined hand-in-hand to confront the problem together and solve the situation.

We promote tolerance because we don't want to be the mechanism of the extremists who would like to show that it is a conflict between religions. In fact, Buddhists and Muslims have no problems at all.

We have to try to reach out to the Muslim people to reduce the gap in understanding between the Thai Buddhists and Thai Muslims. At this moment, there are some problems, because the extremists, have expanded the target groups from the Buddhists monks to business men and women; they go to the schools, especially the teachers, as targets.

The Thai government has also tried many measures at the international level, and I would like to share with you the details of what the Thai government has done for the rights of women and children in the country.

Since we joined as a state party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992, Thailand has enacted 17 pieces of legislation to ensure children's rights in the country. At the national level, the Thai government is in the process of amending the Child Protection Act, especially in section 26 of 2529, to explicitly criminalize the involvement of children in armed forces or armed groups.

Efforts have been made by many concerned state agencies to promote women and protect them from violence in the area.

Since 2010, the number of children affected by conflicts has significantly declined to the lowest figure since 2004. Protection for school teachers has been provided to ensure the children's right to education, because around five to six years ago, children could not go to school because sometimes their teachers were killed. So, that's why we have to try to protect the security and right of children to go to school.

The government is fully aware of the importance of the juvenile justice system today. Rather than special security laws, the Thai government collaborates with several UN bodies to ensure children in Southern Thailand have a childhood. UNICEF and the Thai government have provided placement educational materials and big quantity of sports equipment to ensure that students will continue to have educational and recreational opportunities. At the same time we join with UNESCO, Thai Ministry of Education, Mahidol University and the Southern Education Authority of Thailand to implement the bilingual and multi-lingual education program. The people in the south speak in their southern language mixed with some Malay language. The program aims to provide these children, family, with this equality multilingual education. It takes the culture and identity of the people in the area into consideration. In a broader way, even the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recruits students from the south to give special opportunities for the students in the south.

Regarding the roles of females in the south, right now, it is very important, because, according to the Provincial Administration body, we've had frequent success that motivate us to expand the role of the women.

In terms of international level commitments for the rights of women in the south of Thailand, the Thai Government ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) since 1985, and its Optional Protocol(OP) in 2000; and endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Thai Constitution currently provides equality for all men and women, regardless of ethnicity or religion. Currently under the National Women's Development Plan 2012-2016, guided by the principles of the Beijing Platform for Action, we recognize all stakeholders to promote attitude change towards gender equality, increase women's participation in political decision-making, improve access to health care services, strengthen women's right to human security and foster women's economic participation. In addition, we involved all interested women's groups in the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, including the Thai-Muslim women from the Southern Thailand. We would like to integrate our brothers and sisters in the south while respecting their culture and

traditions. The Thai government has been active in collaborating with United Nations bodies, civil society, academic institutions and other stakeholders to ensure promotion of women's rights as well as rights of the people in Southern Thailand.

In 2010, UNDP launched in Southern Thailand an empowerment and participation project. The aim of the project was to empower communities and civil society networks, while also strengthening the capacity of different government agencies. Through entrepreneurship training, the project has more than doubled the income of the women in the province, improving the livelihood of conflict-affected women-headed households.

As I mentioned yesterday, according to my experience at peacekeeping in the different countries, I can find that the root cause of the problem is poverty. Just as I mentioned, the people in the south rely on planting as their main livelihood. So, that's why the government would like to help them to increase their income in a sustainable way, so we try to expand opportunities to the southern area. Thank you.

#### **UNDERSECRETARY MARIA CLOFE GETTIE C. SANDOVAL**

Thank you very much, His Excellency, on your reflection and additional information on the programs currently being done by the Thai government. I now call on His Excellency from Malaysia to give his comments or questions.

#### **AMBASSADOR HASNUDIN HAMZAH**

Thank you so much, Madam Moderator. First, I would like to thank all the speakers for their presentations. Three of them have given their personal experiences and involvements in all those areas. Let me begin with Ibu Dr. Endah, thank you so much for sharing with us your experience in Timor Leste. I think what you have presented provided us a good account of the empowerment of women, providing their capacities in post-conflict situations. Perhaps this kind of study or findings would also be part of the efforts to understand more of Timor-Leste. We would also like to take into account some of the points made by Dr. Endah in her presentation just now.

To Atty. Alamia, thank you so much for giving us the accounts on the ARMM peace process. I was here way back in the mid-80s when the ARMM was formed. I know a little bit of the history. I thought the ARMM already has come to pass, but it is still there. I thought that when the proposed law would come into force, it would no longer be there. Interestingly, you

referred to the issues of IDPs and one of the things you highlighted was related to the incident in Lahad Datu, where you mentioned, caused the displacement of a lot of people. To be objective about it, I think it should be the reverse. I cannot, I think, describe the Lahad Datu incident as the cause of the displacement, because I don't know where the displacement is from - your area or the displacement from Sabah. That is something which you need to clarify. Because I don't think that it was the intention of the government of Malaysia, at all, having the problem of all these displaced people.

Thirdly, thank you so much, also to Ms. Pichaikul, for your presentation on the situation in Thailand, especially relating to the Southern Thailand conflict. On this point, I just want to refer to the interesting point made by the Ambassador of Thailand when he mentioned that the conflict in Southern Thailand is a problem between Malaysia and Thailand. This is what you mentioned just now. I think I would put this in the proper perspective, that it is not a problem between Malaysia and Thailand. It is an internal problem of Thailand. Of course, we have a lot of Southern Thais coming into Malaysia due the situation existing in Southern Thailand. As admitted by the Ambassador himself, it is an internal problem of Thailand; a problem that has nothing to do with Malaysia.

We are facilitating in the peace process with the view of helping the aggrieved parties as well as the Thai government. It was done at the request of the participants of the process with the consent of the Thai government. We certainly hope that our efforts to that end will be fruitful, because we want to avoid this kind of prolonged situation that will bring more difficulties on both Malaysia and Thailand. I come from a state that is at the border of Thailand and Malaysia and I know very well the situation. I just want to put this in perspective, so as to have those present here understand the reality of what is happening in Thailand. I think, the presentation by Ms. Pichaikul have put these problems in wide perspective; and, I think, the Ambassador has given a lot of inputs on how progress is being made. As I said, from my perspective as a representative of Malaysia, we want to see this issue resolved as quickly as possible.

One point that you have not been able to mention is related to rebuilding and restoring Buddhist and Muslim relations. This also was mentioned that there are no problems in the relationship between Buddhists and Muslims, but I would just like to know what civil society organizations are doing to achieve this. I think this is very important as one of the aspects that will help to reduce the tension and eventually help to create the trust we are trying to achieve in the talks that we have conducted between the Southern Thai people and Thai government. Maybe you can share some thought on this. Thank you so much, Madame Moderator.

## **AMBASSADOR KULKUMUT SINGHARA NA AYUDHAYA**

Excuse me please. I'm very sorry that you misunderstand my explanation. In fact, it is a problem of my country, but your country has given a hand to help us, as facilitator, so that's why I explained that it is a problem where the Thai government and Malaysian government try to support and help each other. I'm very sorry that I made you totally misunderstand my explanation. Thank you.

## **ARMM EXECUTIVE SECRETARY LAISA ALAMIA**

Thank you very much. I would just like to respond to His Excellency's comment with respect to the deportees coming from Sabah. With all my deepest respect, I did not intend to put any blame on any government, whether it's the Malaysian government or the Philippine government, on the issue of the deportation of Filipinos, particularly Moros from Sabah. Just to give a context, at the time that the Lahad Datu incident occurred, it was actually the Moro Sultanate Royal Army who went to Lahad Datu in Sabah and the Government of Malaysia responded to the occurrence. At that time, I was still with the Regional Human Rights Commission (RHRC) and I was in Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, where I witnessed waves and waves of people coming from Sabah because of that. There was a question with respect to what you call the people. Of course, they were Filipinos; they had to be considered as Filipinos. They were not deportees, in the legal sense of it, unlike the current situation, where Filipinos with no legal documents in Sabah are, of course, deported because they stayed there without any legal documents. There was a debate as to what to call those displaced persons who got out of Sabah, they were not deported but they got out of Sabah as a result of clashes involving the Moro Sultanate Royal Army, to which the Malaysian government responded. So the best nomenclature for the Filipinos who went out of Sabah was actually displaced persons. They were not internally displaced persons, but also considered as evacuees. In the local parlance, they were called *Halaws*. It's not because of the Malaysian Government; it's also not because of the Philippine Government. It was a situation that occurred because of the stand-off that occurred because of the presence of the Royal Sultanate Army which caused a lot of problems on our side, the ARMM, because there were waves and waves of people in boats going to Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan and Zamboanga. At that time, the local government units (LGUs) in these three provinces and one city were not able to respond immediately and appropriately, and so, they were not able to provide the services that were needed because of the number of people who were affected.

## **AMBASSADOR LATSAMY KEOMANY**

Thank you, Madam Chair. Anyhow, let me also commend the excellent presentations made by four (4) excellent women. The presentations were so informative that I, myself, learned a lot from the presentations. My congratulations also to Atty. Alamia for your appointment as the first-ever woman Executive Secretary of your organization.

I have one comment and one question. The first comment is on the post-conflict response to the plight of women and children. These are very multi-faceted kinds of activities and programs, and therefore, need concerted efforts, programs and activities including in the areas of political security, economic and social-cultural. This is highlighted in all your presentations.

My question to you, Madam Ruengrawee Pichaikul, as senior program coordinator for Thailand and Lao PDR of The Asia Foundation. Perhaps you can also report on the programs and activities that are carried out in Lao PDR and the challenges as well as future prospects in fighting and solving this kind of problem of women and children. Thank you, Madam Chair.

## **MS. RUENGRAWEE PICHAIKUL**

Thank you very much. Actually, it has been many years since my involvement in programs to promote the role of women and improve the status of women in Laos, especially in the program to stop and reduce trafficking in women and children. Laos is the sending country and Thailand is the transit, and sometimes, receiving country, so we promoted a bilateral program and also provided technical training to help the Lao Government to create laws against trafficking and domestic violence. That was part of my job during that time.

Laos is now so advanced. Your country passed all the laws needed to protect the rights of women and created the national machinery for the advancement of women. I have to admire the Lao Women's Union who has been the leader of the programs related to the protection of women. For Thailand, we would like to look at you as the role model to have a machinery like that. In Thailand, we have the Commission on Gender Equality, that kind of machinery is also gaining ground in other countries.

For challenges, I think, so far, because you have a very diverse country, very beautiful but, at the same time, there is difficulty in implementing projects. I remember that when we supported legal education, we had to translate it into so many languages, because there is the Lao highland, Lao lowland - so many languages, so many cultures. Then, there is the

use of media tools and information and communication technology (ICT). Right now, people have access to TV and radio, so that's very helpful.

I cannot say much right now because I've been away for a long time. What I'm proud of most is that, we were the first one to establish women and children desks in Lao and right now this has expanded to other provinces. You have already done a good job. Just increase efforts and I look forward to working with you in the future, as well.

#### **UNDERSECRETARY MARIA CLEOFE GETTIE C. SANDOVAL**

Thank you very much. Certainly, this symposium is an opportunity for all of us to learn from each other and to share our experiences so that these practices can actually cross our borders and, of course, be implemented locally in our countries. Are there any more interventions or comments?

#### **MS. LILY SAVITRI**

Thank you Madam Moderator. I just would like to ask Dr. Endah about Timor Leste. You have provided a comprehensive presentation regarding women and gender mainstreaming, but I would like to ask regarding the land problem. The last time I was there in 2011-2013, land regulation was not implemented yet. It could be a source of conflict in the future if it is not resolved. I would just like to know the developments on that.

#### **DR. ENDAH AGUSTIANA**

Thank you very much. It is a very good question but also very difficult to answer. Sorry. Timor Leste has included land reform in the national plan 2012-2017. It is one of their priorities and it is also included in their socio-economic plan. They want to make sure that reforms on this would not bring any conflict with the owners of the land. For example, I was involved, as well, in Timor Leste, with the Asian Development Bank, on rural reconstruction and rehabilitation of roads. It was so complicated. It affected the land entitlements of men and women. It needed to be assessed very carefully. It was always assumed that land would be titled to men, but this needs to be looked at from a gender perspective. This is my understanding, so far. I was also an adviser of the Ministry of Agriculture where they are tackling this and I think they have been able to settle the problem.

**UNDERSECRETARY MARIA CLEOFE GETTIE C. SANDOVAL**

Thank you very much, Dr. Endah. At this point, you have heard from our four (4) formidable speakers, the sharing of programs that are present in conflict as well as post-conflict environments. Necessarily, these programs have their own share of achievements and challenges. The design and implementation call for, as has been mentioned, a collaboration of governments, civil society, international community. These problems are multi-faceted and concerted efforts that include multi-disciplinary responses and approaches are needed.

The challenges include implementation and institutionalization of these programs so that the problems are resolved. On that note, I think we had a very rich fruitful discussion this morning and I would like to thank again our panel of speakers, as well as everyone who participated and listened.



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**CONCLUSIONS,  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
AND CLOSING REMARKS**





**Ambassador Elizabeth P. Buensuceso**  
AIPR Governing Council Member  
Philippine Permanent Representative to ASEAN

I've been strictly instructed by the secretariat to finish by at least 12:30 to 12:45 p.m. because of the tour, so I will do away with what I prepared of the summary and will just mention a few points. I will also do away with calling one by one each of you. If there are any other recommendations that we missed, can you just please email to us so that we can include them in the final report.

In the past two days, we've had very fruitful and enriching discussions. If you remember, we were ushered in by an amateur choir that set the mood for our discussion. We've had inspirational messages from the Minister of Social Welfare and Development of the Philippines, conveyed to us by her Assistant Secretary. We also listened to the Undersecretary of the Philippines for Policy, Evan Garcia and the Chair of AIPR, Dato Hasnudin, and from the Ambassador of Norway, Stig Traavik and Ambassador Yvonne Baumann of Switzerland. We heard speakers from Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar, UN Women and the Philippines, providing us with valuable materials and analysis on the specific topics presented. And also including Timor Leste, I admired Endah Agustiana for including the topic so that she will not repeat what was said of the case of Aceh.

Here I have the summary of what we have discussed. Here are some conclusions and lessons that we take away from this Symposium:

- 1) Conflict, primarily war, and post-conflict situations affect women and children in a unique and different way compared to other sectors of their communities, including men.
- 2) There are parallelisms to the experiences of ASEAN women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations in a way that present threats to their security, affect their health, education, livelihood, cultural, religious practices and general well-being. We've heard how situations where women and children are unique but similar in various settings in the ASEAN Region. We've heard about exposure to sexual violations and, even, loss of identity, etc.
- 3) Internal displacement of persons due to conflict remains a major concern in countries of the region.
- 4) While there are available studies by the UN, particularly UN Women, there is a need for reliable gender-aggregated data and researches on issues relating to conflict and their effects on stakeholders, such as women and children in the region.

- 5) Another conclusion which I will always remember as part of AIPR is that children and women play an important role in peace processes and other interventions in conflict and post-conflict situations, since they bring with them unique perspectives and experiences. Involving them in all mechanisms, interventions and instruments to help people and communities affected by conflict would help ensure addressing their specific needs in a more targeted fashion.
- 6) Women and children are important actors and stakeholders in peacebuilding. They must be given appropriate venues to participate in processes and programs to alleviate their plight, such as those implemented at the community level and help ensure inclusive and sustainable peace.
- 7) Solving problems requires addressing root causes. New ideas and innovation will naturally encounter initial resistance in light of deep-seated political culture, societal views and traditional cultural and religious practices, for example, property ownership rights of women and children, land titling, means of livelihood, etc. Indeed, even in the last session, when they were presenting institutions, mechanisms and legislation already introduced by governments and civil society, we're still faced with several challenges. And so, therefore, we need to continuously work on learning from each other best practices in addressing these root causes and how to make those mechanisms work and become sustainable.
- 8) Prevention of conflict is crucial in order to protect and promote the welfare of women and children. That , at the end of the day, is the best solution to all our problems. If there is no more conflict, we will not meet here anymore. There is a need for programs to prevent conflict and spare women and children from enduring the outcomes of conflict.
- 9) Humanitarian intervention in conflict situations, including in post-disaster situations, must be developed and implemented in a holistic manner. As in the case of Aceh, Indonesia, and, I would like to really express my great thanks to Professor Mangkusubroto, for sharing with us his wisdom and experience, and even his daring to go beyond his mandate to address the challenges at hand and in his participation in this workshop. The post-tsunami reconstruction and rehabilitation necessitated addressing the conflict involving decades-old separatist movements and the government to secure peace in the area and pave the way for reconstruction and development.
- 10) Empowering women involves not just capacitating women but, more importantly, requiring interventions targeted at influencing cultural

norms, practices and belief systems of the society at large. Related activities and programs on conflict resolution and peace-building, such as community trainings and fora, may integrate the cultural context in resolving conflicts.

- 11) Men are equal stakeholders in promoting women's rights. That is why you can see here a good balance of participants from the male sector. Getting the buy-in and support of men is critical in eliminating gender-related issues, such as violence against women as well as in mainstreaming women's participation.
- 12) There is a need for greater engagement of ASEAN Member States governments with civil society in order to sustain progress in addressing the needs of women and children in conflict situations.

These are just the preliminary conclusions and summary that we have been able to scramble on early this morning. The moderator for the last session has very ably summarized her session; I will not touch on that anymore. I hope you still remember her summary.

I would like to now present the recommendations that we have heard so far, and as I mentioned earlier I will not call anymore for new interventions. I hope we have covered them, but if you have recommendations that are not reflected here, please email us, so that when we distribute the report of this Symposium, you will have a complete picture:

First recommendation is to:

- a. Undertake greater efforts in implementing the UNSCR 1325, particularly through the development and implementation of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) National Action Plans;
- b. Promote the use of gender perspectives in addressing the humanitarian needs of women and children in conflict situations;
- c. Support the development of reliable gender-aggregated data and research on issues relating to conflict and their effects on stakeholders, such as women and children. Some of the presentors told us that, yes, they have preliminary data, but we need more scientific and more complete data so that we can respond more appropriately to the challenges;
- d. Promote equal participation of women and other stakeholders, including men, in conflict-resolution and conflict-prevention processes;
- e. Continue undertaking AIPR activities (such as symposia and workshops) to increase knowledge base in ASEAN with the view of supporting the expansion of the role of women in conflict

resolution and peace processes. ASEAN may continue to share and compile the experiences and actions of Member States' national governments to help address the needs of women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations.

For those who are not yet familiar with this gathering, the AIPR is a baby institution; we have not been fully operationalized yet, but because of the challenges and urgency to act, Member States have undertaken initiatives such as this one. We hope that when we become fully operational, with an Executive Director, thanks to the Government of Indonesia who will help us set up the nerve center of AIPR, we will be able to really function full time.

- f. For ASEAN to continue efforts at mainstreaming gender issues in ASEAN.
- g. For ASEAN to support the development of preventive measures in conflict. Examples of preventive measures include developing a culture of peace and promoting moderation in the region. Programs and activities could be undertaken to promote tolerance and moderation. These can be implemented through activities in various sectors under all the ASEAN community pillars, such as education, culture, human rights, and political-security pillars. A holistic approach to include all the pillars of ASEAN, particularly as they relate to the ASEAN Vision 2025.
- h. Efforts should be undertaken by the Member States in aligning their national laws and policies, specifically those that have bearing on women and children's rights and participation with ASEAN/ regional as well as UN/ international commitments. Member States must make efforts in providing corresponding resource and budget support at the national level.
- i. My personal recommendation to all these recommendations is that, with the permission of our next AIPR Governing Council Chair, Ambassador Keomany Latsamy of Laos, I would like us, AIPR, to farm out to the different sectoral bodies of ASEAN, the respective recommendations that we have gathered today and yesterday, for them to craft specific activities and programs and include them in their plans of action. For example, those that relate to the Senior Officials and Ministers on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWAD), the specific recommendations for the protection and provision of assistance for children and women. That should be undertaken by that specific ASEAN body.

After all, most of the members of AIPR are also members of the Committee on Permanent Representatives, whose mandate it is to oversee the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. So what a beautiful combination for AIPR and CPR to see the

fruition of our efforts, farmed out and implemented by the specific ASEAN regional mechanism.

So that concludes my presentation on what we've been discussing, so far. It's an inadequate summary, but I don't have the time to read my longer summary, which is 20 pages. We will distribute these to you in due time, after we have corrected the composition, grammar, etc.

But right now, let me just thank all of you who have participated very actively. Some participants were telling me that there is a very good balance in this discussion, We were very honest in presenting the challenges and problems facing women and children in conflict; but at the same time, the perspectives of everybody were already included in the presentations and the discussions. This would not have happened without your active participation. Around this hall, we have participants from government, from civil society, and even, if you notice yesterday, we have representatives from the student sector. I invited six universities, four of them responded, even if they are from UP and Ateneo, so far away, they have come to listen. Some of them are majoring in Women Studies and these are the future players in the resolution of conflict and in addressing the problems brought about by armed conflict.

So, I would like to thank all of you for your active participation. Thank you for being with us in Tagaytay and we hope that AIPR will continue to look at issues, such as these and other aspects of peace and reconciliation in the future

I would now like to turn over the microphone to the emcee. Sorry I cannot listen to your recommendations, but please, email us. I respond to all emails, including scam mails.



**H.E. Dato' Hasnuddin Hamzah**  
Chair of the AIPR Governing Council and  
Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN

Excellencies, distinguished speakers, moderators, ladies and gentlemen.

I will be very short because I fully agree with what has been presented by Ambassador Elizabeth; and thank you so much for the extensive summary and compilation of recommendations, though you say that you still have a 20-page recommendations document that will be presented later on, but I think what you presented just now captured largely the essence of our deliberations over the two days, which I believe was most enriching and constructive. I think that what we have put together, we have to map the way forward for AIPR to discuss this important issue of the plight of women and children in conflict situations and post-conflict situations.

Though we still have a long way to go, provided we remain steadfast, I think we should be able to operationalize those recommendations. The outcomes of our Symposium, I think, reflect very much that we are on the right trajectory; and we should be able to assist those who are in need of expertise, those who are in need of knowledge and assistance, to deal with these problems.

It may not be that visible in our part of the world, but we do have problems as presented by speakers during the Symposium.

The presentations made, I believe, very much provided the perspective of the situations that we are facing in this region, the presentations made, on one hand, by government representatives and on the other hand, by representatives of civil society organizations have brought us to understand the totality of the problems, issues and what needs to be done.

Once we understand those plethora of issues and challenges regarding the subject at hand, we should be able to provide the important contribution, say from the AIPR's perspective, to assist in establishing relevant mechanisms and instruments to safeguard and ensure the betterment and livelihood of vulnerable peoples in times of conflict and post-conflict situations.

More importantly, I hope all these recommendations, as suggested by Ambassador Elizabeth, will be channeled appropriately to further strengthen existing policies and develop new policies, both at the national level as well as the regional level. As we also noticed during the presentations, from some of the speakers, there are indeed already

policies and measures that have been undertaken at the national and local levels. As pointed out by Ambassador Elizabeth Buensuceso, these recommendations will have to be consolidated to have much more strengthened mechanisms and policies to deal with these.

I think the momentum resulting from the Symposium should be continued and yesterday, we note that there are already interested countries who want to further this good cause, especially, Cambodia and Myanmar, that want to further continue the deliberation and discussion on this issue.

As I think this would have to increase the awareness of this issue at all levels in ASEAN. I believe the awareness will help not only government and CSOs but also government and other interested parties from outside to look at us objectively in regard to how best they should be able to assist ASEAN on these important issues.

For the next AIPR chair, Ambassador Keomany Latsamy, you have a big task, AIPR should incorporate all aspects relating to this complex issue that we have earlier discussed in relation to the work of the AIPR. I'm sure that with all the assistance and contribution from all countries, we should be able to accomplish this important task.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion let me thank and congratulate all speakers and moderators, and the respective delegations for your cooperation and support, which undoubtedly, as Ambassador Elizabeth Buensuceso said, participated actively that have made, to me, this Symposium a great success.

Also, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who are working behind the scenes -- the officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs and other agencies, including members of the Philippine Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta. Tagaytay City is beautiful and while, I cannot speak for the others, but I really enjoyed my stay here though it was a short one.

The Symposium has enabled us to network with people, to understand the issue we are discussing. It has also been most educational for me, as well.

Also, not to forget, my sincere gratitude to the Governments of the Philippines, Norway and Switzerland for all your contribution and assistance in organizing this important event. Please join me in giving a round of applause to all of them.

That basically concludes my closing remarks. I wish you all the very best and have a safe journey home. To those who celebrate Christmas, Merry

Christmas and *Manigong bagong taon sa inyong lahat, mga kaibigan ko!*  
*Maraming Salamat!*

Hopefully we will be able to see each other again, somewhere, somehow. As Ambassador Elizabeth said, the whole report will be published and distributed accordingly to each and every participant. Thank you, once again.





**ANNEX I**

**SUMMARY REPORT OF THE AIPR SYMPOSIUM  
ON THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN  
IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS**





## **Summary Report of the AIPR Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations, Tagaytay City, the Philippines, 8-9 December 2015**

### **Introduction**

1. The ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) Symposium on the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations was held on 8-9 December 2015 at Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City, the Philippines. It was organized by the Philippine Permanent Mission to ASEAN with the support of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) of the Republic of the Philippines and the Philippines' ASEAN National Secretariat.
2. The objectives of the Workshop are: 1) To surface the situation of women and children in conflict situations, exposing various ways they are exploited in such conditions; 2) To look closely at the recruitment by religious extremists of children and women as future terrorists and society destabilizers; 3) To explore the role of women and children as peacebuilders and peacekeepers; 4) To discuss existing domestic and regional initiatives and mechanisms, as well as to share best practices and models, to help protect and promote the welfare of women and children in conflict situations; 5) To formulate policy recommendations to address the problems arising from the exploitation of women and children in conflict situations.
3. The symposium was attended by the Members of the AIPR Governing Council and other representatives of ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Socio- Cultural Community Deputy Secretary General Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, the Ambassadors of Norway and Switzerland to ASEAN, ASEAN Secretariat officers, experts and peace practitioners from ASEAN, UN Women, representatives of a few Philippine CSOs, university students and a few Philippine officials. The List of Participants appears as ANNEX 1.

### **Opening Session**

4. In his welcome remarks, Hon. Undersecretary Evan P. Garcia gave an overview of how women and children are affected by conflict differently. He cited a UN Women study, which analyzed the effect of gender equality programming on humanitarian outcomes, and stressed the need to adjust humanitarian intervention to address the special needs of women and children. He challenged the

participants to go beyond surfacing the plight of women and children in conflict situations and urged them to make full use of their policy-making duties to help alleviate their conditions. He underlined the importance of making a difference in the lives of these marginalized sectors, starting in the ASEAN region.

5. The Chairman of the AIPR Governing Council and Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to ASEAN, H.E. Dato' Hasnudin Hamzah, underscored the need to uphold the welfare of children, who are our future. In his message, he emphasized that children should be given the highest priority in the process of providing support to those facing difficult situations. He called women and children as great treasures and underlined that protecting them would mean protecting the world's future. He stressed that convening the symposium is timely and noted that while ASEAN has a long way to go in protecting vulnerable groups, there is a need to steadfastly address the needs of women and children. He underscored the importance of ASEAN in addressing the issue and urged ASEAN to ensure that the vulnerable groups are not sidelined through the establishment of mechanisms that would protect their rights. He noted that these groups equally take part, with the rest of the population, in the economic, political and social spheres in the region as it moves towards becoming a community.
6. Norway, which along with Switzerland, supported the symposium, noted the urgency to discuss the issue given the situation in the Middle East and the rise of the extremist group Daesh or the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). H.E. Stig Ingemar Traavik stressed that Norway is not supporting the activity merely out of humanitarian concern but because it is legally obliged as most ASEAN Member States are, being a signatory to relevant international legal instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. He shared his experience during his posting in Afghanistan where he witnessed first-hand the coming together of various groups, such as UN agencies, foreign governments, CSOs and local stakeholders to successfully handle a humanitarian crisis involving a nomadic community in the country. He emphasized the importance of holding the symposium as a follow-up activity to the AIPR Workshop on Strengthening Women's Participation in Peace Processes and Conflict Prevention held in Cebu City. He noted the workshop's conclusion on the importance of women's involvement in peace processes. He added that the ongoing symposium shows the need to handle conflict situations together with all stakeholders.

7. H.E. Yvonne Baumann of Switzerland underscored that the commitment to protect vulnerable groups is a priority of her country's foreign policy. Its support for peace processes and the protection of women in conflict and post-conflict situations reflects the importance it attaches to gender equality and protection of women and children. She noted that women and gender-based violence has caught the attention of the international community. She also noted that 2015 marks the 15th anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was the first UN SC resolution to incorporate gender perspective into peace and security matters. She also stressed that ASEAN and Switzerland's relations are based on long-standing mutual trust and respect and increasing fruitful economic cooperation. She emphasized ASEAN's pivotal role in addressing regional issues and fostering prosperity, peace and stability in the region, which is also important to the world.
8. The message of Hon. Corazon Soliman, Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), was read by DSWD Assistant Secretary Noel Macalalad. She especially noted that the symposium is an eye-opener on the perspective of women and children as movers of peace and who are not to be seen only as victims. Her message detailed the programs of the Philippine Government in protecting the welfare of women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations. The Philippine Government has been able to provide appropriate facilities for women through DSWD-run centers nationwide, which respond to the needs of women and children, including victims of conflict. Services provided to them include counselling and rehabilitation facilities and livelihood and education opportunities.
9. A lively and meaningful rendition of songs about peace and the vibrant capital city of the Philippines, by Faith Family Foundation, preceded the Opening Session.
10. The programme of the symposium appears as ANNEX 2.

## **Session 2: Surfacing the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations**

11. In Session 2, *Surfacing the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations*, participants were able to discuss the various situations in which women and children find themselves during conflict. The session, which was moderated by Hon. Luis T. Cruz, former Director-General of the Philippines' ASEAN National Secretariat, benefited from the regional and national perspectives on the subject

shared by experts and practitioners in the region. The pre-recorded video message of Dr. Jean D' Cunha, who heads UN Women in Myanmar, presented the effects of conflict on women and girls with a particular focus on Myanmar. Dr. D'Cunha stressed that conflict, including war, affects women, men, girls and boys in different ways. Her presentation was guided by the most recent research of UN Women titled, "Why Gender Matters in Conflict and Peace: Perspectives from Mon and Kayin States." The study advocates for greater participation of Mon and Karen women in peace processes and discusses their contributions to peacebuilding. The study highlights the women's use of creative strategies to mitigate the impact of conflict despite being treated as victims of conflict.

12. Attorney Marylin Pintor of the Commission of Human Rights of the Philippines explained the mandate of the Commission in the promotion and protection of human rights in the country. She exposed the effects of conflict on women and children, including but not limited to the following: threats to personal safety and health, exposure to sexual harassment, displacement and restriction of freedom of movement, loss of sources of livelihood, damage to houses and personal properties, such as documents, disruption of education and limitations on practice of religious and cultural traditions.
13. Prof. Javate De Dios' presentation, which was delivered by Dr. Jean Franco of the non-government organization Women and Gender Institute (WAGI), presented stories and narratives of women survivors of conflict who used their own concept of women's security and safety. She spoke about the experiences of women in armed conflicts in Southern Philippines, which included being caught in the middle of clan wars as well as secessionist-related conflict. In gist, her presentation focused on the perspective that "women (in the area) are used to war." Despite enduring the negative effects of conflict, women are able to go beyond their tragic experiences and take the lead in crisis management for themselves and their children. She concluded that women are not only victims but active agents of peacebuilding processes.
14. Ms. Hanny Cueva Beteta of UN Women gave a snapshot of the varying impacts of conflict on women, children and men in Southeast Asia. She discussed the key findings of the Global Study on the Implementation of UN Resolution 1325 (on Women Peace and Security), including the following: implementing "prevention than cure" measures and the need to allocate resources towards peacekeeping with a gender equality component are important in alleviating the effects of conflict on women and children; women's

engagement in peace and security is key to ensuring effectiveness of peacekeeping and conflict resolution programs; national-led approaches to Women Peace and Security and their effective implementation, including the development of National Action Plans of UNSCR 1325, are crucial in implementing UNSCR 1325.

### **Session 3: Women and Children as Active Participants in Conflict Resolution and the Peace Process**

15. In Session 3: *Women and Children as Active Participants in Conflict Resolution and the Peace Process*, the unique roles of women and children in working towards conflict resolution and improving their own plight during conflict and post-conflict situations were discussed.
16. Ms. Thavory Huot, Executive Director of non-government organization Khmer Ahimsa, Cambodia, presented how women and children have actively participated in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in Cambodia. She shared her experiences and roles, both as a girl and a woman, when Cambodia was in the cusp of heightened violence during the Khmer Rouge regime. She discussed how socio-cultural factors, like the observance of traditional patriarchal practices and norms, and belief in societal stereotypes, have contributed to further marginalization of women, which render them vulnerable. She recalled how she and other Cambodian women have persevered and tried to participate in the prevention and resolution of conflict in their community. In the course of her involvement in various non-government organizations, she has noted that capacitating women at the grassroots level in leading peace and social development programs has a multiplier effect. She added that this contributes to the advancement of peace and reconciliation advocacy in the region.
17. Prof. Dr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, Chairman of the School of Advisory Council of the School of Business and Management Institut Teknologi, Bandung, Indonesia and former Head of the Aceh-Nias Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR) from 2005 to 2009, presented the unique perspectives that women have brought into the reconstruction of Aceh after the 2004 tsunami. These included their influence in rebuilding their houses and encouraging their menfolk and communities to closely participate in the reconstruction process. He noted that the Acehese experience was trailblazing in many counts, especially with regard to the direct participation of women in the reconstruction of the traditionally male-dominated communities of Aceh. He shared breakthroughs

in the reconstruction process, including the involvement of women in discussions and decision on land ownership. He also noted the emphasis on prioritizing the welfare of children, as seen in the experience of an orphan boy who was given a land entitled to him and not to his elder relatives. Prof. Mangkusubroto delved into the experience of Aceh and Nias, which was further complicated by the 25-year armed conflict involving rebels, including the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM) in Aceh. According to Prof. Mangkusubroto, introducing innovative ways was important in addressing the problem as the conflict was foreseen to affect the reconstruction process.

18. During the Open Forum, ASEAN Deputy Secretary General for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, H.E. Vongthep Arthakaivalvatee, emphasized that ASEAN needs to have an integrated approach in addressing the interlinked issues of human rights, strengthening the rule of law and mainstreaming gender issues, education and legal frameworks in peace building. He noted that while ASEAN is forging ahead on its 2025 agenda, inter-ASEAN-pillar linkages (ASEAN Political Security Community, ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community) should be emphasized in building more integrated activities in the area.
19. Session 3 Moderator H.E. Rosario Manalo expressed the hope that Prof. Mangkusubroto would be able to contribute to the Thematic Study on Protecting the Rights of Women in Natural Disaster Situations, which will be implemented by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). She noted that the Acehnese experience draws parallel in so many ways with the Philippine experience on Typhoon Haiyan in 2013. She added that the empowerment of women to become entrepreneurs, health professionals, educators, and community development workers is critical in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of any community rebuilding program.
20. Ms. Daw Mary Tawm KD, the Co-Founder and Coordinator of Wunpawng Ninghtoi, a Kachin humanitarian non-government organization in Myanmar, shared the experience of internally displaced ethnic groups in Kachin and Northern Shan States and how NGOs are trying their best to address the needs of affected communities, primarily women and children. To date, there are 120,000 IDPs from 24,000 households in 168 camps in Kachin and Northern Shan States. She also shared that given this context, challenges, such as militarization, human trafficking and loss of livelihood, are met in finalizing and implementing concluded peace

agreements with the government. KD highlighted how conflicts and protracted displacement of people impact negatively on education and social development of women and children. She stressed that these effects of conflict heighten the vulnerability of women to sexual abuse and exploitation. Such ground realities press the need for the inclusion and participation of women in peace processes as a fundamental principle toward ensuring the viability and durability of peace.

21. Ms. Ros Sopheap, Executive Director of NGO Gender and Development for Cambodia, discussed how gender equality could be integrated in peace and reconciliation efforts. She related how a number of Cambodian women in local communities are tackling their roles and the traditional roles of men step-by-step, beginning in their families. They are making efforts at challenging the societies' conventional perception of women and roles to which they are relegated to. She stressed that men too have to be involved in the resolution of conflict since their support is critical to the realization of peace processes and conflict resolution.
22. Ms. Agnes F. Lopez, President of NGO People's Advocacy for Collaboration and Empowerment (PeACE), Philippines, and a rebel returnee, shared her experience as a ranking political cadre of the Communist Party of the Philippines. She discussed the push and pull factors on why women and children are recruited by armed groups. She noted that psycho-social factors need to be taken into consideration in crafting humanitarian interventions for women and children who were once involved in conflict.

#### **Session 4: Programs and Mechanisms to Ensure Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Welfare of Women and Children during Armed Conflict and/or in Post-Conflict Situations**

23. Session 4 delved into the programs and mechanisms to ensure that the rights and welfare of women and children are protected during armed conflict and/or in post-conflict situations. Hon. Undersecretary Maria Cleofe C. Sandoval of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process moderated the session.
24. Dr. Agustiana, who serves as the Technical Lead of Capacity Building, Human Rights and Women's & Children's Rights of the ASEAN-U.S. PROGRESS(ASEAN-U.S. Partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security) program, discussed the experience of Timor Leste in incorporating in its legislation, primarily its Constitution, the implementation of the

UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. In particular, she noted the efforts at enhancing women's leadership and gender equality in the promotion of sustainable peace and establishment of democratic governance in post-conflict Timor Leste. She highlighted the role and achievements of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus in terms of empowering women to become significant contributors to the society. This was implemented through the passage of relevant legislations, increasing awareness on gender empowerment, and strengthening collaboration among the government, parliament and civil society groups.

25. Ms. Ruengrawee Pichaikul, the Asia Foundation's Senior Program Coordinator in Thailand and Lao PDR, shared her experience in developing programs on women's empowerment, human rights, legal and constitutional reform, local governance, legal aid programs for tsunami survivors and civic/voter education for Thailand and Lao PDR. Her presentation provided an overview of the situation and the current initiatives to address the needs of these under-represented groups.
26. Executive Secretary of the Autonomous Region Muslim Mindanao Laisa Alamia's presentation focused on the context of conflict in Southern Philippines and the challenges encountered by the population as well as the Government in keeping the peace in the region. The struggle of the Bangsamoro people and its effect on women and children were part of her presentation. The Philippine Government's legislations and actions to address these challenges were also mentioned in her presentation.
27. Ms. Alpha Larga, who heads the Planning Division of the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) of the Philippines, presented the CWC's initiatives for children in situations of armed conflict, with emphasis on facilitating the adoption and implementation of laws for this purpose. She underscored the importance of passing necessary legislations in protecting children in conflict, and the significant role of relevant government agencies in protecting the welfare of these children. One of her organization's main thrusts is the passage of the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict (CSAC) Bill. She also identified that the localization of the Monitoring, Reporting and Response System (MRRS) structure, including the establishment of the MRRS hotline, will help facilitate policymakers' role in the promotion and protection of children from grave child rights violation.
28. In the Open Forum, as in previous Open Fora in previous sessions of the symposium, AMS, as well as the resource speakers, were able

to update the meeting on efforts of respective AMS' Governments in addressing the conflict situations and internal challenges in their countries. Malaysia underscored the importance of participation of civil society in supporting efforts of conflict resolution in the areas. Malaysia and Indonesia also noted the importance of Dr. Agustiana's assistance in Timor Leste in enhancing women's leadership and gender equality, as well as developing legislation to support these. Malaysia noted that there may be a need to extract information and highlight lessons from the experience of Timor Leste. Ms. Pichaikul noted Lao PDR's achievements in passing legislation to protect the rights of women.

### **Conclusions, Recommendations and Closing Remarks**

29. The Closing Session was led by H.E. Elizabeth P. Buensuceso, the Philippine Representative to the AIPR Governing Council and Permanent Representative of the Philippines to ASEAN.
30. H.E. Buensuceso summarized the conclusions drawn from the discussions in the symposium:
  - a. Conflict, primarily war, and post-conflict situations affect women and children in different ways compared to the other sectors of the communities, including men.
  - b. There are parallelisms to the experiences of ASEAN women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations in terms of the increased threats to their security, ill effects on their health, education, livelihood, cultural, religious practices and general well-being.
  - c. Internal displacement of persons due to conflict remains a major concern in countries of the region.
  - d. While there are available studies by the UN on the subject matter, particularly UN Women, there is a need for reliable gender-aggregated data and researches on issues relating to conflict and their effects on stakeholders, such as women and children in the region.
  - e. Women and children play an important role in peace processes since they bring with them unique perspectives and experiences. Involving them would help ensure addressing their specific needs in a more targeted fashion.

- f. Women and children are important actors and stakeholders in peacebuilding. They must be given appropriate venues to participate in processes and programs to alleviate their plight, such as those implemented at the community level, and help ensure inclusive and sustainable peace.
- g. Solving conflict-related problems requires addressing root causes. New ideas and innovation will naturally encounter initial resistance because of deep-seated political culture, societal views and traditional cultural and religious practices, e.g. property ownership rights of women and children, land titling, means of livelihood, etc.
- h. Prevention of conflict is crucial in order to protect and promote the welfare of women and children. There is a great need for programs to prevent conflict and spare women and children from enduring the outcomes of conflict. There is no justification for violence and terror against women and children.
- i. Humanitarian assistance in conflict situations, including in post-disaster situations, must be developed and implemented in a holistic manner, taking into account the needs of the affected country. As in the case of Aceh, Indonesia, the success of the post- tsunami reconstruction and rehabilitation necessitated addressing the conflict involving decades-old separatist movements and the government securing peace in the area to pave the way for reconstruction and development.
- j. Empowering women involves not just capacitating women but, more importantly, it requires interventions targeted at influencing cultural norms, practices and belief systems of the society at large. Related activities and programs on conflict resolution and peacebuilding, such as community trainings and fora, may integrate cultural context in the course of resolving conflicts.
- k. Men are equal stakeholders in promoting women's rights. Getting the buy-in and support of men is critical in eliminating gender-related issues, such as violence against women as well as in mainstreaming women's participation.
- l. There is a need for greater engagement of AMS' governments with members of civil society in order to sustain progress in addressing the needs of women and children in conflict situations, in particular the protection of women and children from the impact of conflict.

The moderator summarized the recommendations as follows:

- a. Undertake greater efforts at implementing UNSCR 1325, particularly through the development and implementation of Women Peace and Security National Action Plans;
- b. Promote the use of gender perspectives in addressing the humanitarian needs of women and children in conflict situations;
- c. Support the development of reliable gender-aggregated data and researches on issues relating to conflict and their effects on stakeholders, such as women and children.
- d. Promote equal participation of women and other stakeholders, including men, in conflict-resolution and conflict-prevention processes;
- e. Continue undertaking AIPR activities (such as symposia and workshops) to increase knowledge base in ASEAN with the view of supporting the expansion of the role of women in conflict resolution and peace processes. ASEAN may continue to share and compile the experiences and actions of AMS' national governments to help address the needs of women and children in conflict and post-conflict situations;
- f. For ASEAN to continue efforts at mainstreaming gender perspectives in ASEAN.
- g. For ASEAN to support the development of preventive measures to conflict, including preventive diplomacy. Examples of preventive measures, include developing a culture of peace and of rejection of violence and extremism especially directed towards women, promoting moderation and tolerance in the region through programs and activities to promote tolerance and moderation, and promoting respect for diversity. These can be implemented through activities in various sectors under all the ASEAN community pillars, such as education, culture, human rights, and political- security, among others. Inter-pillar linkages among APSC, AEC, ASCC and building integrated programs and activities are important in the implementation of ASEAN Vision 2025.
- h. Efforts should be undertaken by AMS in aligning their national laws and policies, specifically those that have bearing on women and children's rights as well as the equality of rights between women and men, and participation of ASEAN in regional as

well as UN/ international commitments. AMS must endeavor to provide corresponding resource and budget support at the national level.

31. In closing, H.E. Data' Hasnudin Hamzah thanked the Government of the Philippines for leading the conduct of the symposium, and relevant officials, Norway and Switzerland for their valuable support to the project and participants who contributed to the discussions of the topic at hand. He urged ASEAN to do more in the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children, especially those in conflict situations.



**ANNEX II**

**LIST OF SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS**





## SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS

### OPENING SESSION

#### 1. HON. CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN

**Secretary Soliman** is the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) of the Philippines since 2010. She held the same Cabinet position from 2001 to 2005. The Secretary is a social development professional with over 30 years of experience as a leader in Philippine civil society and practitioner in community organizing and people empowerment.

As head of DSWD, Soliman spearheads projects for poverty reduction and social protection. She is the National Project Director for both the KALAHI CIDSS-NCDDP (*Kapit Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan* - Comprehensive Integrated Delivery of Social Services – National Community-Driven Development Program) and the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* program, which invests in the health and education of Filipino families. She has led projects and programs for the International Center on Innovation Transformation and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov) in areas of social protection and empowerment of the people.

She graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work from the University of the Philippines, placing 5th at the National Board Exams for Social Workers in 1974. She is also a graduate of the Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University.

#### 2. HON. EVAN P. GARCIA

**Mr. Evan P. Garcia** is currently the Undersecretary for Policy of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines and Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) Leader of the Philippines in various fora, including ASEAN. Before assuming his current position, Undersecretary Garcia was the Permanent Representative and Ambassador of the Philippines to the United Nations in Geneva.

He also served at the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo and as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Philippine Embassy in Washington D.C.

Undersecretary Garcia earned a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service, *magna cum laude*, from University of the Philippines (Diliman) and

License in International Relations and Political Science from the Graduate Institute for International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland.

### 3. H.E. Dato' Hasnudin Hamzah

**Mr. Dato' Hasnudin Hamzah** is the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to ASEAN and is the Chairman of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to ASEAN as well as the Governing Council of the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) for 2015.

He graduated from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur in 1982 and obtained a Master's Degree at the National University of Singapore in 1997. Ambassador Hasnudin Hamzah joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia in 1982 and was assigned at the Malaysian Embassy in Manila, the Philippines (1988-1992); High Commission of Malaysia in Singapore (1994-1998); and Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland as Deputy Permanent Representative and Consul-General of Malaysia to Switzerland (1998-2001). He was the Undersecretary for the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Division of the Malaysian Foreign Ministry and Special Officer to the Foreign Minister.

Prior to the current assignment, he was the High Commissioner of Malaysia to New Zealand (2009-2011) and Ambassador to Jordan and concurrently accredited to Iraq (2006-2008).

### 4. H.E. STIG INGEMAR TRAAVIK

**Mr. Stig Ingemar Traavik** is the Ambassador of Norway to Indonesia, Timor Leste, and ASEAN. He holds a Bachelor's degree in History and a Master's degree in Political Science from the University of Oslo. His career in the Norwegian Foreign Ministry began as an Executive Officer for the Ministry's Political Department in 1994. He became a Foreign Service Trainee in 1996 and got his first foreign assignment as Second Secretary at the Norwegian Embassy in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

His other foreign assignments include the Norwegian Delegation to the UN and WTO in Geneva, Switzerland, the Norwegian Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan and the Norwegian Refugee Council as Resident Representative in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Ambassador Traavik is a 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan black belt in Judo, and represented Norway in Judo at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. He is a six time Judo champion in Norway between 1987 and 1996, and is a Bronze

medallist in the World Judo Championships for Veterans in 2011. He is married to Noor Sabah Nael Traavik and they have four children.

## **5. H.E. DR. YVONNE BAUMANN**

**Ms. Yvonne Baumann** is the Ambassador of Switzerland to Indonesia and ASEAN. She was born in Zurich, Switzerland. She studied History, German literature and Philosophy and holds a Doctor's degree (Dr. phil.) from the University of Zurich.

She joined the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in 1991 as a Foreign Service Officer and completed her diplomatic training in Bern and Budapest. From 1993 to 1996, she was assigned as Diplomatic Officer to the Division of Policy, Planning and Multilateral Affairs of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. From 1996 to 1999, Ms. Baumann served as Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Switzerland in Caracas, Venezuela, where she was promoted to Counsellor in 1999. From 2000 to 2002 she was a special advisor to the Swiss Foreign Minister, Federal Councillor Joseph Deiss.

In 2002 Ms. Baumann was assigned as Deputy Head of Mission to the Embassy of Switzerland in Mexico. In 2004 she was promoted to the rank of Ambassador and took on as Head of the Political Affairs Division in charge of the Americas at the Foreign Ministry in Bern. In March 2010 she became the Ambassador of Switzerland to the Republic of Chile. On 13 October 2014 she presented her Letter of Credence to H.E. Dr. H. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, accrediting her as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Indonesia. She is married to Mr. Ruben Chirino Ochoa.

## SESSION II

### **1. HON. LUIS T. CRUZ (Moderator)**

**Mr. Luis T. Cruz** was the Director-General of the ASEAN National Secretariat of the Philippines before recently retiring from the Foreign Service. He reassumed the position of Assistant Secretary for ASEAN Affairs at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) on 1 March 2014 after a six-year posting as Philippine Ambassador to the Republic of Korea. He graduated from San Carlos Seminary with a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy.

Mr. Cruz joined the Philippine Foreign Service in 1983 and served in a few Asian countries, including in the People's Republic of China (Beijing and Guangzhou) and Malaysia. His first posting was in the United Kingdom, together with his wife Ambassador Minda Cruz, who is currently the DFA Assistant Secretary for Asian and Pacific Affairs.

During his previous stint as Assistant Secretary for ASEAN Affairs from 2006 to 2008, Mr. Cruz chaired several ASEAN meetings, especially during the Philippines' ASEAN chairmanship. In August 2007, he received the *Lakandula* Achievement Award from the Office of the President and the *Gawad Mabini* Leadership Award from the DFA for his outstanding work during the Philippine chairmanship of ASEAN. In October 2013, he received the Gawad San Lorenzo Ruiz from the Hyewadong Filipino Community for embodying the spirit of Christian leadership in the Filipino diaspora in Korea.

## 2. DR. JEAN D' CUNHA

**Ms. Jean D' Cunha** is currently the Head of UN Women, Myanmar, where she has held several senior technical and management positions at regional and headquarters level. She holds a Ph.D in Sociology and a double Masters degree in Sociology and Economics. She has 35 years of academic, practitioner, senior technical and management experience in the area of development, more specifically gender and development. Her special areas of internationally recognized expertise include sexual and gender-based violence, gender and sexuality, labor migration and trafficking, gender and disasters.

She moved from academics in India and Thailand and active civil society engagement in India, the Asian region and globally to join the UNIFEM East and Southeast Asia Regional Office, Bangkok in June 2000. She has advised governments in the Asian region on gender and development and has been a consultant to a number of UN agencies, INGOs and national NGOs in Asia.

Dr. D'Cunha has participated in and presented papers at well over 150 conferences and workshops, including high-level government and UN meetings and published in India, and internationally, including the UN. She wrote consistently in the mainstream Indian Press from 1982-1996 on Gender issues, and was the recipient of a National Award for Outstanding Writing on Women's Issues, India, 1986

### 3. ATTY. MARILYN PINTOR

**Ms. Marylin M. Pintor** is the Regional Human Rights Director at the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) of the Philippines for CARAGA region. She is a lawyer and a certified public accountant by profession. She is also currently serving as the Vice-Chairperson of the Police Regional Office (PRO) -13 Regional Advisory Council.

Ms. Pintor was seconded to the Cambodian League for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights where she served as consultant for its women and children's rights projects. She is currently serving as Chairperson of the Regional Development Council - Gender and Development Coordinating Committee and a member of the steering committee of WE Act 1325 or Women Engaged in Action on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

Among other recognitions, she was honored for her commitment and invaluable service in connection with the peaceful resolution of a hostage-taking incident of 15 people from the Department of Education in 2011. She graduated *cum laude* with a Bachelor of Science in Commerce degree from the Ateneo de Davao University. She holds a Master in Public Management degree from the Development Academy of the Philippines.

### 4. PROF. AURORA JAVATE DE DIOS

**Ms. Aurora Javate De Dios** is a self-described lifelong feminist leader who combines academic excellence and advocacy for women's human rights and gender equality. She is currently the Executive Director of the Women and Gender Institute, a specialized center for feminist learning and teaching; research and training at Miriam College, in the Philippines. She is former College Dean and currently Professor in International Relations, Migration and Gender studies in the same institution. She is also currently a Co-Convener of the Women's Peace Collective (formerly Women's Peace Table) working with community-based Muslim women's groups in conflict-affected communities in Mindanao towards the passage of a gender-sensitive Bangsa Moro Basic Law.

She served as Chairman of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. At NCRFW, she lobbied for the passage of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and the Violence Against Women and their Children Act and was actively involved in the setting up of Police Women's Desks all over the country. She was elected as one of the Experts in the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, where she became Rapporteur from 1994-1998.

President Benigno Aquino III appointed her as the Philippines' Representative for Women's Rights to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), where she is actively involved in the regional promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment programs in all 10 ASEAN Member States. She was conferred the Congressional Award for Gender Equality by the Philippine Congress and one of the most outstanding Alumni award by the University of the Philippines, among other accolades.

## **5. DR. JEAN ENCINAS-FRANCO**

**Ms. Jean Franco** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science at the University of the Philippines. Prior to her work at the university, she served as a Director in the Philippine Senate's Economic Planning Office (2006-2007), a Senior Governance Specialist (1999-2006) and a Senior Legislative Staff Officer (1996-2006) in the Senate's Policy Studies Group.

Her experience in Gender and Development spans almost a decade, beginning as an editor of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Country Fact Sheets and as a consultant and research-writer for the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) Regional Support Team for Asia and Pacific, specifically on Country Assessment of Spousal Transmission of HIV in the Philippines.

She also worked as Co-Researcher on Gender Audit of Local Service Providers of the Philippine Social Science Circle and Philippine-Australia Human Resource and Organizational Development Facility (PAHRDOF); United Nations Entity for Gender Identity and Empowerment of Women (UNWOMEN) National Migration Expert Consultant; Lead Trainer at the International Labor Office in Manila; and UNDP National Coordinator for the Joint Project on Gender and Remittances: Building Gender-Responsive Local Development. She has served as a member of the Participatory Gender Audit Team of various Philippine and international agencies.

## **6. MS. HANNY CUEVA BETETA**

**Ms. Hanny Cueva Beteta** is UN Women's Governance, Peace and Security Advisor for Asia and The Pacific Region. In this role, she provides programme development and technical support, and establishes

and strengthens strategic partnerships for the region in the areas of Governance, Political Participation and Peace and Security.

Before taking this position, Ms. Beteta was the coordinator of the Global Study on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and until October 2014 she served as the Gender Advisor to the UNCT for the UN Women office in Peru. Previously, she was the Policy Advisor and Deputy to the Chief Advisor for the Peace and Security Section in UN Women in New York. She originally joined the governance, peace and security team in former UNIFEM in 2006 based in New York. She has led various global programmes including gender-responsible peacebuilding, the development and implementation of National Action Plans, promoting women's political participation and support to making public service delivery more gender responsive. In 2010, on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UNSCR 1325, she was tapped as one of the main technical leading experts for the development of global indicators. Earlier, she also co-authored former UNIFEM's flagship report Progress of the World's Women 2008/09 "Who Answers to Women? Gender and Accountability."

Before joining the UN in 2006, Ms. Beteta worked as a researcher and lecturer at the Universidad del Pacific in Lima, Peru, where she published extensively on issues of poverty and development economics. She is originally from Peru and holds a MPhil in Development Studies from the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK.

### SESSION III

#### **1. H.E. ROSARIO G. MANALO**

**Ms. Rosario G. Manalo** is the Philippines' Representative to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) since its establishment in 2009. Ambassador Manalo has held various diplomatic assignments after retiring as a career diplomat in 2002. She served as Philippine Commissioner to the Shanghai World Expo (1 May-15 June 2010); Special Envoy of the Philippine President to the ASEAN High Level Panel to negotiate the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Human Rights Body in 2009; Philippine Representative to the Board of Governors, Asia-Europe Foundation in Singapore and Member of its Executive Committee (December 2007- present); Special Envoy of the Philippine President for the Drafting of the ASEAN Charter in 2007; Chairperson of the ASEAN High-Level Task Force that drafted the ASEAN Charter and leader of the group that negotiated for Chapter XIV of the Charter relating to Human

Rights; Senior Adviser to President Fidel V. Ramos, Philippine Eminent Person for the formulation of the ASEAN Charter in 2006; and Foreign Affairs Senior Adviser of the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

Ambassador Manalo has held various diplomatic positions as a career officer in the DFA since 1962. She served as Special Envoy to Latin America of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo; DFA Undersecretary for International Economic Relations; Secretary General of UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines; Ambassador to the Nordic States of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania; Ambassador to France and concurrently to Portugal and UNESCO (1990-1994); Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium and concurrently the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (1985-1987) and to the European Economic Community (EEC) (1979-1987). She was also on secondment to UNESCO as appointed by President Corazon Aquino and Adviser in the Cabinet of Director General Federico Mayor Zaragoza from 1988 to 1990.

At present Ms. Manalo holds several positions in leading academic institutions in the Philippines. She is taking up doctoral courses in Social Development and holds a Master of Arts in International Relations and Diplomacy from Long Island University, New York, Master of Arts in Public Administration from the University of the Philippines (UP) and Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Science in Jurisprudence and Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from UP.

Among the many distinctions she has received through the years include: The French National Order of Merit, rank of Grand Officer, bestowed by French President Francois Mitterand in 1994; The Order of King Leopold Award, rank of Commander, which was bestowed on her through a Royal Decree of His Majesty, King Badouin of Belgium; Order of Sikatuna, rank of Datu, bestowed by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo; and Premio Zobel for her efforts in the promotion and preservation of Spanish heritage, language and culture in the Philippines.

## 2. MS. THAVORY HUOT

**Ms. Thavory Huot** is currently the Executive Director of Khmer Ahimsa, a Phnom Penh-based non-governmental organization that focuses on strengthening democratic leadership skills, enhancing gender equality and developing skills in non-violent conflict resolution processes throughout the country. Ms. Huot's ability to bring together women across political lines and who come from all over Cambodia has been admired by national and international organizations in the country. Prior to her current work, she was a peace consultant with some NGOs in Cambodia, developing and

facilitating workshops for staff and focusing on communities throughout the country, including local commune (Government) councilors. For several years, she served as program manager of the Peace Education and Awareness Unit of the Working Group for Weapons Reduction (WGWR), working to reduce the availability of weapons and promote peace and non-violent problem solving.

After the Vietnamese incursion in 1979, Ms. Huot survived by teaching in exchange for food for almost a decade. In the 1990s, she became the project coordinator of the Buddhist Association of Nuns and Lay Women, where she worked to empower women on national reconciliation. She has also worked in various projects to fight against domestic violence.

In 2007-2009, she finished an Applied Conflict Transformation Master's Course (ACTS) at Panhasasstra University and earned an Associate in Finance and Accounting at Build Bright University from 2002-2003. She attended an English Teaching Methodology course at the Cambodian British Center at Phnom Penh Municipal Regional Pedagogical Center (1991-1992) and a training course on Teaching Methodology and Pedagogical Skills for high school English teachers at National Education Institution facilitated by Quaker Service Australia (QSA). She also led media campaigns and broadcast of programs on developing peace and combatting the proliferation of small arms. She was at one time an Education Program Assistant on domestic violence in Cambodia, a research assistant for GTZ Cambodia and a Mathematic teacher at Kampong Thom High School Cambodia.

### **3. PROF. DR. IR. KUNTORO MANGKUSUBROTO**

**Mr. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto** is a decision science professor and the founder of the School of Business and Management of the Bandung Institute of Technology. He has recently been appointed by the President as the Chairman of the Board of the State Electricity Company (PLN). Previously as a Senior Minister, he served as the Head of the President's Delivery Unit for Development Monitoring and Oversight (UKP4) in 2009-2014. This unit is responsible for overseeing the progress of the countries' National Priorities as implemented by Line Ministries and other government agencies, resolving bottlenecks in implementation and managing the President's Situation Room at Bina Graha. He is also assigned by the President to chair the Task Force against Judicial Mafia and Taskforce for Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+), as well as to lead Indonesia's participation in the Open Government Partnership movement since its inception. After his term ended, he established the Indonesia Institute of Deliverology (IDeA)

to continue assisting national and local governments as well as civil societies to ensure the effective implementation of priority programs.

Mr. Kuntoro was previously the Head of the Aceh-Nias Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR) 2005-2009. As the Head of BRR, he led the post-tsunami reconstruction efforts with funds amounting to USD 8 billion, 70%, which came from foreign assistance. The outcome of the reconstruction has since become an international role model for post-disaster management. He also played a significant role in the Indonesian energy and natural resources sector, where he was the Minister for Mining and Energy (1998-1999) and CEO of PLN (2000-2001), PTBA (state coal mining company, 1988-1989), and Timah (state tin mining company, 1989-1993). His restructuring effort at Timah has managed to turnaround the ailing company to a point where it became the benchmark for global tin price.

Kuntoro gained his doctorate in Decision Science from ITB, where he also earned his first engineering degree. Prior to his doctorate, he earned two master's degrees -- M.Sc. in Industrial Engineering and M.Sc. in Civil Engineering -- both from Stanford University. His international reputation earned him several recognitions, such as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Engineering Excellence Award in 1996 and Honorary Lee Kuan Yew Exchange Fellow from the government of Singapore in 2006.

#### **4. MS. DAW MARY TAWM KD**

**Ms. Daw Mary Tawm KD** is the current director, and one of the co-founders of the relief and humanitarian organization Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN), which means "Light for the People." WPN plays a key role in providing humanitarian assistance to refugees displaced by conflict in eastern Kachin state who are currently living in camps that are in an area that is difficult for international aid groups to reach.

As director of WPN, Ms. KD oversees the organization's day-to-day activities, which include providing relief to six (6) IDP camps comprising more than 10,000 displaced persons living along the China-Kachin border. Ms. KD has overseen the organization's operations as fighting continues in eastern Kachin state nearly four years after its establishment. Wunpawng Ninghtoi - WPN is one of the members of the Joint Strategy Team (JST), which has been working together with nine (9) local organizations providing humanitarian response in Kachin and Northern Shan State of Myanmar since the civil war started again between the Kachin Independence Army of Kachin Independence Organization (KIA/ KIO) and Myanmar Government Army (Tatmadaw) in 2011 June.

Prior to her work at WPN, Ms. KD served as coordinator for Life Vision Foundation, Pan Kachin Development Society (PKDS) and as manager at Golden Crown Jewelry. She holds a BA Psychology degree from the Mandalay University of Distance Education and attended various training programs, including Earthrights School Burma (ERSB) training, Democratic leadership training, Community mobilization and MRE training, and Training on Humanitarian Principles. She is an UNDP N-Peace Award nominee for 2015.

## 5. MS. SOPHEAP ROS

**Ms. Sopheap Ros** is the founder and Executive Director of Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC), a gender-specialized non-government organization in Cambodia. She has previously held posts in government ministries and international and national development agencies and programs in Cambodia. She is known as an activist, organizer and advocate for gender equality and women empowerment. Her activism and advocacy are drawn from vast knowledge and real life experience of Cambodian women. Over the course of her leadership of GADC, the organization has progressed as the national leader in building the capacity of organizations on mainstreaming gender into policies, plans and programs, including those of government departments. She has also engaged men and boys in order to end violence and discrimination against women.

She is also one of the founding members of the Committee to Promote Women in Politics (CPWP), the national network of women's organizations that lobbies mainstream political parties to promote women in political leadership.

Ms. Sopheap has further brought to the fore the issues of Cambodian women to the international community, through speaking on women's rights issues in various regional and international forums, including the UN Sessions on CEDAW. She undertakes such efforts to obtain international support and call for action to address the issues that affect women's human rights in Cambodia.

## 6. MS. AGNES F. LOPEZ

**Ms. Agnes F. Lopez** is at present working as a Research Analyst/ Information Officer II under the Information Support Affairs Branch of the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations (CMO), Philippine Army. She is the National President of the People's Advocacy for Collaboration and Empowerment, Inc., (PeACE, Inc.), an organization

established in June 2010 with more than 3,500 members nationwide and has 30 local chapters and a regional chapter. The organization is composed of former members of the communist-led New People's Army.

Previously, she worked as Head of Program Department and Head-News Department of DWDD Armed Forces Radio based at Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City under the Office of the Civil Relations Service Armed Forces of the Philippines. She was also a contributing writer for "Ang Tala," the official publication of the Civil Relations Service Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), from 2004 to 2008; and a lecturer at the AFP CMO School. From 2005 to 2013, Ms. Reano hosted radio programs of the AFP, which mostly focused on stories of former rebels who decided to lay down their arms. As a Research Analyst/Information Officer II for the OG7 Philippine Army, she wrote and co-authored several handbooks, annual reports and manuals for the Philippine Army, including *The AFP Human Rights Situationer: Children in Armed Conflict*, which was submitted to UN Secretary-General Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Radhika Coomaraswamy.

She quit the communist rebel armed movement in February 1993 and decided to tell her story and use her communication skills to enlighten her fellowmen, especially the youth. She graduated *cum laude* from the Ateneo de Naga University with a Bachelor of Arts in Development Communication and a Master of Arts in Communication.

## SESSION IV

### **1. HON. MARIA CLEOFÉ C. SANDOVAL**

**Ms. Maria Cleofe Gettie C. Sandoval** is the Undersecretary for Programs at the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), Office of the President. She supervises the implementation of final agreements with two groups of former rebels who are members of the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines; a national program in conflict-affected areas to complement the peace negotiations; and the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, among other responsibilities.

Previously, she held other government positions as Assistant Secretary for Policy in OPAPP (2004); Director for Sectoral Policy of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (2001-2003); and Chief of Staff of Abanse! Pinay, the first women's party-list in the House of Representatives, Congress of the Philippines (1998).

Ms. Sandoval was also a teacher for the Jesuit Volunteer Program (1985-86) and a subject matter expert on Medical Jurisprudence at the Ateneo de Manila School of Medicine and Public Health (2009-2012). She spent many years as part of civil society working with a non-government organization involved in alternative lawyering (or public interest law). As a lawyer, she worked for the interests of labor, informal settlers, peasants, and cross-cutting concerns like gender and governance. She is a resource person on topics such as gender empowerment and human rights, alternative lawyering, laws on women, peace process, women and peace, and governance, among others. She earned her Degrees on Bachelor of Arts, Major in Economics (1985) and Juris Doctor (1991) from the Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines.

## **2. DR. ENDAH TRISTA AGUSTIANA**

**Ms. Endah Trista Agustiana** is the Technical Lead for Capacity Building, Human Rights, Women's and Children's Rights for ASEAN-U.S. Partnership for Good Governance, Equitable and Sustainable Development and Security (PROGRESS). She has more than 25 years of combined experience in gender, women's rights and empowerment, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, democratic governance, and sectoral social development issues.

Prior to joining the ASEAN-U.S. PROGRESS, she was Gender Advisor/Specialist for various ministries, parliaments, multilateral and bilateral organizations in ASEAN countries and Timor-Leste, provided advice to UNDP, UNICEF, ADB, DFAT Australia, Norwegian Embassy-Jakarta, GIZ, NCDD-Ministry of Interior of Cambodia, MOHA-Lao PDR and National Parliament of Timor-Leste and Viet Nam, and had been a researcher at Women's Studies Center and a lecturer at Sriwijaya University, Indonesia.

Ms. Agustiana has hands-on experience working in conflict-affected/post conflict countries. She established the first-ever Regional Forum on Women's Leadership and Peace-building in Indonesia together with women peace activists in Maluku, Central Sulawesi and North Maluku. She also assisted the National Parliament and Women Parliamentarians' Caucus of Timor-Leste in the establishment of a Parliamentary Gender Resources Center, the adoption of a Parliamentary Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and a Parliamentary Resolution on Gender Budgeting.

She holds a Ph.D. Degree in Interpersonal/Cross-cultural Communication and Women's Studies from Ohio University, USA, an M.A in Gender Analysis and Development Studies from University of East Anglia, U.K.,

and a Bachelor of Arts in Public Administration, with “Honors” from the Faculty of Social and Political Science, Sriwijaya University, Indonesia. She wrote a number of publications including, “Living in the Crisis: Women’s Experience of Violent Conflict in Poso, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia” (2006).

### 3. MS. RUENGRAWEE PICHAIKUL

**Ms. Ruengrawee Pichaikul** is the Asia Foundation’s Senior Program Coordinator in Thailand, where she manages and develops programs for Thailand and Lao PDR, focused on women’s empowerment, human rights, legal and constitutional reform, local governance, development of legal aid programs for tsunami survivors, and civic/voter education. She developed and implemented training curriculums for gender, human rights, and local governance training. She also served as regional advisor for the Foundation’s programs on trafficking in persons and violence against women for the countries in the Mekong subregion.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Ms. Pichaikul was a human rights master trainer with the United Nations Border Relief Operation (UNBRO) Information Program. She also spent several years working with Indochinese refugees with the Joint Voluntary Agency, U.S. Embassy in Bangkok. She is the founding member of the Women and the Constitution Network. She also served as advisor to the Standing Committee on Human Rights, Women’s Affairs, and various sub-committees focusing on human rights, gender, justice administration and health issues.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the Ramkhamkaeng University, Bangkok and a Master of Arts in Political Science on Justice System Administration from Kasetsart University, Bangkok.

### 4. ATTY. LAISA ALAMIA

**Ms. Laisa Alamia** is currently the Executive Secretary of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). She was the former Chairperson of the ARMM Regional Human Rights Commission (RHRC). Prior to the establishment of the RHRC, she used to be the Officer-in-Charge-Regional Human Rights Director of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR)-ARMM Regional Office.

Before joining CHR-ARMM, she was the Program Manager of Nisa Ul-Haqq Fi Bangsamoro (Women for Justice in the Bangsamoro) since 2007 and Project Coordinator of Bangsamoro Lawyers’ Network. She had a

law firm in Zamboanga City and practiced trial law in the Zamboanga Peninsula-Basilan-Sulu-Tawi-Tawi area, in addition to handling *pro bono* cases of Moro victims of human rights violations.

Prior to CHR-ARMM, she was the legal counsel of the Ateneo de Zamboanga University (ADZU). She has a seven-year work experience with Government as Senior Economic Development Specialist at the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). Atty. Alamia undertakes consultancies with the Philippine Commission on Women and other national government agencies, local government units, non-government organizations, and international funding institutions on human rights, gender, Islam and women's rights, local governance, conflict resolution and peace-building, international humanitarian law, research and advocacy, and policy reform. As a women's rights activist, she also represents marginalized women in litigation of gender-based violence and mentors women leaders in the area of political leadership, economic empowerment, and reproductive health. She is also an environmental lawyer and has successfully litigated an anti-mining campaign in the watersheds of Zamboanga City. Atty. Alamia graduated *cum laude* and valedictorian from the Ateneo de Zamboanga University and completed her law degree at Western Mindanao State University.

## 5. MS. ALPHA LARGA

**Ms. Maria Alpha A. Larga** is a Planning Officer at the Policy and Planning Division of the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) of the Philippines. Her work involves development planning and program/project implementation and monitoring at CWC. Among her responsibilities is the preparation of annual budget and work program of the office and development of the monitoring and evaluation framework for National Plans of Action for Children.

Ms. Larga holds a Masters in Development Management from the Development Academy of the Philippines and Public Administration from the University of the Philippines (UP). She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition degree from UP Los Banos. She attended a Diploma Course on Children, Youth and Development from the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague in 2010.

## SESSION V

### 1. H.E. ELIZABETH P. BUENSUCESO

**Ms. Elizabeth P. Buensuceso** is currently the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to ASEAN. She also represents the Philippines in various ASEAN bodies and entities, including the ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) as Governing Council Member, ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) Representative, and ASEAN Foundation Board of Trustees Member.

Ms. Buensuceso is a career diplomat, having been with the Philippine Foreign Service for 35 years. Before assuming her current position, she was the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs in the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines. She was also Philippine Ambassador to Norway, Denmark and Iceland (2008-2011) and the Lao PDR (2004-2008). She served at the Philippine Embassies in Brussels and Beijing as Deputy Chief of Mission. Her other postings include Singapore and Hong Kong. She has served in various positions in the Department, including in the Office of ASEAN Affairs, the Anti-Terrorism Unit of the Office of the Undersecretary for Policy (OUP), the Economic Diplomacy Unit, etc. She has organized various international conferences, workshops and other meetings under the ASEAN, ASEM and bilateral frameworks.

Ambassador Buensuceso earned a Bachelor of Arts, major in English, *magna cum laude*, and Master of Arts in Teaching English, both from the University of the East and a Master of Arts in Asian Studies from the University of the Philippines. Before her Foreign Service career, Ambassador Buensuceso was a Lecturer at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines and the University of the East, teaching Literature, Philosophy and English Grammar and Composition.



**ANNEX III**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**





## PARTICIPANTS

Country	Name	Designation
Brunei Darussalam	H.E. Datin Paduka Malai Halimah Yussof	Head of Delegation
Cambodia	H.E. Norng Sakal	Permanent Representative
Cambodia	Mr. Sok Thea	Permanent Representative
Cambodia	Mr. Chhay Songheng	Head of International Cooperation Department
Cambodia	Mr. Prom Akhita	Head of International Cooperation Department
Indonesia	H.E. Bagas Hapsoro	AIPR Governing Council
Indonesia	Ms. Lily Purba	Member of Delegation
Indonesia	Mr. Rezlan Ishar Jenie	Member of Delegation
Indonesia	Ms. Lily Savitri	Member of Delegation
Indonesia	Ms. Starlet Yuniarti Koenardi	Member of Delegation
Indonesia	Ms. Tety Mudrika Hayati	Member of Delegation
Indonesia	Amb. Rahmat Pramono	Permanent Representative
Indonesia	Mr. Tody Baskoro	Member of Delegation
Lao PDR	H.E. Latsamy Keomany	Permanent Representative
Lao PDR	Mr. Souksakhone Lithsenevang	Permanent Representative
Lao PDR	Mr. Chanthanakhone Sayavong	Member of Delegation
Lao PDR	Mr. Somkhit Vankham	Member of Delegation
Malaysia	H.E. Dato' Hasnudin Hamzah	Permanent Representative
Malaysia	Mr. Azril Abd Aziz	Permanent Representative
Malaysia	Ms. Noraini Shaari	Member of Delegation
Myanmar	H.E. Min Lwin	Permanent Representative
Myanmar	Mr. Tin Maung Naing	Permanent Representative
Myanmar	Ms. Su Thit Htoo	Member of Delegation
Myanmar	Ms. Thin Thin Nwe	Member of Delegation
Singapore	H.E. Tan Hung Seng	Permanent Representative
Singapore	Mr. Cai Xihao	Permanent Representative
Thailand	H.E. Kulkumut Singhara Na Ayudhaya	Head of Delegation
Thailand	Ms. Busadee Santipitaks	Permanent Representative
Thailand	Ms. Piang-or Wacharaprapapong	Permanent Representative
Thailand	Ms. Asya Thanchitt	Member of Delegation
Thailand	Ms. Manassinee Moottatam	Member of Delegation
Vietnam	H.E. Nguyen Hoanh Nam	Permanent Representative

Country	Name	Designation
Vietnam	Mr. Hoang Quoc Trung	Member of Delegation
Vietnam	Ms. Nguyen Thi Le Hang	Member of Delegation
Vietnam	Ms. Pham Thi Lan	Member of Delegation
Philippines	Hon. Elizabeth P. Buensuceso	Moderator and Organizer
	H.E. Vongthreth Arthakaivalate	ASEAN Secretariat
Philippines	Mr. Girard Bonotan	ASEAN Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Abigail C. Lanceta	ASEAN Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Maria Agnes Cervantes	Member of Delegation
Philippines	Mr. Jose Veloria	Member of Delegation
Philippines	Hon. Maria Cleofe Gettie C. Sandoval	Moderator
Indonesia	Dr. Endah Trista Augustiana	Speaker
Thailand	Mr. Ruengrawee Pichaikul	Speaker
Philippines	Atty. Laisa Alamia	Speaker
Philippines	Ms. Alpha Larga	Speaker
Philippines	Hon. Luis T. Cruz	Speaker
Philippines	Atty. Marilyn Pintor	Speaker
Thailand	Ms. Hanny Cueva Beteta	Speaker
Philippines	Hon. Rosario G. Manalo	Moderator
Cambodia	Ms. Thavory Huot	Speaker
Indonesia	Prof. Dr. Ir. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto	Speaker
Myanmar	Ms. Daw Mary Tawn Kd	Speaker
Cambodia	Ms. Sopheap Ros	Speaker
Philippines	Ms. Agnes F. Lopez	Speaker
Norway	H.E. Stig Traavik	Speaker
Switzerland	H.E. Yvonne Baumann	Speaker
EU	H.E. Francisco Fontan	Guest
Canada	Mr. Stuart Shaw	Guest
China	Mr. He Liang	Guest
Norway	Mr. Christian Groseth	Guest
Switzerland	Ms. Martina Schmidt	Guest
Philippines	Assec. Denis Lepatan	Guest
Philippines	Mr. Alex Lamadrid	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Jeremie Credo	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Joycee Teodoro	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Melanie Rita Balisi-Diano	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Shirley Florendo	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Sittie Djuhanesa Sumagayan	Guest

Country	Name	Designation
Philippines	Ms. Maria Agnes Cervantes	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Cristina Bagano-Telan	Guest
Philippines	Hon. Mindy Cruz	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Rammaila Tolentino	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Elizabeth Ramos	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Elizabeth U. Yang	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Rina J. David	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Hazel M. Suba	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Maria Cynthia P. Pelayo	Guest
Philippines	Mr. Jose Perpetuo H. Viloria	Guest
Philippines	Mr. Rizany Irwan Muhamad Mazlan	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Maria Lourdes T. Nuera	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Melinda Prieto	Guest
Indonesia	Mr. Ade Petranto	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Princess Lynn A. Padua	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Camille V. Alcedo	Guest
Philippines	Mr. Mark Clinton R. Borja	Guest
Philippines	Mr. Aian Caringal	Guest
Philippines	Ms. Jo-an Calan	Guest
	Mr. Nuon Rithyroath	Guest
	Ms. Teresa Grantham	Guest
Philippines	Mr. Noel M. Novicio	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Vanessa C. Bago-Llona	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Cecille Joyce Y. Lao	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Nihaya T. Macaradi	Secretariat
Philippines	Mr. Nilo Jay G. de Guzman, Jr.	Secretariat
Philippines	Mr. Marc Joseph O. Jaucian	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Carina B. Gaurana	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Majella Cristy U. Pua-Diezmos	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. May P. Ofrasio	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Zaide S. Castro-Fuerzas	Secretariat
Philippines	Mr. Genaro Jose Ma R. Simpao	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Renz Oliver I. Tabil	Secretariat
Philippines	Ms. Maria Franchesca Isabel C. Salazar	Secretariat
Philippines	Mr. Cedric Danielle A. Barcena	Secretariat
Philippines	Mr. Einstein Quioait	Secretariat
Philippines	Mr. Rolando Salazar	Secretariat

Country	Name	Designation
Philippines	Mr. Joel Mariñas	Secretariat
Philippines	Dr. Odine Maria de Guzman	Faculty
Philippines	Ms. Mardy Gonzales	Faculty
Philippines	Prof. Paul Michael C. Lopez	Faculty
Philippines	Mr. Juan Carlos Caronan	Student
Philippines	Ms. Krystle Fernandez	Student
Philippines	Ms. Mary Helen Labuan	Student
Philippines	Ms. Danica Caritativo	Student
Philippines	Ms. Nichole Raynera	Student
Philippines	Ms. Shella Mae Duavis	Student
Philippines	Ms. Khyra Canillo	Student
Philippines	Ms. Eunice B. Trinidad	Student
Philippines	Ms. Tricia B. Trinidad	Student
Philippines	Ms. Ma. Bianca Yvonne O. Castro	Student
Philippines	Mr. John Francis B. Urate	Student
Philippines	Ms. Shaine Loren A. Albo	Student
Philippines	Mr. Posavilla o. Gipit	Student
Philippines	Ms. Norhani L. Lucman	Student
Philippines	Ms. Kylla Mariele M. Miranda	Student
Philippines	Mr. Iñigo A. Gonzalez	Student
Philippines	Ms. Beatrice Isabelle L. Hernandez	Student
Philippines	Ms. Sheen Paras	Student
Philippines	Ms. Rose Marianne Louis M. Gardoce	Student
Philippines	Ms. Richelle B. Medina	Student
Philippines	Mr. George H. Gloriani	Student
Philippines	Mr. John Christopher M. Dimaranan	Student
Philippines	Mr. Joy C. Garcia	Student
Philippines	Mr. Roncevax M. Vidallo	Student
Philippines	Mr. Patrick Lawrence Buan	Student
Philippines	Ms. Clarita Benzon	Student
	Khorshid Mahbouby Pirpeht	Student



**ANNEX IV**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE AIPR**





## **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ASEAN INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION**

The ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (hereinafter referred to as 'the Institute') shall be established under Provision B.2.2.i of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint. As a follow-up to the ASEAN Leaders' Joint Statement on the Establishment of an ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation adopted on 8 May 2011, the Institute shall be an entity associated with ASEAN under Article 16 of the ASEAN Charter.

The Institute shall operate in accordance with the following Terms of Reference (ToR):

### **1. HEADQUARTERS**

The headquarters of the Institute shall be in the Republic of Indonesia, hereinafter referred to as "the Host Country", and shall be based in Jakarta.

### **2. LEGAL PERSONALITY**

The legal personality of the Institute shall be established under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Host Country and the Institute.

### **3. PRINCIPLES**

The Institute would operate in accordance with the ASEAN Charter and be guided by the principles of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, *inter alia*:

- a. respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all ASEAN Member States;
- b. shared commitment and collective responsibility in enhancing regional peace, security and prosperity; and
- c. non-interference in the internal affairs of ASEAN Member States.

## **4. MANDATE AND FUNCTIONS**

### **4.1. Mandate**

The Institute shall be the ASEAN institution for research activities on peace, conflict management and conflict resolution, as requested by ASEAN Member States.

The Institute's work will include, *inter alia*, promotion of those activities agreed in the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint and additional activities as agreed by ASEAN Member States.

### **4.2. Functions**

The Institute may undertake, among others, the following activities:

#### **Research**

- Undertake research and compile ASEAN's experiences and best practices on peace, conflict management and conflict resolution as well as post-conflict peace-building, with the view to providing appropriate recommendations, upon request by ASEAN Member States, to ASEAN bodies
- Undertake studies to promote gender mainstreaming in peace building, peace process and conflict resolution
- Study and analyse existing dispute settlement mechanisms in ASEAN with a view to enhancing regional mechanisms for the pacific settlement of disputes

#### **Capacity Building**

- Hold workshops on peace, conflict management, conflict resolution
- Hold seminars/workshops/training in promoting the voice of moderation to contribute to the Global Movement of the Moderates, as well as to advance work in the area of interfaith dialogue
- Knowledge building among relevant government officials, scholars or think-tanks on conflict management and resolution

#### **Pool of Expertise and Support for ASEAN Bodies**

- Develop a pool of experts from ASEAN Member States as resource persons to assist in conflict management and conflict resolution activities
- Where appropriate and at the request of ASEAN governments, provide policy recommendations to ASEAN governments on

promotion of peace and reconciliation based on their own studies, as well as facilitation for peace negotiation

- Assist ASEAN bodies, upon request of ASEAN Member States, on activities and initiatives related to peace, reconciliation, conflict management and conflict resolution

## **Networking**

- Function as a knowledge hub by establishing linkages/network with relevant institutions and organisations in ASEAN Member States, as well as other regions and at the international level, which have similar objectives aimed at promoting a culture of peace
- Collaborate with relevant UN agencies, regional organisations and international think tanks to exchange expertise and experiences on peace, conflict management, conflict resolution

## **Dissemination of information**

- Disseminate best practices, lessons learned and relevant information to ASEAN Member States
- Outreach and engagement with the civil society and other relevant stakeholders to promote peace, reconciliation, conflict management, conflict resolution and peace-building
- Promote awareness of the work of the Institute among the general public

## **5. BUDGET AND FUNDING**

- *ASEAN Member States shall make a contribution to support the operations of the Institute for each budget year.*
- *ASEAN Member States may consider making additional contributions to support the operations of the Institute within the same budget year.*
- *The Institute may seek additional project-based voluntary funding from ASEAN Member States on an ad hoc basis, which should be requested in a timely manner*
- *The Institute shall mobilise additional resources from ASEAN Dialogue Partners, interested countries, international and regional organizations, financial and any other institutions, corporations, foundations or individuals to fund project-based activities.*
- *The resources mobilised to fund the project-based activities will also be allocated as deemed appropriate to support the operations of the Institute.*

## **6. STRUCTURE**

The Institute shall be composed of the Governing Council, the Executive Director and an Advisory Board

### **Governing Council**

- 6.1. The Governing Council, hereinafter referred to as “the Council”, shall consist of :
  - a. a Representative of each ASEAN Member State to be appointed by and accountable to the respective appointing Governments;
  - b. the Secretary-General of ASEAN as ex-officio member; and
  - c. the Executive Director as ex-officio member.
- 6.2. Each Member of the Council, except for the ex-officio members, shall work for a term of three (3) years and shall be eligible for one re-appointment.
- 6.3. The Chair of the Council shall be the Representative of the ASEAN Member State holding the Chairmanship of ASEAN.
- 6.4. The Members of the Council, except for the ex-officio members, shall elect two (2) Vice-Chairmen from among themselves each for a term of one year.
- 6.5. The Council shall :
  - a. formulate the guidelines and procedures for the activities of the Institute;
  - b. have the overall responsibility for the funds of the Institute and shall be responsible for the formulation of policy for the procurement and the utilization of the funds;
  - c. approve the annual operating budget for the Institute;
  - d. perform such other functions as may be necessary to carry out the objectives of the Institute; and
  - e. meet at least twice a year.

### **Executive Director**

- 6.6. The Executive Director of the Institute shall be a national of an ASEAN Member State and shall be appointed by the Governing Council through open recruitment for a non-renewable term of three years.

- 6.7. The Executive Director in discharging his/her functions to serve ASEAN Member States, shall represent the Institute, not his/her country or any other institution.
- 6.8. The Executive Director shall:
- a. represent the Institute in all administrative and operational matters, manage the activities of the Institute and perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Council from time to time;
  - b. have authority to appoint such professional, secretarial and administrative staff as are necessary to achieve the Institute's objectives; and
  - c. undertake activities to raise funds for the Institute's activities, in accordance with guidelines and procedures as established by the Council.
- 6.9. The Executive Director shall be responsible to the Council.

### **Advisory Board**

- 6.10. An Advisory Board, hereinafter referred to as "the Board", shall consist of:
- a. a representative appointed by the government of each ASEAN Member State, hereinafter collectively referred to as "Representative";
  - b. the Executive Director as ex-officio member.
- 6.11. Representatives shall work for a term of three years and shall be eligible for one re-appointment.
- 6.12. Representatives shall be eminent persons in the field of peace and reconciliation, including, but not limited to, academics, parliamentarians, senior or retired civil servants and civil society representatives.
- 6.13. Representatives on the Board, with the exception of the Executive Director, shall not serve concurrently on the Council.
- 6.14. The Board shall advise the Council on the research priorities for the Institute.

## **7. DECISION-MAKING**

Decision-making in the Institute shall be based on consultation and consensus in accordance with Article 20 of the ASEAN Charter.

## **8. REPORTING MECHANISM**

The Executive Director shall make regular reports on the work of the Institute through the relevant senior officials to the ASEAN Political-Security Community Council (APSC Council).

## **9. REVIEW MECHANISM**

This TOR shall be initially reviewed five years after the official launching of the Institute. This review and subsequent reviews shall be undertaken by the APSC Council supported by the relevant senior officials.



**ANNEX V**

**MEMBERS OF THE AIPR GOVERNING COUNCIL  
AND ADVISORY BOARD**





**ASEAN MEMBER STATES' REPRESENTATIVES TO THE  
GOVERNING COUNCIL AND ADVISORY BOARD OF THE ASEAN  
INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION (AIPR)**

Country	Representative to the Governing Council	Representative to the Advisory Board
Brunei Darussalam	<b><i>H.E. Amb. Emaleen Abdul Rahman Teo</i></b> Permanent Representative of Brunei Darussalam to ASEAN	<b><i>Mr. Mohammad Shafiee Kassim</i></b> Acting Director of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Cambodia	<b><i>H.E Mr. Norng Sakal</i></b> Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia and Permanent Representative of Cambodia to ASEAN	<b><i>H.E Mr. Ouk Sorphorn</i></b> Director-General of the General Department of ASEAN-Cambodia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia
Indonesia	<b><i>H.E. Amb. Rezlan Ishar Jenie</i></b> Former Ambassador of Indonesia to France, Andorra and Monaco & Permanent Representative of Indonesia to UNESCO (2010-2014)	<b><i>H.E Artauli Tobing</i></b> Executive Secretary of the Council of the Presidential Adviser for International Affairs
Lao PDR	<b><i>H.E. Latsamy Keomany</i></b> Ambassador/Permanent Representative of the Lao PDR to ASEAN	<b><i>H.E. Mrs. Pavanh Nuanthasing</i></b> Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Lao PDR to the Republic of Indonesia
Malaysia	<b><i>H.E. Dato' Hasnudin Hamzah</i></b> Permanent Representative of Malaysia to ASEAN	<b><i>H.E Tengku Dato' Abdul Ghafar Tengku Mohamed</i></b>
Myanmar	<b><i>H.E. U Min Lwin</i></b> Permanent Representative of Myanmar to ASEAN	<b><i>Mr. Kyee Myint</i></b> Deputy Director-General (Rtd.) Ministry of Foreign Affairs Member, Myanmar Institute for Strategic and International Studies
The Philippines	<b><i>H.E. Elizabeth P. Buensuceso</i></b> Permanent Representative of Philippines to ASEAN	<b><i>H.E. Teresita Quintos Deles</i></b> Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process.
Singapore	<b><i>H.E. Tan Hung Seng</i></b> Permanent Representative of Singapore to ASEAN	<b><i>Prof. Joseph Liow</i></b> Associate Dean of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS)
Thailand	<b><i>H.E. Dr. Somkiati Ariyapruhya</i></b> Dean of the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies (IDIS)	<b><i>H.E. Ms. Busadee Santipitaks</i></b> Permanent Representative of Thailand to ASEAN
Viet Nam	<b><i>H.E. Amb. Nguyen Hoanh Nam</i></b> Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to ASEAN	<b><i>H.E Le Cong Phung</i></b> Former Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs





**ANNEX VI**  
**PROGRAM**





**ASEAN INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION  
(AIPR) SYMPOSIUM ON THE PLIGHT OF WOMEN AND  
CHILDREN IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS**

Tagaytay City, the Philippines  
08-09 December 2015

**TENTATIVE PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES**

**Day One, 08 December 2015**

0800H-0900H     **Registration**

0900H-1000H     **Opening Session**

Venue: Ballroom 1, Taal Vista Hotel

**Choral Rendition     Faith Family Foundation Choir**

**Welcome Remarks     Hon. EVAN P. GARCIA**  
Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs and  
ASEAN-Philippines SOM Leader

**Message                 H.E. Dato' Hasnudin Hamzah**  
Chairman of the Committee of Permanent  
Representatives (CPR) to ASEAN and  
AIPR Governing Council

**Message                 H.E. Stig Ingemar Traavik**  
Ambassador of Norway to ASEAN

**Message                 H.E. DR. YVONNE BAUMANN**  
Ambassador of Switzerland to ASEAN

**Keynote Speech         Hon. CORAZON J. SOLIMAN**  
Secretary of the Department of Social  
Welfare and Development (DSWD)

To be delivered by:     **Hon. NOEL MACALALAD**  
Assistant Secretary of DSWD

**Group Photo**

1000H-1030H **Coffee Break/Meet and Greet**

1030H-1130H **Session 2:** Surfacing the Plight of Women and Children in Conflict Situations

Venue: Ballroom 1, Taal Vista Hotel

Moderator: **Hon. LUIS T. CRUZ**  
Former Director-General of ASEAN-Philippines

Speakers (20 minutes per speaker):

1. Dr. Jean D'Cunha (Pre-Recorded Message)  
Head of UN Women, Myanmar
2. Atty. Marilyn Pintor  
Regional Director for Caraga Region  
Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines
3. Prof. Aurora Javate De Dios (represented by Dr. Jean Franco)  
Philippine Representative for Women's Rights to the  
ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of  
the Rights of Women and Children
4. Ms. Hanny Cueva Beteta  
Regional Advisor for Governance, Peace and Security  
UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

1130H-1210H **Open Forum**

1210H-1330H **Lunch**

Venue: Ballroom 1 Covered Veranda, Taal Vista Hotel

1330H-1450H **Session 3:** Women and Children as Active Participants in Conflict Resolution and Peace Process

Venue: Ballroom 1, Taal Vista Hotel

Moderator: **H.E. ROSARIO G. MANALO**  
Philippine Representative to the ASEAN  
Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights  
(AICHR)

Speakers (20 minutes per speaker):

1. Ms. Thavory Huot  
Executive Director of Khmer Ahimsa, Cambodia
2. Prof. Dr. Ir. Kuntoro Mangkusubroto  
Chairman of the School of Advisory Council of the School of Business and Management Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB), Indonesia
3. Ms. Daw Mary Tawm KD  
Co-Founder and Coordinator of Wunpawng Ninghtoi, Myanmar

1450H-1530H **Open Forum**

1530H-1550H **Coffee Break**

**Group Photo, Taal Lake View**

1550H-1620H **Continuation of Session 3: Women and Children as Active Participants in Conflict Resolution and Peace Process**

Venue: Ballroom 1, Taal Vista Hotel

Moderator: **H.E. ROSARIO G. MANALO**  
Philippine Representative to AICHR

Speakers (20 minutes):

4. Ms. Ros Sopheap  
Executive Director of Gender and Development for Cambodia

Case Study (10 minutes)

Ms. Agnes F. Lopez  
President of People's Advocacy for Collaboration and Empowerment, Inc. (PeACE), the Philippines

1620H-1720H **Open Forum**

1830H            **Cocktails by the Ridge**

1900H            **Welcome Dinner**

Venue: Ballroom 3, Taal Vista Hotel

## **Day Two, 09 December 2015**

0800H-0900H    **Registration**

0900H-1020H    **Session 4: Programs and Mechanisms to Ensure Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Welfare of Women and Children During Armed Conflict and/or in Post-Conflict Situations**

Moderator:    **Hon. MARIA CLEOFE C. SANDOVAL**  
Undersecretary of the Office of the Presidential  
Adviser on the Peace Process

Speakers (20 minutes per speaker):

1. Dr. Endah Trista Agustiana  
Technical Lead of Capacity Building, Human Rights and  
Women's & Children's Rights, ASEAN - U.S. PROGRESS
2. Ms. Ruengrawee Pichaikul  
Senior Program Coordinator for Thailand and Laos of the  
Asia Foundation
3. Atty. Laisa Alamia  
Executive Secretary of the Autonomous Region in Muslim  
Mindanao (ARMM)
4. Ms. Alpha Larga  
Head of Planning Division of the Council for the Welfare of  
Children, the Philippines

1020H-1100H    **Open Forum**

1100H-1120H **Coffee Break**

1120H-1230H **Session 5:** Summary, Recommendations, and Closing Remarks

Moderator: **H.E. ELIZABETH P. BUENSUCESO**  
Permanent Representative of the Philippines  
to ASEAN and Member of the AIPR Governing  
Council

Closing Remarks: **H.E. DATO' HASNUDIN HAMZAH**  
Chairman of the CPR to ASEAN and  
AIPR Governing Council

1230H **Lunch**

Venue: Ballroom 1 Covered Veranda, Taal Vista Hotel

Afternoon Departure of Delegates, Private Time

### **Day Three, 10 December 2015**

Departure of Delegates



