

**Trade Union-Domestic Workers Regional Strategy Consultation on ILC 2010
4-5 May 2010, Astoria Plaza Hotel, Pasig, Metro Manila, Philippines**

“Strengthening the joint position and campaign of Asian domestic workers, trade unions and advocates for an ILO DW Convention and the recognition of domestic workers.”

CONFERENCE STATEMENT

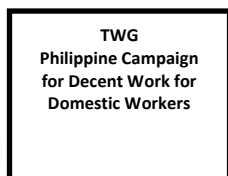
We, the participants to the Regional Strategy Consultation on Decent Work for Domestic Workers held this 4th and 5th of May 2010 at the Astoria Hotel, Ortigas, Pasig City, Philippines, representing domestic workers, trade unions, civil society groups and non-government organizations from the Philippines, Hongkong, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Singapore, Cambodia, Taiwan, jointly and voluntarily adopt the following framework for action:

Domestic workers are workers and not slaves. All domestic workers are entitled to the strongest form of legal protection possible at the international and national levels. As such, we are striving for an International Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers, accompanied by a Recommendation. Similarly, we are campaigning for the adoption of national laws and regulations that will ensure effective application of the provisions of the Convention.

For centuries, domestic work had been unrecognised, informal, unregulated, undervalued, and considered unskilled due to the notion that domestic work does not constitute formal employment – i.e. it is an extension of women’s unpaid reproductive (nurturing) role. The significant role of domestic work in the reproduction of every day life, and the contribution of domestic workers to the local and global economy, must be recognised. An ILO Convention will help break these gender and class stereotypes, and lay down the basis for an employer-employee relationship in domestic work.

We will utilize the following principles as our guide in campaigning for a Convention and other legal instruments:

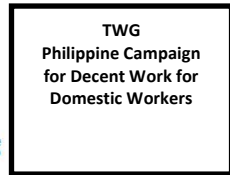
1. **Domestic work is work.** Domestic workers must be treated equally as other workers and enjoy all the rights, privileges, and legal protection, as well as responsibilities afforded to all other workers in the context of decent work for all.
2. International Conventions, accompanying Recommendations, and complementary legal instruments must follow the principle of non-discrimination and must cover ALL types of domestic workers. We will oppose provisions that would, in effect, exclude categories of domestic workers from the benefits and protection afforded by the



International Convention, its accompanying Recommendation, and corresponding national legislations and regulations.

3. It is our utmost priority to end all forms of discrimination against domestic workers, because of, but not limited to, race, region, class, religion, sex and gender, and beliefs.
4. Domestic Workers are entitled to fair terms of employment, decent working and living conditions, a safe and secure workplace, portable social security, health care, and maternity protection. These terms of employment should be reflected in a written contract which, whenever applicable, is legally-binding and enforceable to both sending and receiving countries of work.
5. Special measures should be undertaken to protect the right to privacy of domestic workers, including confidentiality of personal and medical information.
6. Domestic workers are entitled to decent wages and shall be covered by prevailing minimum wage rates, where such coverage exists. Their wages should be protected against any form of diminution. No in-kind payments of any form should be allowed.
7. Domestic workers are exposed to multiple vulnerabilities and, by the nature of their work, often placed in disadvantageous positions. Domestic Workers have the right to protection against all forms of abuse and harassment, including withholding of wages and documents, physical, verbal, sexual and mental abuse. Such protection is the responsibility of sending and receiving countries and recruitment agencies and other intermediaries. Abused domestic workers have the right to continue gainful employment while their case is pending.
8. Children below the minimum admissible age as prescribed by ILO Convention 138 (Minimum Age for Work) and 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour) and complementary national legislations should not be allowed to work as domestic worker.
9. Domestic Workers have the right to justice through easy and free access to fair, impartial courts, mechanisms and processes of dispute and case resolution. Pro-active monitoring system of their conditions should also be instituted.
10. Domestic workers should be given the capacity, resources, opportunity, and democratic space necessary to organize themselves into unions and associations, engage in collective bargaining, and represent themselves in policy and decision-making bodies, especially on issues directly affecting domestic workers.

We subscribe to the principles articulated above, as basis for the adoption of an International Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers and the enactment of



national laws and regulations that will recognize, without discrimination, the rights of Domestic Workers.

As a sign of our dedicated commitment to promote Decent Work for Domestic Workers, we attach our signatures to this Statement.