

## **JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE MAE-SOT CONSULTATION MEETING**

We the self-organised member groups of Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW); Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC), India, Cambodia Prostitute's Union (CPU), Action for Reach Out (AFRO), Hong Kong, Sanayar-Thi-Pan Women's Centre, Thailand, Asosiasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia di Hong Kong (ATKIHK), National Domestic Workers Movement, (India NDWM), Shakti Samuha (SS), Nepal and Self-Empowerment Program of Migrant Women (SEPOM), Thailand gather ourselves today at the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Consultation with Self-Organised member Organisations, organized by the GAATW International Secretariat, September 28th to October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005 in Mae Sot, Thailand.

We come here today with similar histories and objectives, achievements and challenges, yet at different stages of organizational growth. We share the realization that 'more people are more power' and believe in self-empowerment, self-representation and capacity building for our entire communities. We face similar challenges of social stigmatization, the insensitivity of governments and anachronistic development policies. Our differences are many, as are our regions of work, but we are united in our common goals and beliefs.

In this consultation we have shared our mutual belief in social justice and equality. We believe in human rights for all and have a particular interest in the right to health, women's rights and labour rights.

To achieve these ideals will not be easy, but we are determined to continue with the work that we have been doing for several years. We believe that only through self-organizing, skills training, networking, information sharing, and continued solidarity and support, we can improve our condition as women and as workers, and bring about social awareness and social change.

We all know that we are facing great challenges, but our motivation and will to fight is at least as big as the problems we rise up against. Solidarity is our first weapon. So we request that you, the members and friends of GAATW, lend us your full support and assistance as we continue this venture together. Self-organized groups are at the very heart of the trafficking issue; some of us have experienced trafficking and many of us work in sites in which trafficking is rampant. We hope that as we learn from other member organizations of GAATW, you too may learn something from us, at the very least listen to us and make us a partner in planning anti-trafficking initiatives. We deeply believe that exchanging information, communicating and networking will be a key to the realisation of our common goal.