

# 2013 DECLARATION ON THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN ASEAN

*Adopted in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam on 9 October 2013*

**WE**, the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as “ASEAN”), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on the occasion of the 23rd ASEAN Summit; UPHOLDING the goals, purposes and principles of ASEAN as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on the Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (2009-2015);

**REAFFIRMING** the goals and commitments of ASEAN to eliminating violence against women and monitor their progress as reflected in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in the ASEAN Region adopted at the 37th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) on 30 June 2004;

**FURTHER REAFFIRMING** the importance and general principles of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of the AHRD adopted at the 21st ASEAN Summit on 18 November 2012; and the commitments of ASEAN as reflected in the ASEAN Leaders’ Joint Statement in Enhancing Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons in Southeast Asia adopted at the 18th ASEAN Summit on 8 May 2011; the Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children adopted at the 17th ASEAN Summit on 28 October 2010; the ASEAN Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons Particularly Women and Children adopted at the 10th ASEAN Summit on 29 November 2004; the Declaration on the Commitments for Children in ASEAN adopted at the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare (AMRSW) on 2 August 2001; the Resolution on the ASEAN Plan of Action for Children adopted at the 3<sup>rd</sup> AMRSW Meeting on 2 December 1993; and the Declaration on the Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region adopted at the 21st AMM on 5 July 1988;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the commitments of individual ASEAN Member States to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) that have been ratified by all ASEAN Member States; the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Vienna Declaration); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA), BPFA+5 Outcome Document; the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and Plan of Action for Child Survival, Protection and Development; A World Fit For Children Declaration; and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

**RECALLING** resolutions relating to the elimination of violence against women and children of the United Nations General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), and 1889 (2009) on Women, Peace and Security;

**WELCOMING** the adoption of the Terms of Reference and Work Plan (2012-2016) of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and children in ASEAN taking into consideration the regional and national contexts bearing in mind the different historical, political, socio-cultural, religious, legal and economic backgrounds in the region;

**RECOGNISING** that ASEAN Member States shall take all appropriate measures to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedom and to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** the importance of intensifying efforts of ASEAN Member States to promote the rights of women and children, as well as to prevent and protect them from and respond to all forms of violence, abuse and exploitation of women and children particularly for those who are in vulnerable situations, including domestic violence, women and children who are sexually exploited, women and children with disabilities, women and children living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, women and children in conflict with laws, cyber pornography and cyber prostitution, trafficking in women and children, women and children in disasters, women and children in armed conflict, women and children in refugee camps, women and children on the move, stateless women and children, migrant women and children, women and children belonging to ethnic and/or indigenous groups, children in early marriage, physical abuse of children, bullying, discrimination against women and children in mass and social media, and others;

**RECOGNISING** that violence against women and violence against children occur irrespective of the stages of the life cycle, whether at home, in school, in the workplace, in public or private spaces (including cyber space) as a result of gender bias, discriminatory and harmful traditional practices and must be eliminated as they impair human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and children;

**EMPHASISING** that the rights of children to special protection and care are different than those of women, given that parents have the responsibilities in the upbringing and development of their children and to protect them from violence, abuse, maltreatment and exploitation, and the obligations of state parties to assist parents in these efforts;

**DO HEREBY DECLARE THAT:**

ASEAN Member States, individually and/or collectively, express common resolve to eliminate violence against women and violence against children in the region through the following measures:

1. Strengthen and, where necessary, enact or amend national legislations for the elimination of violence against women and violence against children, and to enhance the protection, services, rehabilitation, education and training, recovery and reintegration of victims/survivors;
2. Integrate legislations, policies and measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women and violence against children and to protect and assist the victims/survivors in the national development plans and programmes with time-bound targets, adequate resources, and gender responsive planning and budgeting;

3. Strengthen a holistic, multi-disciplinary approach to promote the rights of women and children and adopt a gender responsive, child sensitive, and age-responsive approach to eliminate violence against women and violence against children in the region which includes effective laws, legislations, policies and measures to:
  - Investigate, prosecute, punish and, where appropriate, rehabilitate perpetrators;
  - Protect women and children victims/survivors and witnesses;
  - Provide victims/survivors with access to justice, legal assistance, protection, social welfare services, education, and health services, including counseling and peer-to-peer support mechanisms, rehabilitation, recovery, and reintegration into the community, and consider provision of programme for families to properly give support to victims/ survivors;
  - Instill awareness to prevent re-victimization of women and children from any form of violence and ensure it does not occur anywhere through various programmes, such as provision and promotion of vocational training and employment opportunities of women who are victims/survivors, access to reproductive health services, education and other basic social services;
  - Promote family support services, parenting education, education and public awareness on the rights of women and children and the nature and causes of violence against women and violence against children to encourage active public participation in the prevention and elimination of violence;
  - Create an enabling environment for the participation of women and children, including victims/survivors, in the prevention and elimination of violence against women and violence against children;
  - Develop effective strategies to eliminate harmful practices which perpetuate gender stereotyping, violence against women and violence against children;
4. Strengthen the existing national mechanisms, with the assistance, where necessary, of the ACWC and other related stakeholders, in implementing, monitoring and reporting the implementation of the Concluding Observations and Recommendations of CEDAW, CRC and other Treaty Bodies as well as the accepted recommendations under the Universal Periodic Review Process of the United Nations Human Rights Council related to the elimination of all forms of violence against women and violence against children;
5. Strengthen the capacity of law enforcement officers, policy makers, social workers, health personnel, and other stakeholders to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate gender responsive and child friendly legislations, policies and measures for women and children victims of violence;
6. Encourage research and data collection and analysis in confidential concerning all forms of violence against women and violence against children to support the formulation and effective implementation of laws, policies and programmes to eliminate violence against women and violence against children for better protection of the victims/survivors in the region;

7. Strengthen the provision of support social welfare services to women and children victims/survivors of violence and their families in ASEAN through the establishment of an ACWC network of social services to facilitate the promotion of good practices, sharing of information, exchange of experts, social workers and service providers, including NGOs;
8. Strengthen partnerships with external parties at international, regional, national and local levels, including ASEAN Dialogue Partners, UN Agencies, civil society, community-based organisations, academia, philanthropists and private entities, in the work for the elimination of violence against women and violence against children in ASEAN and to mobilise resources to assist the victims/survivors;

**WE TASK** the relevant ASEAN bodies, in particular the ACWC, to promote the implementation of this Declaration and review its progress through appropriate instruments and actions with the support of ASEAN Member States.

**ADOPTED** in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam this Ninth Day of October in the Year Two Thousand and Thirteen, in a single original copy, in the English Language