



TASK FORCE ON ASEAN MIGRANT WORKERS



PRESS RELEASE

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ASEAN member states urged to ratify UN Human Rights Treaties and ILO Core Conventions

During the 12th ASEAN Summit from 10-15 January in Cebu City, the Philippines, Task Force on ASEAN Migrant Workers, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), and Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) jointly submitted a written statement to ASEAN member states to appeal for the ratification and implementation of the UN Treaties and ILO Conventions.

It reflects how ASEAN is centred around one of the regions of the lowest numbers of ratifications recorded, and how it also reflects the deteriorating human rights situation on the ground in ASEAN countries – ranging from disappearances, extra-judicial killings and persecution of human rights defenders, to where millions of national workers and migrant workers live in appalling conditions.

We highlight those with the worst UN Treaties ratification records - from Singapore, Burma, Malaysia and Brunei; call for the removal of reservations from Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and Thailand; urge countries to submit proper and timely reports as per their obligations to the Treaty Bodies; and call for full implementation and actions after concluding reservation.

The statement also calls for increased ratification of ILO Core Conventions to protect both national and migrant workers, and stresses that ASEAN member states should fulfill their obligations. Brunei, Burma, Laos, and Vietnam rank the worst in ASEAN for ILO Core Conventions ratifications, while Thailand failed to ratify conventions protecting freedom of association and collective bargaining. The statement lists Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines as failing to implement the conventions. Sinapan, Lee and Gois also emphasise the non-implementation of the Core Conventions in countries such as Cambodia, Singapore, and Burma.

The statement also asserts that *“There has been stressed of the serious divergence of national legislation and convention ratification [in the case of Burma]...Cambodian trade union leaders are targeted by extra-judicial killings and harassment, while public sector workers in Singapore have no legal right to form and join trade unions”*. Please see attached the full statement to ASEAN member states, calling them to remedy all human rights violations and to ratify UN Human Rights Treaties and ILO Core Conventions.

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