

# ACRATH - Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans - Canberra visit 21-26 November 2010

In November 2010, 15 women religious and colleagues undertook an ACRATH networking and policy development week in Canberra.



We met 68 people. We met Members of Parliament including two Ministers; we spoke with government advisors, Embassy and Union officials, and trafficking researchers. We distributed 200 copies of our ACRATH media release. Our end of week evaluation meeting declared the week a major success. We know that there is already movement on our key issues. We have much follow-up to do.

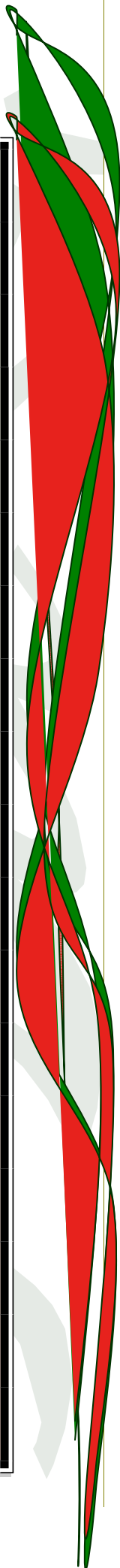
We gave each MP a one pager of our key talking points organised around the following areas of concern:

1. Preventing trafficking through promotion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Fairtrade.
2. Establishing a national system of financial compensation for people trafficked into Australia.
3. Providing safe and supportive accommodation for survivors of trafficking in Australia.
4. Expanding the human trafficking focus to include people trafficked into non sex related industries – construction, agriculture, mining and domestic labour.



## Outcomes of our visit:

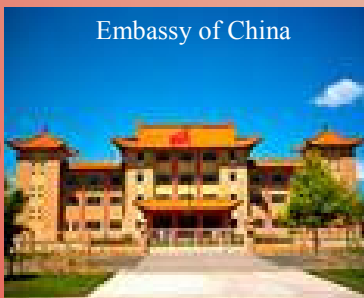
1. A commitment by government to work with us on a national system of financial compensation, on housing, and on TAFE access & English classes for people trafficked into Australia.
2. An invitation to make a presentation next March at the Human Rights sub-committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade.
3. An invitation to contribute to two Inquiries.
4. Two speeches were made in Parliament on human trafficking whilst we were there.
5. Minister O'Connor announced that ACRATH has been granted \$350,000 over 3 years to continue our networking, community education and direct service work—great news in keeping us viable, but it does need to be spread over our work in 4 states, across salaries, travel and events. The grant, along with other financial support and volunteer time, will enable ACRATH to handle the mushrooming work.





Louise Cleary CSB, ACRATH chairperson, attended the national roundtable discussion on trafficking on Wednesday 24 Nov at Parliament House. Carol Hogan SSS was present as an observer.

Later on that same day, ACRATH members met with Minister Kate Ellis, Minister for the Status of Women, and with Senator Louise Pratt, chairperson, and other members of the ALP Status of Women Committee.



Embassy of China

We met with officials at the Embassies of China, the Philippines, Malaysia & the USA. In addition we met with Prof Hilary Charlesworth from Australian National University, and with leadership from the AFP (Australian Federal Police), AIC (Australian Institute of Criminology), and CFMEU (Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union).

## Snapshots of the team



Many of us were accommodated at the Brigidine 'Gathering Place'



Relaxing in the parliament café at the end of a long day



Pausing in the Senate Courtyard



Our comfortable workspace within Parliament

*ACRATH is endorsed by: Catholic Religious Australia - the peak body for 180 religious orders in Australia, representing more than 8000 religious sisters, brothers and priests. [www.acrath.org.au](http://www.acrath.org.au)*

