



**AUSTRALIAN
CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS
AGAINST TRAFFICKING
IN HUMANS**

ACRATH

Canberra Advocacy

March 2013

A group of four formed the March 2013 ACRATH advocacy group. We spent four days working together in Canberra visiting parliamentarians and departmental officers. We were keen to affirm the passing of the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Slavery, Slavery-like Conditions and People Trafficking) Act 2013 and the recent announcement by the Prime Minister regarding ethical Commonwealth procurement. We particularly sought meetings with Ministers, Shadow Ministers and their advisors.



L-R: Noelene, Christine, Maree, Laurie Ferguson MP and Shane

The aims of the visit to Canberra were to:

- drive forward our advocacy on particular issues relating to the rights of trafficked people in Australia, ie the names of visas stigmatises those trafficked, the accessing of financial compensation and English classes and concerns relating to Special Benefits allowances



Meeting with members of the Attorney General's Department.

- remind MPs from the major political parties of some key issues in our area of work, ie the rights of people trafficked into Australia, the need for the Australian aid program to achieve its 0.5% target, and the need for government to ensure no slavery exists in the supply chain of goods brought into Australia
- remind MPs of ACRATH's work involving forced marriage, both in support of young women who have been trying to escape a forced marriage, and in partnerships with young women to raise community awareness as a prevention strategy. We spoke of the ACRATH RAP – Radio Awareness Project, and our work of awareness raising of labour trafficking in key languages in radio programs
- ask for a pre-election commitment to support re-funding of ACRATH by the federal government

Outcomes

On the fourth day we felt we had achieved our goals. It was good to find that the work of ACRATH was once again respected and affirmed. This affirmation was across parties. It is clear that the work of fighting human trafficking is an issue that has bipartisan support.

Additional Events

While in Canberra we attended two events as well as our advocacy meetings:

- a public hearing on the Slavery, Slavery-like Conditions and People Trafficking Inquiry conducted by the Human Rights Subcommittee of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade during which the Australian Federal Police gave evidence. It was especially pleasing to hear the AFP acclaim as helpful to their work the new slavery legislation that came into effect on March 8th 2013
- the Australian launch of the Ferrero Corporate Social Responsibility Report of 2011 at the Italian Embassy. We are excited that a business sees its commitment to a slavery free supply chain, amongst other acts of social responsibility, as something in its own corporate interests. Giovanni Ferrero in his introduction writes: 'Ferrero is committed to reaching 100% certified as traceable and sustainable cocoa ... before 2020 and to improving the living conditions of farmers in some of the poorest countries in the world'



ACRATH members with Ambassador Gianludovico de Martino