



www.acrath.org.au
People are NOT for sale

Media Release

16th August 2012

Australian Religious to Speak for the Rights of Trafficked People

A group of women religious from around Australia will make their sixth annual pilgrimage to Canberra next week in a bid to influence policies affecting people trafficked into Australia.

The fifteen women, Catholic sisters and their colleagues, are all members of Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH). They will spend a week (August 19-24) in Canberra speaking to Members of Parliament, Advisors, Embassy staff, departmental officials and Church leaders in their continuing endeavours to ensure trafficked people access their human rights.

ACRATH acknowledges the current work of the Australian Government, particularly its willingness to collaborate with NGOs to develop social policy to address the issue of human trafficking. We believe effective legislation has grown out of the genuine collaboration between government and civil society. The process has included frank dialogue as well as formal national round tables at which stakeholders have discussed the issues.

During the forthcoming visit to Canberra ACRATH members will speak with over 76 Members of Parliament and Ministerial staff. The following are their requests to Members of Parliament:

1. **ACRATH particularly wishes to encourage Members of Parliament to support the new legislation *Crimes Legislation Amendments (Slavery, Slavery-like Conditions and People Trafficking) Bill 2012.***
2. **ACRATH strongly urges the Government to implement the recommendations made by the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Dr Ngozi Ezeilo,. During her Nov 2011 mission to Australia she noted that Australia has “demonstrated strong leadership in combating trafficking in persons regionally and domestically.” She also affirmed the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code ACT.**
3. **ACRATH asks the Australian Government to ensure our Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) reaches 0.5% of our Gross National Income (GNI) by 2015, and 0.7% by 2020.**
4. **ACRATH asks the Australian government to ensure that the supply chain of goods brought into Australia is slave-free. ACRATH asks the Australian government to require companies to take all reasonable steps to ensure the goods they import and sell in Australia are free of slavery, forced labour and human trafficking. The US has been leading globally in this area, taking a number of steps in this direction. Goods that are particularly vulnerable include cocoa, seafood, clothing (especially cotton), bricks and rugs from some countries.**

For more information see the attached document - **Talking Points for Advocacy visit to Canberra.**

Christine Carolan
ACRATH National Projects Coordinator
projects@acrath.org.au 0427 302 755

Sr Maree Marsh csb
ACRATH National Chairperson
mareemarsh@brigidine.org.au



www.acrath.org.au
People are NOT for sale

ACRATH - Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans Talking Points for Advocacy visit to Canberra 20 – 23 August 2012

ACRATH acknowledges the current work of the Australian Government, particularly its willingness to collaborate with NGOs, to develop social policy to address the issue of human trafficking. We believe effective legislation has grown out of the genuine collaboration between government and civil society. The process has included frank dialogue as well as formal national round tables at which stakeholders have discussed the issues.

ACRATH is committed to the well-being of people trafficked into Australia, whether for sex work, for work in other industries, for organ trafficking or for forced marriages. From our experience in the area over the past 8 years in Australia, ACRATH has come to an understanding of some of the complexities of addressing the issue of human trafficking.

- A. ACRATH particularly wishes to encourage Members of Parliament to support the new legislation *Crimes Legislation Amendments (Slavery, Slavery-like Conditions and People Trafficking) Bill 2012*. ACRATH supports the Bill because**
1. ACRATH is particularly pleased to see the forced and servile marriage aspects of the Bill
 2. ACRATH asks that resources follow the passing of this legislation to ensure its efficacy
 3. ACRATH believes the Bill does not go far enough with respect to the availability of reparations to victims of these offences. The ability to access compensation for survivors of trafficking is something Australia committed to in signing the Palermo Protocol to the UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime.
- B. During her Nov 2011 mission to Australia, the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, Dr Ngozi Ezeilo, noted that Australia has “demonstrated strong leadership in combating trafficking in persons regionally and domestically.” She also affirmed the proposed amendments to the Criminal Code ACT.**
- ACRATH strongly supports the following recommendations made by the Special Rapporteur:
1. offer support to victims as a human right, rather than because of their willingness and ability to participate in the criminal justice processes
 2. greater focus on victims’ rights to access services especially housing and English language classes
 3. establish a comprehensive compensation scheme for victims of trafficking
 4. ratify, without delay, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and International Labour Organization Convention No. 189 (2011) concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.
- C. ACRATH asks the Australian Government to ensure our Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) reaches 0.5% of our Gross National Income (GNI) by 2015, and 0.7% by 2020.**
1. ACRATH is particularly concerned that in the last federal budget, Australia has fallen behind its commitment to meet its ODA target and has deferred by one year its achievement of the target to reach 0.5% to 2016-17
 2. The impact of the government’s one year delay to the aid budget increase means fewer people will have access to clean water, sanitation, education and health care; ACRATH is most concerned by the impact on women and girls
 3. Australia’s aid contribution lags behind other wealthy nations. In fact several countries already give 0.5% aid, and Britain will increase that to 0.7% by 2015 despite their serious economic situation at present.
- D. ACRATH asks the Australian government to ensure that the supply chain of goods brought into Australia is slave-free.**
1. ACRATH asks the Australian government to require companies to take all reasonable steps to ensure the goods they import and sell in Australia are free of slavery, forced labour and human trafficking. The US has been leading globally in this area, taking a number of steps in this direction.
 2. ACRATH and other NGOs are now deeply concerned that research by the US Dept of Labor and UN bodies has identified goods being imported into Australia where forced labour and trafficking have been involved in their production. These goods include cocoa, seafood, clothing (especially cotton), bricks and rugs from some countries.

Christine Carolan
ACRATH National Projects Coordinator
projects@acrath.org.au 0427 302 755
15 August 2012

Sr Maree Marsh csb
ACRATH National Chairperson
mareemarsh@brigidine.org.au