

Opening remarks at the meeting, possibly by speaking about some of the work that you are doing in the context of Thailand or the region in order to promote values and evidence-based narratives on migration

**A regional roundtable on reshaping narratives
on migration in Asia and the Pacific.**

Tuesday, 17 December
Grande Centre Point Ploenchit

Dr. Ratchada Jayagupta, ASEAN ACWC Representative for Women, Thailand

(Excellencies), Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for organising this important regional roundtable on reshaping narratives on migration in Asia and the Pacific.

Preventing and responding to violence against women and girls is a regional priority because this is one of the most serious and life-threatening violations of human rights in our world today, with lifelong consequences- and it's entirely preventable. Violence against women has devastating impacts on survivors' mental and physical health, education, incomes and employment opportunities.

In ASEAN Member States, violence against women remains widespread according to the available data.

Violence against women continues to play a significant role in migration – both in driving women into precarious migration pathways, and as part of migration and labour itself. Whether migrating through regular or irregular channels, women migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to

exploitation, abuse, violence and trafficking throughout the migration cycle. They are at risk of violence and abuse from intermediaries, employers, partners, and strangers as well as from exploitative labour conditions. Violence can be physical and sexual, psychological and economic- and has long lasting impacts.

The ASEAN region has made important progress in recent years, with 8 out of 10 countries in the region now having dedicated laws to prevent and address violence against women. We have also seen increased accountability at the regional level, with the adoption of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women which also mentions the rights of women migrant workers.

With the objective of turning these important policy commitments into a lived reality for all women migrant workers in ASEAN, we have developed an innovative regional Campaign in Support of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action to Eliminate Violence against Women and the Bohol Trafficking in Persons Work Plan; which focusing on the elimination of Gender-Based Workplace Exploitation.

The campaign, recently launched in Thailand, will contribute to preventing and responding to violence against women workers and human trafficking in ASEAN. This innovative campaign was designed through extensive consultations of women migrant workers, ASEAN representatives, United Nations agencies, employers, and non-governmental organisations.

Through a solid evidence-based approach, we have jointly produced a song and music video with key messages and referral information related to violence against women and human trafficking that could effectively reach

and engage women migrant workers' communities. In cooperation with Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, The Asia Foundation, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand, Sidekick Social Change Agency, UN Women, and IOM, especially since the campaign was developed following research in migrant communities about their information consumption habits and platforms, and tested with migrant communities too. Aware of the fact that most migrant workers rely on digital as primary source of information, we have created content tailored on their information channels and needs.

When a woman migrant worker is living in a country without a having legal status, her ability to access basic public services, such as health care and sexual and reproductive health services, is drastically affected. She may simply not know who to trust or where to go for help – where there are centres or providers who will respect her right to treatment regardless of her immigration status.

Through this innovative campaign we want to overcome these barriers by providing key information and referral contacts related to access to essential services for survivors of violence, including human trafficking. Through this promising initiative, we have the ambition to foster the ability of women to choose the first door while seeking support.

This campaign will provide us a unique opportunity to improve the access to information and quality and the coordination of services for women migrant workers. This campaign also has a potential to break the barriers women migrant workers faced when seeking help.

Thank you