



DIPLOMACY TRAINING PROGRAM

AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
A training program for peoples of the Asia-Pacific region

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL ASIA-PACIFIC TRAINING SESSION

9 January - 2 February 1996

Bangkok, Thailand

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) successfully completed its seventh annual training session on human rights held in Bangkok from 9 January to 2 February 1996. Twenty two trainees from thirteen different countries/constituencies in the Asia-Pacific region attended the full four week course, twenty of them receiving certificates of successful completion, and two others for their attendance. Ten additional Thai participants attended the introductory course in the first week and also received separate certificates. The certificates were awarded by the University of New South Wales with which the DTP has been affiliated from its inception.

All the trainees at the 1996 Bangkok session were human rights defenders and activists from various non-governmental organisations in the region. Their objective, as indicated in written applications, was to receive professional training in human rights and human rights work in order to enhance their knowledge, skills and activities. In their responses to the evaluation questionnaire, participants commented that all or most of their objectives were successfully met during the session.

Professional training of NGO personnel in effective human rights defence, protection and promotion was the primary objective of the Bangkok session. Year by year, the DTP has sought to improve course content, as well as course delivery through additions to curriculum and resource personnel. As representatives of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM Asia), the main partner organisation of the DTP in the region, commented, the January 1996 session was a "significant improvement on the 1995 session." This progress was possible as a result of the well planned curriculum delivered by well qualified and experienced training staff on the one hand and, by the active and enthusiastic participation of the trainees on the other. It was the opinion of Cecilia Jimenez, a long standing trainer for DTP sessions, that the January 1996 trainees were one of the best groups ever at a DTP session.

The present report is longer than usual DTP reports. As the DTP intends to strengthen and expand its activities in the near future, the purpose has been to provide a comprehensive account of what the DTP actually does in its training sessions. The report was written by Laksiri Fernando, with contributions from Alison Tate.

2. OBJECTIVES AND RATIONALE

The DTP was founded in 1989 at the initiative of Jose Ramos-Horta, a human rights advocate from East Timor who became his country's representative to the UN after the invasion of East Timor by the Indonesian military in 1975. Having been directly involved in international diplomacy for over fifteen years, Jose decided to share his experiences with other activists in the Asia-Pacific region through the development of a professional training course in the diplomacy of human rights.

Jose's proposal to initiate diplomacy training for human rights defenders was endorsed by the Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) and the first training session was held in January-February 1990 in Sydney. From that date the DTP has been affiliated with the University of New South Wales and cooperates closely with the University of New South Wales Human Rights Centre. Since 1990, the DTP has organised seven annual training sessions in Sydney and Bangkok and a number of other in-country sessions for activists and NGOs in the region. The total number of graduates from the DTP is more than three hundred.

As expressed in the foundation document of the DTP, the main aims and objectives of the Program are to:

Convey to participants an understanding of the problems and issues faced by national minorities, colonial and indigenous peoples, and labour movements of the developing world, in particular, of the Asia-Pacific region;

Offer participants a specialised training in the ways the international system functions, the means and resources available for the advancement of their rights and interests, within the UN system and other international, regional and national institutions.

The DTP believes that Asia-Pacific is a region in which human rights require protection and promotion through a multitude of activities, in particular education and training. In the Asia-Pacific, there are no regional arrangements for human rights, such as a convention or a regional commission. The level of ratification of principle UN human rights conventions is particularly low in comparison with other regions. Although there have been some improvements in human rights protection in a number of countries, in others instances of disappearances, arbitrary arrest, detention and torture in custody etc. persist. Many victims of these and other violations belong to ethnic and other minorities and indigenous peoples. Problems concerning violations of the rights of women, workers, minorities and indigenous peoples are unresolved, even in those countries in which political structures purport to be democratic.

Over the last decade or so, there have been encouraging developments in terms of the emergence of non-governmental organisations particularly concerned with human rights defence and promotion. The determination and solidarity of such organisations became prominent during the regional preparatory meetings, held in Bangkok, prior to the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights. The 1993 Bangkok NGO Declaration symbolises the resolve of human rights organisations in the Asia-Pacific region to work for human rights promotion.

Despite their outstanding commitment, many NGOs continue to lack the experience, knowledge and training for effective human rights advocacy. There are several conceptual issues that NGOs in the region need to address. In Asia, universality is strongly challenged. There is confusion even in NGO circles about the cultural relevance of human rights and links between civil and political rights, on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights, on the other. These are some of the issues that the 1996 DTP Bangkok session sought to explore with participants.

There are trends towards consolidation in human rights work in the Asia-Pacific region, as shown by the formation of umbrella organisations such as the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM Asia) and the Asian NGO Commission for Human Rights. As a result of growing awareness of human rights issues in the region, there is a need for education and training for people involved in human rights work. **As the Directory of Selected Training Programmes on Human Rights compiled by FORUM Asia shows, there are only five training programs in Asia-Pacific countries. All except the DTP, are country training programs, three of them in the Philippines, and are of limited scope and duration.**

3. PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR BACKGROUND

The selection of candidates for the 1996 Bangkok session was primarily conducted through NGOs in the region. From a total of 48 applications, 32 trainees were finally selected with priority given to women and representatives of indigenous organisations. Only two candidates were selected from one country/constituency to give a fair balance to different sectors of interest. As a result of personnel changes in the DTP Office in Sydney in November 1995 there were unfortunate delays in the selection process of candidates.

Consequently only 22 candidates were able to participate in the session. Others found it difficult to organise their travel and/or visas to arrive on time in Bangkok. This resulted in an unfortunate gender imbalance. There were only 5 women among 22 trainees. Some women applicants found it difficult to make travel arrangements at such short notice. This was especially the case among the selected women candidates from the Philippines, Bangladesh and Indonesia. There was already a gender imbalance among the applications received which also affected the final balance among participants. It is a matter of concern that many human rights organisations in the Asia-Pacific region, except in the case of the Philippines, are heavily resourced by men. The DTP intends to take corrective measures in future application and selection processes to address this.

All participants came from non-English speaking backgrounds and this had to be taken into account in formulating and delivering training sessions. The average age of participants was 32 years. Many had some experience in NGO work if not directly in the area of human rights. The youngest participant was 19, the oldest 47. Thirteen of the 22 participants were graduates in different fields, with some having received post-graduate degrees. Some of the organisations represented were:

- Legal Aid of Cambodia
- Humanity Protection Forum for the Jumma People
- The Revolutionary Peoples Front of Manipur
- The United Liberation Front of Asom
- Manguri Aboriginal Corporation (Australia)
- All Burma Students' Democratic Front
- Karen National Union
- Karen Women's Organisation
- Burmese Women's Union
- Federation of Trade Unions of Burma
- Overseas Mon National Students Organisation
- Trust for Rural Education and Development (India)
- Informal Sector Service Centre (Nepal)
- Movement for the Defence of Democratic Rights (Sri Lanka)
- West Papua Peoples' Front

Participants also represented the following 13 countries or constituencies: Mon people (Burma), India, Aboriginal Australia, Karen people (Burma), Nepal, Burma, East Timor, Assam (India), West Papua, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Thailand and Manipur (India).

4. TRAINING PROGRAM

The Bangkok session was divided into a logical sequence of four weeks.

4.1. Week One: Introduction to Human Rights

The first week provided an Introduction to International Human Rights. On the first day, Laksiri Fernando of the DTP introduced basic concepts and landmarks of human rights development. Jose Campino from the UN Secretariat in New York explained the main human rights objectives and functions of the United Nations placing much emphasis on the UN Charter and the General Assembly. Fernando explained the universality of human rights, arguing that human rights concepts are not constructions, western or otherwise, but discoveries of international importance. He emphasised the indivisibility and more particularly the interdependence of human rights, with reference to civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other.

Campino explained that the end of the Cold War has opened new opportunities for the realisation of human rights through the UN system. A more conducive atmosphere is visible in the General Assembly, Security Council and Secretariat. The purpose of the first day was to stimulate further discussion. Some of the concepts introduced were further explored in group discussions amongst the participants.

On the second day, Sarah Pritchard conducted specific introductory sessions on Human Rights Law and Public International Law. She introduced the concepts of sovereignty, equality of states and territorial integrity. She noted that some of the old premises of international relations are being challenged through the enlargement of international law. She explained the sources of international law, namely international conventions or treaties, international custom, general principles of law accepted by nations and judicial decisions. She also provided an overview of the major human rights instruments.

The Introduction to International Human Rights Law was followed by a day-long session on International Human Rights Mechanisms. While Laksiri Fernando introduced the Charter-Based Human Rights System at the UN, Sarah Pritchard explained the Treaty-Based Procedures. Among the Charter based bodies, much emphasis was placed upon the functions and procedures of the UN Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission. Pritchard explained that treaty bodies supervise the compliance of States with their obligations under particular human rights treaties. In the discussion of the six major human rights treaty based bodies, particular emphasis was placed on the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

A highlight of the first week was Victor Karunan's session on the "The Role of Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations within the United Nations System." Karunan explained that as a body composed of Member-States or governments, the UN reflects global politics in all its dimensions. NGOs are provided "consultative status" within the terms determined by Member-States. Karunan suggested that the under-utilisation of the UN system by NGOs in the Asia-Pacific was largely a result of lacunae on the part of NGOs. These were (a) lack of information and training in the utilisation of UN human rights mechanisms; (b) lack of resources and personnel in this area of work; and (c) lack of clear policy and guidelines for UN work among NGOs. During the discussion which followed, much emphasis was placed on the need for training and for closer cooperation among NGOs in the region.

4.2. Week Two: UN Human Rights Bodies and Procedures

The second week's training commenced with an overview of "Human Rights Issues in the Asia-Pacific Region" presented by Songphorn Tajaroensuk. With over three billion people, the Asia-Pacific is a complex region in political and cultural terms. Some of these complexities have been aggravated by different colonial influences. Although many countries won independence after the Second World War, their path to development was obstructed by the existence of unfavourable international structures, especially in the sphere of economics. Tajaroensuk identified the following causes and consequences of human rights violations: Militarisation, repressive rule, race for economic development, commercial interests over national resources, sex tourism, migration of workers, traditional labour systems, traditional practices which make women subordinate, lack of right to self-determination and trend towards religious fundamentalism. Tajaroensuk emphasised the importance of the Bangkok NGO Declaration as a starting point in NGO work on human rights. She expressed concern over governmental action undermining the universality and indivisibility of human rights and remarked that NGOs need to counter such action through human rights education.

The main thrust of the second week was to provide a detailed explanation of the actual functioning of the Commission and the Sub-Commission on Human Rights. Conducted mainly by Cecilia Jimenez, sessions were concerned with how to approach the Commission/Sub-Commission and how to utilise special procedures such as working groups and rapporteurs/representatives in order to enhance NGO work. Jimenez explained some procedures of the Commission and the Sub-Commission that could be invoked to address human rights issues, during and between sessions. She referred to possibilities for on-site visits, as well as urgent action. She described Special Rapporteurs with thematic mandates on issues such as executions, torture, religious intolerance, sale of children, freedom of opinion, racism and independence of the judiciary.

She also described the more substantial work on thematic issues performed by working groups. Such working groups deal with issues including disappearances, arbitrary detention and the right to development. Jimenez also provided information on special representatives on country situations such as Myanmar, Afghanistan and Cambodia. Her sessions conveyed much practical information and involved numerous exercises on speech making and submitting information under special procedures.

During the second week, time was also taken to deal with the issue of "Self-Determination: The Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Minorities." After tracing the history of the concept of the right to self-determination and its embodiment in European international law of the 18th century, Sarah Pritchard explained two dimensions of the concept: the democratic and the ethnic. The broad democratic dimension encompasses the right of all citizens of a country to choose their own government, without interference from outside. Under the ethnic dimension, there is a recognition of the aspirations of culturally distinct groups to make decisions concerning their own destinies. Pritchard noted the conceptually distinct status of the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination.

During the second week, there was also a presentation by Joachim Grismann on "International Labour Standards and Human Rights." After tracing the history of the ILO from its inception in 1919, Grismann emphasised the tripartite character of the Organisation which is unique among UN agencies. Labour organisations, through trade unions in member countries, are constitutionally represented within the ILO. A major portion of international labour standards are part of human rights. The ILO adopts international labour standards through Conventions and Recommendations. Conventions are meant to be ratified by Member States, and thus create legally binding obligations. Recommendations lay down general principles for countries to follow. Grismann also explained the functioning of ILO supervisory bodies in monitoring and promoting ILO standards.

4.3. Week Three: Diplomacy, Lobbying and Media

Week Three commenced with an examination of "the State and International Relations" as relevant to diplomacy and lobbying. It is against the State that human rights are generally asserted and it is within a particular State system that human rights are to be achieved.

The first session was conducted by Laksiri Fernando. He identified an inverse relationship between the power of the State and respect for human rights. The achievement of human rights is thus related to the achievement of democratic participation. However, whilst democracy is a necessary condition for human rights, the mere existence of democracy does not guarantee respect for human rights. In achieving human rights, it is important for people to organise into movements. However, only the State can transform the claims of human rights into legal realities. In this connection the reformation of the State is critical. Fernando noted that in comparison to the period of the Cold War, today there are possibilities of achieving human rights in a tangible manner through campaigns, lobbying and diplomacy.

Evelyn Serrano discussed "Human Rights and Effective Lobbying", based mainly on her experience in the Philippines. The moral basis for effective lobbying is one's strong belief in people's power and the legitimacy of human rights. Serrano suggested that experience and training make the techniques of lobbying effective. A clear analysis of one's situation and issues is also of paramount importance. Such analysis should identify an organisation's interests and overall objectives and encourage consideration of how these can be most effectively promoted. What are the organisation's long term and short term objectives? What strategies might be employed to achieve them? Serrano also stressed the importance of information as a major tool in lobbying activities. Information needs to be systematically documented for use in urgent circumstances. With respect to lobbying, Serrano noted that target groups need to be identified. Lobbying can be national or international or both. For international lobbying, an organisation need not go abroad. The Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), for example conducts monthly briefings of foreign diplomats. As in any other activity, planning and preparation, then effective implementation, and thereafter assessment and evaluation are essential.

In the third week, Victor Karunan made a presentation on "The Diplomacy of Human Rights" in which he identified the various roles of human rights advocates in the protection of human rights and in advocacy. He focussed on the relevance of power structures to activities that aim to influence and change the setting of human rights standards. Karunan also raised issues in connection with the development of an "holistic approach" to integrating civil and political, and economic, social, and cultural rights. His presentation focussed both on the principles that need to be addressed, as well as strategies that need to be developed to achieve respect for human rights in a civil society.

Two days were spent considering the nature of the media. Alison Tate covered topics relating to the mass media, specialist media and non-formal media, and skills development in the effective utilisation of the media in human rights work. Discussion focussed on the purposes of the media, and who might be reached through media attention, the kind of stories that appeal to mainstream media organisations, the language of the media and media bias. There was also discussion of issues relating to a free media, censorship, discrimination and prejudice, independence and media ownership.

Sonny Inbaraj, a prominent journalist from *The Nation* newspaper, conducted a session on "Writing for the Media." Reflecting on various critiques of the media, including Noam Chomsky's analysis, Inbaraj covered the freedom of the media in the Asian region, the internationalisation of news and information and the influence of State and business interests. He also highlighted the impact of national domestic political agendas on the coverage of human rights stories, and the impact of a consensus within the media on limiting the range of alternative perspectives.

Media skills were practiced in group exercises conducted by Tate and Inbaraj. These included media liaison and presentation skills, such as the preparation of media releases, the choice of representatives, and the creation of images and media events. Susan Montgomery assisted participants in preparing for a role play simulation of a media conference. Tessa Piper, a consultant with Article 19 also conducted a session which further examined issues of media freedom and censorship.

A session on "Lessons from the 1995 Beijing Forth World Conference on Women" was presented by Sinith Sittirak from the Thai Grassroots Womens' Group. Somboon Srikhumdokkae reflected on her experiences preparing to participate at the Beijing NGO Forum and on her subsequent work in relation to health and safety issues for Thai women factory workers. Sachi Pandey described his work in areas of gender training in the region with the Women's Action Research Institute.

Boonthan Verawongse gave a presentation on "Lessons from the UN World Conference on Human Rights". This covered the regional preparatory meetings in which the Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD) had been involved, as well as the achievements of NGOs since the 1993 Vienna World Conference and the challenges ahead in the Asia-Pacific.

Week Three concluded with a presentation by Laksiri Fernando on "The Realisation of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights". This covered the history of the distinction made in international instruments between civil and political and economic, social and cultural rights, and controversies surrounding international consideration of mechanisms for international supervision, assistance and cooperation. Fernando highlighted the distinction between a welfare approach and a human rights approach.

4.4. Week Four: Issues and Strategies in Human Rights

Week Four concentrated on issues and strategies in human rights. Thai environmentalist and lobbyist, Srisuwan Kuankachon from the Foundation for Ecological Recovery led a discussion on "Human Rights and the Environment". He identified some issues environmentalists in Thailand need to address and referred to the conflict of private and public interests being played out in many countries in the Asia-Pacific.

Professor Chaiwat Satha-Anand led a session on "Human Rights Problematic and Non-Violent Action". This session raised issues relating to changes in international relations in the Post Cold War period and their relevance to the legitimacy of violent and non-violent forms of public action. He related processes of public protest and persuasion, non-cooperation and direct intervention to the kind of values societies uphold. His analysis focused on the creative use of power relations at a community and an international level.

Walden Bello addressed issues concerning development and its impact on economic and social change from a human rights perspective. He pointed out that income inequality in newly industrialised countries is greater than before industrialisation. Bello analysed economic development in the context of State and institutional authority and representation under different modes of governance. He spoke of the role of international financial institutions, bilateral and multi-lateral aid agencies and national development policies in relation to decision making and participation by people's organisations.

Roque Raymundo, Legal Officer with the Jesuit Refugee Service (Asia-Pacific), covered human rights concerns relating to the global phenomenon of the creation of refugees and internally displaced people and international refugee law. Raymundo emphasised the role of local and international NGOs and of UN agencies in implementing programs of monitoring, protection, advocacy and humanitarian assistance delivery.

Other issues covered in the final week included women's rights in connection with the trafficking of women. Sarah Johnston, Director of the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, highlighted individual and societal challenges arising from the economic and sexual exploitation of women on a local through to a global level.

Taneeya Runcharoen of "Child Workers in Asia" covered issues in connection with the rights of children. Whilst the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been signed by the greatest number of UN members, its practical implementation has been very limited. Runcharoen explained the impact of social and economic changes upon the conditions of the child, the family and the society. She provided an overview of the hidden sector, encompassing bonded labour and domestic servitude; the non-formal sector, including manufacturing, sub-contracting and street vendors; the industrial sector, involving manufacturing and home industries; and the agricultural sector, relevant to the lives of a majority of the world's children engaged as family-farm workers and in plantation and fishing industries. These issues were related to broader human rights concerns in terms of the survival, protection, development and participation of children.

During the final week, considerable time was then spent preparing for a simulation of a session of the Human Rights Commission. These preparations involved putting into practice skills of consultation, strategy development, planning, negotiating, informing and lobbying. Each participant was required to prepare a statement by a Government or an NGO representative on a resolution concerning a mock report from the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Myanmar (Burma).

During the final week, human rights promotion and education were examined in sessions presented by Max Ediger from Burma Issues and by Professor Gotham Arya from one of DTP's Thai partners "Program for the Promotion of Non-Violence in Thai Society". Ediger and Arya explored strategies and techniques for use in formal, informal and non-formal education sectors in order to promote human rights change from a basis of knowledge, attitudes and skills.

An excursion was undertaken to the Thai House Committee for Justice and Human Rights, one of DTP's partners. Participants were able to observe a Committee meeting about a land rights dispute involving farmers from North-East Thailand and to meet with members of the Committee. The final day was devoted to a group discussion on the "Development of NGO Strategies", led by Alison Tate and Laksiri Fernando, and to an evaluation of the four-week session by participants.

The session concluded with a closing ceremony at which all participants were presented with a certificate from the University of New South Wales. Thai partners and a participant nominated by the group made brief presentations. A Thai dance and cultural evening followed in the company of supporters and invited guests.

4.5. Teaching Methodology

The Bangkok session employed collegial teaching methods, suitable for adults with activist orientation in human rights work. Trainers were not selected simply on the basis of academic standing. The main criteria were commitment to human rights, experience in the practice of human rights and familiarity with the NGO environment. As a result, trainers were judicious mix of committed academics and NGO representatives.

Training methods included lecturers, group work and role play. It was sought to ensure a balance of all three methods throughout the session. Apart from formal sessions during the day, informal sessions were organised during the evenings to enhance and support the learning process. These sessions included the preparation of country reports and journal entries. Trainees were asked to maintain a daily journal in which they recorded their impressions about what they were learning. These entries helped them raise pertinent questions during sessions. All participants were asked to prepare country reports before arriving in Bangkok and prior guidelines were provided for this purpose. Country reports were presented in the evenings and were received with much enthusiasm. Through this process, participants learnt about one another's country situations and further developed their presentation skills.

5. EVALUATION

An evaluation was conducted on the basis of a questionnaire distributed among participants during the last week of the training. The questionnaire was answered anonymously. The questionnaire contained 14 questions which sought to assess, in particular: (a) the importance of the subjects covered; (b) the impact of the training on participants in terms of skills, knowledge and attitudes; (c) the effectiveness of different teaching methods used; (d) the strengths and weakness of the trainers; and (e) the adequacy of organisational arrangements.

Almost all participants identified similar objectives which had led to their participation in the session. Participants were asked to list at least three objectives. A typical answer read as follows: "to achieve a conceptual understanding of human rights, diplomacy and international relations; to learn about human rights lobbying and related work; and to make contacts with other regional human rights activists." Participants indicated a clear preference for a mixture of both theoretical and practical knowledge, with a particular emphasis on the latter. As to the question: "Were your objectives reached?" a typical answer was that "Yes, there is always more to learn, but in terms of the objectives I had before coming here, I think they were reached." Some participants noted that they had been unable to fully achieve the objectives because of a limited background knowledge or poor English.

Depending on particular personal and professional interests, participants differed in their views as to the most useful themes. While general appreciation was expressed for sessions covering practical skills, such as "Writing to the Media," "Lobbying and Negotiations," a good number of participants commented positively on the themes such as "Economic, Social and Cultural Rights," "Non-Violence" and "Human Rights Education." When asked about less useful themes, the participants tended to identify the sessions given by a number of guest lecturers. One participant stated that "the themes were relevant, but the lectures were not good." Another participant, referring to the same themes, stated that "presentations were not well prepared." It was very clear that participants gained most from the sessions presented by professional trainers and less from the guest lecturers.

Overwhelmingly, participants found the DTP session to be valuable without being unduly polite. To the question: "Has this training changed your thinking about human rights and human rights work?" a typical answer was: "Yes, I have now gained knowledge how the UN system operates, how one can fit in the system in terms of complaining on issues arising. Also I learnt the importance of lobbying and networking." Virtually all participants agreed that of a four-week period was appropriate for this type of a training. However, some complained about long hours, stretching into late evenings with informal sessions.

When participants were asked "How do you rate the usefulness of different types of teaching at the DTP (lectures, group work and role play)?" some interesting results emerged. Participants seemed to prefer role play (12), group work (11) and lectures (10) as the first preference in that order. The numbers in brackets represent the number of preferences given. The differences, however, were quite marginal. Three participants rated all three teaching types as equally important. As the second preference, the three types of teaching were rated in the following order: lectures (10), role play (5) and group work (5). No participant rated lectures third, while group work (4) and role play (3) were placed third by a number of participant. These results suggest an appreciation of the importance of all three types of teaching at DTP sessions. While lectures of an inter-active nature are important in imparting not only knowledge, but also skills, role play and group work are indispensable in stimulating and testing that knowledge and skills.

When participants were asked "What aspects of human rights or human rights work would you like to learn more about at the DTP?", the answers differed. Many wanted to learn more about the media, lobbying and negotiation skills. Some wanted the DTP to provide sessions on running human rights projects, including project planning and fundraising. Some expressed dissatisfaction with the limited time given to discussion of the rights of women, indigenous peoples and workers. A significant number wanted to learn more about economic, social and cultural rights, non-violence as a human rights approach and methods of human rights education.

A majority of participants expressed their satisfaction with the organisational arrangements. However, a number stressed the need for greater emphasis on time management and less flexibility in changing scheduled times. A number of participants asked for more computer facilities (only one computer had to be shared by organisers and participants). A majority of participants preferred the more self-contained Japanese Studies Centre of the Thammasat University at Rangsit to Chulalongkorn University in the busy city centre of Bangkok.

6. ORGANISATION

The Bangkok session was organised within a short period of time after the change of staff at the DTP in November 1995. Most organisational difficulties in terms of arranging visas and flights resulted from this situation. The new coordinators of the DTP visited Bangkok two times prior to the session to make sure that arrangements were in place. Two DTP coordinators were responsible for anchorage of the session. Laksiri Fernando had primary responsibility for the teaching program, Alison Tate for organisational arrangements. A local organiser, Subhatra Bhumi-Prabas, was responsible for logistics including conference facilities, accommodation, food, field visits and transport for participants to and from the airport.

During the first three weeks, the training was conducted at the Japanese Studies Centre at the Rangsit Campus of Thammasat University. The venue was in most respects suitable for a training of the DTP nature. A major difficulty arose in terms of communication, as a result of a lack of international phone facilities. The final week of the training was held at Chulalongkorn University, with trainees staying at the Student Christian Centre. The change of venue was intended to give trainees a change of atmosphere and access to better facilities at Chulalongkorn University. However, many participants reported that the move was quite disruptive in terms of sustained study and concentration.

The local partners of the DTP session were:

FORUM-Asia

The Program for the Promotion of Non-violence in Thai Society

The Thai House (Parliamentary) Committee on Human Rights and Justice

Duang Prateep Foundation

FORUM-Asia assisted the DTP from the beginning both in organisational and curriculum matters including the formulation of curriculum, identification of local resource persons etc. The Program for the Promotion of Non-Violence in Thai Society, attached to Chulalongkorn University was particularly helpful with arrangements for the fourth week of the session. In addition, its Director, Dr. Gotham Arya, was a key resource person during the session in liaising with Thai Government officials and in dealing with security matters. The Thai House Committee on Justice and Human Rights and its Chairperson, Mr. Witthaya Kaewparadai, hosted participants at the Committee Room in Parliament and was a key speaker at both opening and closing ceremonies. The Committee's participation in these events was a gesture of support for human rights promotion and an acknowledgment of the DTP's role in the region. Duang Prateep Foundation and its members assisted the program in many organisational matters.

The most unfortunate event during the session was the failure to obtain a visa for Jose Ramos-Horta to enter Thailand. Participants were extremely disappointed and the training program had to be re-arranged as a result of his absence. Ramos-Horta, the founder of the DTP, has been a key resource person in DTP sessions. His contributions are particularly valued in skills training and in role plays.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Some important final conclusions can be drawn from an evaluation of the DTP's 1996 Bangkok session.

The DTP's annual January session can, by and large, be considered a beginners' course, in terms of the background and experiences of participants. With a few exceptions a majority of participants were new to human rights at the regional or international level. Most held new or ordinary membership positions in their organisations. While the training they received will enable them to perform more effective work, **the DTP might target a more experienced group of participants for the next 1997 January session** - such participants might come from policy making levels within NGOs in the region. The next session might also be in the nature of "training of trainers", where participants learn in order to pass on to others within their organisations and communities.

In the future, the DTP intends to be more active and involved in human resource development and institutional building for human rights work in the region.

Therefore, DTP training sessions need to be considered more as a means than a final end. The DTP will be placing its activities in the coming years within the context of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education. As a step towards that end, it intends to attract more experienced personnel from NGOs for its next training session and to utilise the opportunity to plan strategies and activities with them.

In terms of the structure of the training program, the DTP intends to review the curriculum in order:

- a) **To improve the first week** to provide more comprehensive introduction to the main concepts of human rights, legal and political;
- b) **To restructure the second week** to provide more detailed and practical information on how to utilise the UN (Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission, working groups etc) and other international mechanisms;
- c) **To examine in a more systematic manner, human rights issues in the region during the third week** i.e. issues relating to the rights of women, workers, indigenous peoples and minorities, as well as the nature and extent of violations. Also to introduce new sessions on human rights fact-finding, human rights education and data-base management during the second-half of the third week;
- d) **To move sessions on the media and lobbying to the fourth week**, together with strategy development and a simulation of the Commission on Human Rights or Security Council in which new skills and knowledge might be practically employed.

April 1996

Annex 1

Training Program and Timetable

Week 1:

Introduction to International Human Rights.

Monday 8 January

Morning: Registration, administration and accommodation arrangements

Afternoon: Getting to know each other
Introduction to the teaching program

Tuesday 9 January

9.30 am - 11.00 am Opening Ceremony

11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.00 pm Introduction to human rights:
history and basic concepts
- Laksiri Fernando

1.00 pm - 2.00 pm Lunch

2.00 pm - 3.30 pm Introduction to the United Nations system
- Jose Campino

3.30 pm - 4.00 pm Tea

4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Group discussion

Wednesday 10 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am Introduction to public international law
and human rights law
- Sarah Pritchard

11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.00 pm Introduction to major human rights instruments
- Sarah Pritchard

1.00 pm - 2.00 pm Lunch

2.00 pm - 3.30 pm Exercise on human rights
- Sarah Pritchard

3.30 pm - 4.00 pm Tea

4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Group discussion (with particular emphasis on different
perspectives on human rights)

Thursday 11 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am	Introduction to international human rights mechanisms - Sarah Pritchard - Laksiri Fernando
11.00 am - 11.30 am	Tea
11.30 am - 1.00 pm	Continued
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm	Role of the UN in peacekeeping and peace making. UN interventions, UN reform - Jose Campino
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Tea
4.00 pm - 5.30 pm	Continued

Friday 12 January

9.00 am - 9.30 am	Questionnaire exercise - international human rights mechanisms
9.30 am - 11.00 am	Role of Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations within the UN System - Victor Karunan
11.00 am - 11.30 am	Tea
11.30 am - 5.00 pm	Field visit to UN offices, Bangkok (Lunch in Bangkok)

Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 January

Free days.

Week 2:

UN human Rights Bodies and Procedures.

Monday 15 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am	Human Rights Issues in the Asia-Pacific Region - Songphorn Tajaroensuk
11.00 am - 11.30 am	Tea
11.30 am - 1.00 pm	International NGO networks and Human Rights - Cecilia Jimenez
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm	UN Charter-based Human Rights System - Cecilia Jimenez

3.30 pm - 4.00 pm Tea
4.00 pm - 5.00 pm UN Treaty-based human rights system
-Sarah Pritchard

Tuesday 16 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am Self-determination, Indigenous Peoples and Ethnic Minorities
- Sarah Pritchard
11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea
11.30 am - 1.00 pm UN Commission on Human Rights
- Cecilia Jimenez
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm Lunch
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm Presenting a Statement to the UN
- Cecilia Jimenez
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm Tea
4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Group discussion
Evening: Video exercise

Wednesday 17 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am Preparation for a Simulation of the UN Commission
on Human Rights
- Cecilia Jimenez
- Laksiri Fernando
11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea
11.30 am - 1.00 pm Continued
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm Lunch
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm Simulation of the UN Commission on Human Rights
- Cecilia Jimenez
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm Tea
4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Group discussion

Thursday 18 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am UN Commission on Human Rights
- Cecilia Jimenez
11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.00 pm	International labour standards and human rights - Joachim Grimsmann
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch
2 pm	Leave for Field trip to Chainat Province

Friday 19 January - Field trip continued - to Sukhothai

Saturday 20 January and Sunday 21 January - free days

**Week 3:
Diplomacy, Lobbying and Media.**

Monday 22 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am	Human Rights, the State and International Relations - Laksiri Fernando
11.00 am - 11.30 am	Tea
11.30 am - 1.00 pm	Human Rights and Effective Lobbying - Evelyn Serrano
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm	The Diplomacy of Human Rights - Victor Karunan
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Tea
4.00 pm - 5.00 pm	Discussion - Victor Karunan

Tuesday 23 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am	Human Rights and the Media - Alison Tate
11.00 am - 11.30 am	Tea
11.30 am - 1.00 pm	Writing for the Media - Sonny Inbaraj
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm - 5.30 pm	Writing a Media Release - Sonny Inbaraj - Alison Tate
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Tea

4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Continued

Wednesday 24 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am Human Rights and Freedom of the Media in the
Asia-Pacific Region
- Tessa Piper

11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.00 pm Preparation for a media conference
- Susan Montgomery
- Alison Tate

1.00 pm - 2.00 pm Lunch

2.00 pm - 3.30 pm Continued

3.30 pm - 4.00 pm Tea

4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Continued

Thursday 25 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am Simulation of a Media Conference

11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.00 pm Lessons from the UN 4th World Conference on Women
(Beijing 1995)
- Sinit Sitirak
- Somboon Srikhumdokkae
- Sachi Pandey

1.00 pm - 2.00 pm Lunch

2.00 pm - 3.30 pm Lessons from the UN World Conference on Human Rights
(Vienna 1993)
- Boonthan Verawongse

3.30 pm - 4.00 pm Tea

4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Discussion
- Boonthan Verawongse

Friday 26 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am Preparations for Role Play
- Boonthan Verawongse

11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.00 pm	Preparations Continued
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm	The Realisation of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - Laksiri Fernando
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Tea
4.00 pm - 5.00 pm	Discussion

Saturday 27 January and Sunday 28 January - free days

**Week 4
Issues and Strategies in Human Rights**

Monday 29 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am	Human Rights and the Environment - Srisuwan Kuankachon
11.00 am - 11.30 am	Tea
11.30 am - 1.00 pm	Human Rights Problematic and Non-Violent Action - Chaiwat Satha-anand
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm	Human Rights and Development - Walden Bello
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Tea
4.00 pm - 6.00 pm	Human Rights, Refugees and Displaced Persons - Roque Raymundo

Tuesday 30 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am	Women's Rights, with special reference to the Trafficking of Women - Sarah Johnston
11.00 am - 11.30 am	Tea
11.30 am - 1.00 pm	Rights of Children, with special reference to Child Labour - Taneeya Runcharoen
1.00 pm - 2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00 pm - 3.30 pm	Preparation for Role Play - continued
3.30 pm - 4.00 pm	Tea

4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Continued

Wednesday 31 January

9.00 am - 11.00 am Preparation for Role Play

11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.00 pm Continued

1.00 pm - 2.00 pm Lunch

2.00 pm - 3.30 pm Role Play

3.30 pm - 4.00 pm Tea

4.00 pm - 5.00 pm Evaluation of Role Play Exercise

Thursday 1 February

9.00 am - 11.00 am Human Rights Promotion Through Education
- Gotham Arya

11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.00 pm Human Rights Fact-Finding
- Max Ediger

1.00 pm - 2.00 pm Lunch

2.00 pm - 4.30 pm Excursion to Thai Parliamentary House Committee on
Justice and Human Rights
Facilitator - Jaran Dithapiechai

Friday 2 February

9.00 am - 11.00 am Development of NGO Strategies
- Alison Tate
- Laksiri Fernando

11.00 am - 11.30 am Tea

11.30 am - 1.30 pm Evaluation of the DTP

1.30 pm - 5.30 pm Lunch/Free Time

5.30 pm - evening Closing Ceremony and Reception

List of Resource People

Trainers

Gotham Arya - is currently Director of the Technology for Rural Development Institute and Chairman of the Program for the Promotion of Non-Violence in Thai Society, both at Chulalongkorn University. He is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Engineering and is an advisor to a number of human rights promotion and education organisations including to FORUM Asia and the Campaign for Popular Democracy.

Jose Campino - Political Affairs Officer in the Africa Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. In that work he has participated in a number of UN missions.

Laksiri Fernando - is currently Acting Executive Director of the Diplomacy Training Program. A Senior Lecturer in Political Science from Sri Lanka, he worked as the Secretary for Asia-Pacific of the World University Service (1984-1991) based in Geneva and initiated its human rights program. He has worked very closely with the UN human rights bodies in Geneva.

Sonny Inbaraj - has written on South East Asia regional issues for many years, and is currently the Editor of the Editorial page of the Nation newspaper, Thailand. He is also the author a recent book on human rights conditions in East Timor.

Cecilia Jimenez - has worked in NGO human rights advocacy at the United Nations, formerly as the International Affairs Officer with the Philippines Alliance for Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA). She is currently Vice-President of the International Federation of Human Rights.

Victor Karunan - is currently Regional Development Advisor for South-East Asia and the Pacific for Save the Children Fund (UK). He was formerly Secretary-General of Pax Romana based in Geneva.

Sarah Pritchard - is a lawyer who has worked for over 10 years with Aboriginal organisations in Australia and at the United Nations. She is presently a post-doctoral research fellow in the Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales. Her research is in the areas of human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples.

Songphorn Tajaroensuk - is currently Associate Secretary General of FORUM-Asia, and is Associate Professor in the Faculty of English at Chulalongkorn University

Alison Tate - is currently Coordinator of the Diplomacy Training Program. She has 10 years experience in human rights documentation, research, campaigning and advocacy work at local and international levels with various NGOs and community groups, particularly in relation to development and Burma-related issues.

Guest Speakers

Joachim Grimsman - Senior Specialist on International Labour Standards with the International Labour Organisation; **Evelyn Balais Serrano** - Secretary General of the Philippines Alliance for Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA); **Tessa Piper** - consultant for the anti-censorship NGO, Article 19, and for the Institute for the Studies on Free Flow of Information, Indonesia; **Susan Montgomery** - a media advisor to NGOs in Thailand; **Sinith Sittisak** - researcher with the Thai Grassroots Womens' Group; **Somboon Srikandokkae** - Head of the Network of Environmental and Work-Related Patients; **Sashi Pandey** - gender training consultant with the Women's Action Research Institute; **Boonthan Verawongse** - currently works on the "peace and human rights program" of Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD); **Walden Bello** - Co-Director of Focus on the Global South, affiliated with Chulalongkorn University; **Chaiwat Satha-Anand** - Professor at the Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University; **Srisuwan Kuankachon** - Director of the Foundation for Ecological Recovery; **Rocque Raymundo** - Legal Officer for the Jesuit Refugee Service - Asia/Pacific; **Sarah Johnston** - Project Coordinator with the Foundation for Women and Director of the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women; **Taneeya Runcharoen** - Assistant Coordinator with Child Workers in Asia; **Max Ediger** - coordinates the human rights training and education organisation, Burma Issues; **Jaran Dithapiechai** - consultant to the Secretary General of FORUM Asia.

The Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) is a human rights training program with the aim of assisting human rights defenders from developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region to better utilise the United Nations system and other important international forums. The DTP was established in 1989 at the initiative of Jose Ramos-Horta, a representative of East Timor at the UN for more than twelve years. In the seven years of its existence, the DTP has developed unique teaching materials and methods based on NGO needs and priorities. It provides an introduction not simply to human rights norms and procedures, but to the practicalities of "People's Diplomacy". Sessions cover lobbying and negotiation skills, use of the media, NGO strategies and activities.

The DTP is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation. It is affiliated with the University of New South Wales. In all aspects of decision-making, the DTP is guided by the needs and priorities of human rights defenders in the Asia-Pacific region. The DTP has close working relations with the Australian Council of Overseas Aid (ACFOA), the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM Asia), the International Service for Human Rights, the Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA) and the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO).

Agencies which have supported DTP training sessions include the Canadian International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, the Diakonisches Werk of the Evangelical Church in Germany, NOVIB in the Netherlands, the Australian National Council of Churches, Australian Catholic Relief and Community Aid Abroad.

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