REPORT OF SEMINAR

1996

TASKS FOR THE UN DECADE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

DIPLOMACY TRAINING PROGRAM

Summary

1. Delegates from across the Asia-Pacific region who gathered in Sydney, Australia, from 22-25 August 1996 to discuss the tasks for the UN Decade for Human Rights Education in the Asia-Pacific Region declared, in its Final Statement (See Annex I), that

> ***Aspirations of the peoples in the Asia-Pacific region for a better future are increasingly being articulated in the language of human rights. The objectives of human rights education must reflect these aspirations and the context of intense social conflicts in the societies within which these aspirations are being articulated. Such education should enable society to achieve the basic changes which are prerequisites for the protection and promotion of human rights, with special emphasis on those sections who have suffered the most intense violations of their rights. Enabling every person to participate fully in bringing about such change is the primary goal of human rights education.***

The Final Statement was a considerable improvement to the conception and definition of human rights education in the region and internationally. The Statement, more importantly, clarified and elucidated the tasks ahead for human rights educators and their organisations in the Asia-Pacific region.

1. The workshop was jointly organised by the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) and the Australian Human Rights Information Centre (AHRIC). Human rights educators and representatives of human rights NGOs who attended the workshop for four days were from Australia, Bangladesh, Burma, East Timor, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

2. The workshop was financially supported by AusAID, Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation (The Netherlands) and The Commonwealth Foundation (London). The Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission hosted the workshop at its premises and made available all necessary organisational facilities during the workshop.

3. The workshop sessions were organised in plenaries and panel discussions. Morning plenaries, followed by panel discussions in the afternoons, were the normal pattern of the workshop. What was discussed in the plenaries in general terms were later debated with specificity and detail in different panels separated into several sub-themes. Major themes of the workshop were designed to discuss: (1) Objectives of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education; (2) Ongoing Human Rights Education Activities in the Asia-Pacific Region; (3) Future Needs of Human Rights Education in the Region; and (4) Strategies for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights Education in the Asia-Pacific. There were forty two presentations to the workshop among which twenty seven were with written papers (See Annex II). The workshop received a written message/paper from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Jose Ayala Lasso, who regretted his inability to participate.

The Opening

4. The opening ceremony, chaired by Prof. Paul Redmond, Dean, Faculty of Law, the University of New South Wales, was addressed by the organisers, Dr Sarah Pritchard on behalf of AHRIC, and Dr Laksiri Fernando, Executive Director of DTP, and the invited guest, Mr Chicka Dixon of the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

5. While welcoming the participants to the workshop, Prof. Redmond said "we applaud your timely effort to consider the main tasks for human rights education in the Asia-Pacific region. The range of tasks for human rights educators in the region is no doubt immense. However, given the expertise and commitment of those gathered here, your deliberations will surely make a significant contribution to strengthening the capacities for human rights education in the region." While warmly welcoming the participants, Mr Chicka Dixon said that the "UN Decade for Human Rights Education, unfortunately, appears to coincide with a 'Decade of Disaster' for the Aboriginal people in this country; their funding sources being drastically cut down by the government." The event was graced by an Aboriginal dance, "The Kids from Lapa," organised by the Aboriginal Education Program at the University of New South Wales.

6. The workshop received an encouraging message from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Jose Ayala Lasso. He, nevertheless, assured the participants that he "will follow the results of the programme with great interest." The Commissioner stated that the "objective of the United Nations in its human rights educational activities is to teach the 'common language of humanity' to all people everywhere, to make each woman and man fluent in its vocabulary, and to enable each person to translate its terms into their daily conduct."

7. The Commissioner emphasised that "the effective protection of human rights also requires that those with the potential to have an impact on the realisation of human rights and all human beings subject to their enjoyment, **be aware** of both their rights and their responsibilities under this international framework." "Our common commitment is extremely important because human rights education is not an end in itself, but can constitute a powerful tool to greater ends: teaching and learning about human rights means teaching and learning about our rights. And only by knowing **our** rights, can we defend and realise them. **Education means change**. This is why our efforts must be directed to make human rights known and understood worldwide."

8. The Commissioner concluded saying: "You may also wish to be my spokespersons in your own countries (and, of course, within the region), making public opinion and institutions more and more aware of the importance of human rights education and of this common framework constituted by the Decade. Together, we can bring a change and make a difference in our future. For empowering people, combating human rights violations and enhancing peace and tolerance are challenges which will require the concerted effort of all members of the human rights community, and the use of all available tools to this end. The tool of human rights education will be essential to this struggle."

Plenary I: Objectives of the Decade

Two main papers were presented at the plenary on "Objectives of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education" by Dr Clarence Dias, President of the International Centre for Law in Development, New York and Mr Bill Barker, Director, Human Rights and Indigenous Issues Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Dr ~~Clarence~~ Dias, discussing the tasks for the UN Decade for human rights education in the Asia-Pacific region, said that "Asia-Pacific NGOs have participated vigorously in conferences leading to the declaration of the Decade. However, their participation in respect of the Declaration and its Plan of Action has been minuscule; and their participation, in efforts thus far, to implement the Plan have been virtually nonexistent." His comments highlighted the importance of the present workshop. "The Decade and Plan of Action are clearly well-intentioned but they do not reflect the priorities, needs and experiences of the Asia-Pacific region."

"The process of liberalisation of trade and investment, raises the need to ensure that powerful multinational and national corporations be held fully accountable to human rights standards. We are witnesses to a resurgence of patriachy and violence against women in the region. The rights of minorities and indigenous peoples are under attack in various countries of the region and ethnic identities and relationships are being manipulated to foment tragic, ethnic conflicts and bloody secessionist struggles." His main contention was that the conception of human rights education in the Declaration does not reflect the context of intense social conflicts in society. He argued that "it is sheer self-delusion to believe that 'universal commitment to human rights' can be achieved by 'common understanding and awareness,' unaccompanied by a significant redistribution of power and resources, both within and between the member states of the UN."

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Mr Bill Barker thanked the workshop organisers for inviting a representative of the Australian government. "I can't guarantee that I will be able to avoid some of the traditional governmental behaviour. But I would like to try to go a little deeper into the subject, speaking from a vantage point as someone who has been closely involved in United Nations activities on human rights for a good many years." Commenting on the objectives of human rights education he said that "when working towards human rights objectives, we are not dealing with abstractions, or with theory. We are dealing with giving effect to the most basic wishes of human society in a way that provides for harmony and prosperity. And this should be seen as embracing the whole gamut of human activity, not just more narrow legalistic conceptions of civil or political rights for the individual, but also rights relating to dignity and rights relating to individual and collective development, as well as the collective rights of the peoples to survival and cultural identity."

The main focus of the discussion was to penetrate beyond the UN jargon and to capture the essence of the tasks ahead for human rights education. Critics said that the Decade has been unleashed with a lot of planning but little action. The participants were of the opinion that UNESCO's "World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy," adopted in Montreal in 1993, supplies a better frame of reference for human rights educators in the region and internationally.

Panel I: Education on Civil and Political Rights

Two papers were presented in this panel for discussion, by Mr Ravi Nair, Secretary-General of the South-Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre, Delhi, and Prof. Songphorn Tajaroensuk, Associate Secretary-General of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM Asia).

Mr Ravi Nair said that "there are new challenges in Asia which require new approaches and strategies in human rights education." The challenges are "the growth of violence as part of state and non-state action; internal armed conflicts, often of ethnic nature; and new forms of state repression under emergency regulations; the growing number of displaced persons; and the severe short-fall of awareness on women's issues."

Referring to the situations under emergencies, Ravi Nair said that " the human rights community and other individuals and groups who are able to make an impact, need to be educated on the international and national mechanisms available to oversee the content and application of Emergency Regulations in conformity with international obligations." He outlined the following action to meet the other new challenges: (1) greater communication and cooperation among NGOs; (2) efforts to promote human rights education among the legal profession and special groups such as students, political parties, trade unions and other non-political formations; and (3) raise awareness of gender based issues, initiate gender sensitive laws, and institute programs to deal with problems faced by women." His paper outlined an interesting curriculum module, as an example, on how to develop human rights education among adolescents with the objective of enhancing their knowledge on rights related to survival, protection and individual development.

Prof. Songphorn Tajaroensuk encapsulated her presentation on human rights education on civil and political rights by relating the experiences of FORUM Asia. Her discussion brought into focus some grass-roots insights on the subject. She specifically referred to a program undertaken by FORUM Asia in conjunction with SURAM, Malaysia. She said that it has been proved through experience that human rights education is meaningless if it does not refer to the context in which the target group live and work. "In general, the economic policies pursued by governments in the region, while stressing on economic growth, ignores social justice issues. Therefore, education on civil and political rights are important even in achieving economic, social and cultural rights." Civil and political rights and the environment are major casualties in the process of narrowly defined economic growth in these countries. She highlighted the rights of the workers: to organise, strike and engage in collective bargaining. In her opinion, "development issues, democracy and democratic institutions, discrimination, violations against the integrity of the person, women, labour and indigenous people should take the formidable place in human rights education."

It was the general conclusion of the panel that "after almost five decades since the Universal Declaration, the concept of 'human rights' still remains largely unfamiliar throughout the Asia-Pacific region." The participants were also of the view that education on civil and political rights needs to be integrated with the education on economic, social and cultural rights.

Panel II: Education on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Mr Basil Fernando, Executive Director of the Asian Human Rights Commission (Hong Kong); Ms Evelyn Balais-Serrano, Vice-Chairperson of the Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates; and Mr Andre Frankovits, Executive Director, Human Rights Council of Australia were the main speakers at this panel.

Speaking on problems related to human rights education, Basil Fernando said that there are enormous gaps in the understanding of human rights across Asia-Pacific countries. Most of the people are unaware that they have rights or they should have rights. He presented anecdotal evidence. Some other problems are symptoms of pure ignorance about available remedies which might be resolved through proper training and education. Yet there are problems which are structural and might not be resolved through education alone. He maintained the position that the United Nations does not supply a proper focus for human rights education or protection. He raised the question whether human rights education means "teaching of human rights" ? or does it begin with an understanding of needs and problems, violations, causes of violations and ways to remedy them? Is education a dialogical process or a top-to-bottom activity?

Basil Fernando emphasised the importance of popular methods employed by the late Dr B R Ambedkar, the leader of the "untouchables" in India, which were participatory and all embracing. He also complimented the "Human Rights Course" at the Institute of Social Studies (The Netherlands) which implements participatory and dialogical approaches.

Panel III: Education for Conflict Resolution

The panel included presentations and papers by Mr Jose Ramos-Horta, Founder of the Diplomacy Training Program; Rev. Max Sujadinatha, Congregational Church, New York; and Dr Keith Suter from the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, the University of Sydney.

Jose Ramos-Horta, maintained from the outset that "an effective human rights education strategy must include conflict resolution and also address preventive diplomacy." Preventive diplomacy is not a privilege of States. "In fact, I believe that the UN or its member States are not the most suitable actors in preventive diplomacy because it necessarily requires them to enter into the extremely sensitive, sometimes dangerous terrain of state sovereignty and domestic jurisdiction." "The 1994 secret Oslo talks between Israelis and Palestinians were the culmination of a long process started by private individuals. This was also the case with the peace talks between the Guatemala army and the insurgents in 1993." "It was Prof. Stalsset who single-handedly brought together the parties in the Guatemalan conflict to the negotiating table."

"But how can NGOs and private individuals contribute to preventive diplomacy? I believe that it is ultimately only through human rights education that a society can make a break with a history of violence and begin a new era of national reconciliation, rule of law and participatory democracy." He also emphasised the importance of the recognition of the peoples' right to self-determination. "If we examine the root causes of internal conflicts in certain states, I submit," he said, "that the denial of the inalienable right of a people to self-determination is the common denominator."

Rev. Max Surjadinata said that "I would like to share some thoughts on the role of conflicts in human rights education, based on my experience as a pastor and a social activist." "In this era of free trade and global economy, human rights education is most crucial. Because, we have become not what we are in our identity as a member of the human race, but an economic-being in the global supermarket." In this "commodification of life" the poor are truly getting poorer while the rich are getting richer, he said. There is no escape from conflict, but the need is to resolve them positively. "The struggle for human rights is a hard and ever-present struggle. Conflict will inherently be present in this struggle as long as injustice prevails."

The challenge for all of us is to realise the interconnectedness of our struggle. "No one is an island," he said. "Human rights education is best transmitted through personal modeling. We must model a life-style that indicates the values of human rights." He concluded quoting Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. who said "As long as there is poverty in the world, no one can be totally rich, as long as diseases are rampant, no one can be totally healthy. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. You can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be."

Plenary II: Assessment of Human Rights Education Activities in the Asia-Pacific Region

Three substantive papers were presented at this plenary by Mr Chris Sidoti, Human Rights Commissioner, Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission; Ms Laurie Wiseberg, Executive Director, Human Rights Internet (Ottawa) and Ms Evelyn Balais-Serrano, Vice-Chairperson, the Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates. Other speakers included Mr Andre-Frankovits and Mr Basil Fernando.

Ms Laurie Wiseberg brought global perspectives to the workshop and said that "I would like to look at some of the problems of assessing what is happening in the area of human rights education from a more global perspective." She made comments in the context of a global survey the Human Rights Internet is undertaking. "What we mean by human rights education?" Our usual definition is a broad one. We refer to both formal education at all levels and nonformal education. The subject area is further extended to include civil, cultural, economic, social and political rights; the rights of women, children, refugees, indigenous, minorities, labour, persons with disabilities, HIV/AIDs and other vulnerable groups; as well as the right to peace, the right to a healthy environment and the right to development."

There is another complexity, she said. "Ask any human rights NGO if they are engaged in human rights education and the answer will invariably be yes." Almost all human rights activities are named as human rights education. "However, if one is conducting a survey to find out what human rights education programs exists, there needs to be some criteria to limit the parameters of the survey." "In preparation for this meeting, HRI rapidly put together a small directory of human rights educational programs for which we had information. In the approximately 70 programs described, about half are university-based and about half NGO directed."

Ms Laurie Wiseberg explained, referring to the global survey, that the survey proposes to collect three types of information: information on human rights educational materials, organisations engaged in human rights education, and programs and methodologies. In respect of NGOs, "though we are dealing primarily with the non-formal sector, we may have to restrict the survey to "formal programs" designed to help specific communities or sectors." "Thus, for an NGO to be engaged in human rights education within the context of this survey, The NGO should have a specific educational program; ie. education should be the objective, not just the by-product of the activity." She said that "attention should be paid to what exists, and what can be most profitably disseminated, by using electronic technology." "While we must keep in mind the fact that not everyone have - and certainly not grassroots organisations in the south - have such access, more and more people are able to navigate the electronic highway. Thus, to the extent that the Internet can be used to share information rapidly and cost-effectively, we should make use of this as a tool for gathering and redisseminating information between and among human rights educators."

Panel IV: Human Rights Training Programs

Two papers were presented in this panel by Mr Manuel Guzman, the Executive Director of HURIDOCS and Dr Laksiri Fernando, Executive Director of DTP.

Mr Manuel Guzman explained that he had personal experience in human rights training programs at the national, regional and global level. At the national level he was involved in 'Task Force Detainees of the Philippines'. This Group conducted mostly 'in-house' training based on skills and knowledge that were immediately appropriate in the Philippines, eg. to tackle torture, detention and killings. TFD recognised the need for comprehensive human rights knowledge and hence sent a member to the International Institute of Human Rights in Strassbourg for further training. After seeking help from a paralegal training centre to gain basic legal skills, they developed their own human rights education programs and started to help and train other emerging organisations.

At the regional level, FORUM Asia ran courses in fact-finding, documentation and paralegal training. Mr Manuel Guzman emphasised this to be one of the most important areas of human rights education. The said training programs used role plays, interviews and simulations as important teaching methods. But the most productive tool was to send participants on field trips to contact victims and test their new knowledge and skills.

At the global level, HURIDOCS, a global network of human rights organisations, aims to improve the accession and dissemination of human rights information. Its main programs are: (1) the development of tools for information handling, ie. standard recording formats, standardised terminology and computer programs. (2) Teaching and training - courses, internships and on-site consultations. (3) Advice on the establishment and strengthening of information systems. He said that HURIDOCS views training as the dynamic interaction between the trainer and the trainees, and between the trainees themselves, to ensure a cross fertilisation of information and ideas.

Dr Laksiri Fernando, in attempting to quantify the programs that exist in the Asia-Pacific region, identified the lack of an organised and complete directory of human rights education programs as a problem. He estimated that there are around 5,000 people actively working in human rights work in the Asia/Pacific region. This estimate did not include church groups, liberation organisations or community development groups, but only the organisations that focussed on human rights, of which there are around 500. Many of these groups have only emerged in the last 5 to 10 years. He argued that human rights education should be anchored in the principle of empowerment, to allow people to know and assert their rights. The DTP intends to expand its training in three main areas to address this principle: (1) Advocacy training. Teaching the basics of how to utilise international mechanisms, eg. UN commissions, UNESCO and the workings of the ILO. Also how to lobby, use the media and run press conferences. (2) The training of human rights educators. To give them the material and methods of human rights education. (3) Conflict resolution training. As human rights is a conflictive area, educators must identify major and potential conflicts. For example, in Sri Lanka, human rights education would be meaningless without going into the conflict aspects of the situation. Preventative diplomacy is also needed, he said.

Dr Laksiri Fernando then compared the DTP to other major international human rights training courses. The two courses that are similar to the DTP are: (1) The International Institute of Human Rights in Strassbourg founded by Rene Cassin, which uses a high level academic approach, attracting academics but only few from the Asia Pacific. This institute has developed Human rights into a social science. (2) The Canadian Human Rights Foundation, which was founded by John Humphry ran academic and legal based courses, but now takes more of a popular approach, running summer camp courses for up to 150 people. The DTP has a similar target group to the Canadian course but has a different vision and process. Jose Ramos-Horta founded the DTP in 1989 with a view of training human rights advocates, he said.

Panel V: Human Rights Information Providers

The main speakers in this panel were Ms Laurie Wiseberg, Executive Director, Human Rights Internet (Ottawa); Ms Jane Reid, Co-ordinator, AHRIC; and Sonny Inbaraj, Editor, Editorial Page, The Nation Newspaper (Bangkok).

Ms Laurie Wiseberg reported on the pressing need for NGO's, inter-government organisations and governments to collaborate on sharing information which can be easily dispersed with new communication technology. She pointed out that there is a surplus of information available, the challenge is to use this information in a constructive way. It was suggested that it is important for organisations in the human rights field to embrace the Internet, otherwise this powerful technology could be used as yet another 'tool for domination by corporations and governments'. Laurie spoke of the incredible advances in technology over the past decade. For instance, the fax which was once 'revolutionary', has been virtually replaced by e-mail, a faster and more efficient means of communicating. She asserted that 'paper' documentation centres were becoming obsolete- although still critical points.

A brief overview of the latest developments in new technologies was provided, including increased graphics capability including 'real-time' video and audio facilities. Laurie predicted that in a year or so it will be possible to have teleconferences in 'real time'. 'Hypertext' facilities enable users to navigate through the Internet in an extensive and user friendly way. A computer, modem and phone line is all that is needed to access the Internet. Cost, however, can still be prohibitive in developing countries. Laurie stressed the importance of the Human Rights community taking advantage of these new innovations. Organisations must pool and share their information. It is important that the information is dispersed and is used to empower people who do not have access to the Internet. Laurie also highlighted the need for nodes, or coordinating points, where people can contact to get support on Human Rights education. This 'centre' could disseminate information. Laurie pointed out that there were few adequate centres of this nature in the Asia-Pacific region.

Ms Jane Reid reflected on the Australian experience of human rights education and reported on the progress of the Australian Human Rights Information Centre (AHRIC). A challenge facing human rights educators in Australia, according to Jane, is the 'complacent environment'. It was demonstrated, however, that there have been some encouraging signs of growing interest in human rights in Australia. This apparent shift has been a result of the republican debate and the subsequent revived discussion about an Australian Bill of Rights and the High Court taking a more active interest in Human rights issues.

AHRIC is a product of a growing interest from various sectors of the community for accessible and accurate information about the international human rights system. The aim of the centre is to increase public awareness about human rights procedures, standards and issues within the Asia-Pacific region. There are four areas through which AHRIC would seek to achieve this objective: (1) A documentation centre which is located in the University of NSW. (2) An on-line database and homepage which will provide remote access to human rights information. AHRIC plans to develop a network to enable human rights organisations and educators in the Asia-Pacific region to maintain electronic bulletin boards and conferences, send out network alerts, and to collaborate on human rights projects. (3) Research & publications: AHRIC launched its first publication, "Communicating with the Human Rights Committee- A Guide to optional Protocol" at the workshop. (4) Education and technical advisory services. AHRIC hopes to develop these services in the future; for example, workshops in secondary schools.

Mr Sonny Inbaraj provided an interesting and insightful report on the complex and sometimes contradictory area of the media as a human rights information provider. He spoke of the changing nature of the media, the role of media in human rights education and the limitations of the mainstream media. Sonny used many of his own experiences to demonstrate several keys points. Sonny spoke of the changing nature of the media in the 'information age'. New communication technologies have enabled faster feedback which means the media 'reaction time' has been shortened. This challenges notions of time and space and Sonny asserted that the ability of the media to react in 'real time' has the potential to empower people.

History has shown that the journalist has the power to sway public opinion. Governments blame the media when politicians fail to win public favour. The media can be a powerful ally in the human rights movement. The media should be considered to be one aspect of an 'overall strategic battle against dictatorship'. Sonny spoke of the limitations of mainstream media even in countries where there are democratic governments. He said that the harsh reality was that the media is increasingly 'corporate bound' and 'plays into the hands of privileged groups that dominate society'. The media in some countries in the Asia-Pacific region face the added obstacle of dictatorial governments. Sonny argued that the media in the region 'is not as independent as it should be'. He used the ASEAN press coverage of East Timor as a case in point. The media 'towed the Indonesian line' or was 'encouraged' to adopt a 'non-interference' stance.

A brief, but lively discussion followed these three presentations. The prohibitive cost of access to the Internet was pointed out as a major barrier to the potential of the Internet as an 'alternative' medium in developing countries. Given the fact that 'three quarters of the world's population has never used a telephone line,' the participants questioned the value of the Internet for the majority of people. Ms Laurie Wiseberg responded to this valid and timely concern by suggesting that NGO's must find new ways of helping marginalised groups and nations to get access to information on the Internet. The panel discussion ended on a positive note with Laurie Wiseberg and Rosaline Costa (Bangladesh) agreeing to collaborate on exploring the possibilities of using the Internet in Bangladesh

Plenary III: Human Rights Education Needs

Main presentations at this plenary were by Dr Deepika Udagama, Director, Centre for the Study of Human Rights, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka and Ms Evelyn Serrano, Vice-Chairperson, The Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates.

Dr Deepika Udagama said that she would "identify what she perceived to be the major human rights education needs of Sri Lanka and attempt a generalisation to project those conclusions to the Asia-Pacific region." She suggested two main requirements in human rights education common to many countries in the region. (1) the need to raise awareness on human rights standards and issues and to include concomitant values; (2) the need to develop democratic skills. Referring to Sri Lanka, she said that "education, which is highly valued by society, is viewed by all concerned as a means of social mobility and economic advancement than as a means of moulding the human personality to make a better person." There lies, in her opinion, at least some of the reasons behind the current human rights violations in the country. She analysed different requirements at different levels of education in terms of human rights in her paper.

Referring to formal education she said that "it is very important that human rights components be included, not only to provide information as to what are human rights standards, but also to include a system of values which nurture and promote human rights. It must be remembered that human rights is not just any subject. It defines the quality of our very existence." "One of the most virulent anti-democratic practices to be found in our part of the world is the rigid "lecture oriented" teaching methodology and should be rooted out at whatever cost. The age old guru-gola (teacher-student) relationship has been perpetuated without questioning its merits and demerits."

Ms Evelyn Balais-Serrano said at the outset that "it is a sad fact that we have not really made a dent, a significant dent in the promotion and protection of human rights in the region." "Our human rights education initiatives have resulted in some degree of empowerment among our groups and communities. But the news of these small successes have been confined to small audiences, hardly noticed by those who wield power." "After more than ten years of actual human rights education experience in the Philippines, we realised that more than the quality of human rights education we have been working for, we need to equally aspire for quantity for us to be able to create more impact." She argued that "quality is best achieved when education is contextualized within the peoples' experiences and expectations. The quality also includes being action-oriented. Learning does not end in plain theories but in action."

Ms Evelyn Serrano emphasised the importance of the media in human rights education work. She explained what PAHRA has been doing in this field. "PAHRA runs weekly radio programs for its human rights education series. It uses various formats to make the program more interesting to its listeners like live interviews of victims of human rights violations, use of experts and news portions to update listeners on new trends in human rights education." "The point here is how we can reach out to a bigger audience and make the government aware of what we are doing and what we are capable of doing. It is not to invite arrest or any similar consequence but to remind them of their obligations " She said that "with all the tasks we have assigned ourselves as human rights activists, it is still the governments that have the primary responsibility to plan and implement human rights education programs as part of their responsibility to promote and protect human rights." Her main conclusion was that "our main tasks as NGOs remain to be lobbying our governments in implementing human rights education in schools and among law enforcement agencies."

Panel VI: Needs in the Formal Sector

Three presentations were made at the panel by Prof. Garth Nettheim, Faculty of Law, UNSW; Ms Pene Mathew, Faculty of Law, University of Melbourne; Ms Maisie Warburton, Australia-Burma Council and Prof. George Zdenkowski, Faculty of Law, UNSW.

Ms Pene Mathew argued that "the UN Decade for Human Rights Education should help to build a healthy human rights culture world-wide. Accordingly, human rights education in Australia must contribute to the development of a self-reflective society." She further argued that "legal debate about rights as engaged in by lawyers in Australia, whether they be acting as government advisers, judges, or parliamentarians, may be un-self-reflective and reinforcing of the status quo. Thus, human rights education in law schools must aim to encourage lawyers to think critically about the Australian legal system and their role within it." " Much legal education in the past has been doctrinal and fairly uncritical of the assumptions that underpin the domestic legal system. By contrast, the study of international human rights law necessarily involves discussions of the philosophical character of rights and cannot escape consideration of the question as to whether or not human rights are universal standards, and the question of due recognition of cultural differences." Having recognised the importance of human rights education in law schools, the question is how should we go about it? She regretted that "human rights law is often offered as an optional subject and hence fails to reach the broader student body." "Thus it is important either to make the human rights law course compulsory or alternatively," and she argued preferably "to introduce human rights law materials into the broader curriculum."

She advocated what she called a dialectical model for human rights education. "The first step would be constantly to relate international human rights law standards to the Australian experience." "The second step is to design exercises that permit students not simply to think about their own experiences but to attempt to step outside those experiences, such as role-plays built around treaty-negotiations, senate committee hearings, and moot courts." She concluded that "this kind of teaching is clearly the kind of engaged teaching and learning envisaged by the Plan of Action for the UN Decade for Human Rights Education."

Prof. Garth Nettheim proposed to discuss ways by which human rights education can be developed in universities and other tertiary education institutions. "Our experience at the UNSW over 25 years evolved through several stages. Our initial basic compulsory Public Law subject contained what we called a 'civil liberties component.' Subsequently we developed a single elective subject called Civil Rights. It was later replaced by a new subject, Human Rights Law. UNSW as well as other law schools now offer not only one but a group of electives on specialist topics." Is this sufficient? He said "no". He suggested the broadening of particular electives and the incorporation of human rights materials to in the general curriculum. He also said that "I do not wish to suggest that law is the primary university discipline for concern with human rights. Two things are needed in order to achieve a broader awareness of human rights within particular disciplines and across disciplines. One precondition is that the relevant teachers be assisted to locate relevant information for use. The second precondition is that teachers become aware of the relevance of such material."

"Within Australia, I would like to see active collaboration involving the Human rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, relevant government agencies, university centres and individual experts. For the Pacific, it may be possible to develop a subregional approach through the South Pacific Forum or some other body." He proposed "a series of workshops, like this one, to be held in various parts of the region, say, the South Pacific, South East Asia, North Asia, South Asia and so forth."

Ms Maisie Warburton focused on human rights education in secondary schools and the role of human rights teachers. "At present in secondary schools in Australia, only a few 'humanities type' subjects deal with human rights and that is also very sketchy. There is a great potential in teaching human rights incorporated into subjects like history, social studies, legal studies, society and culture, Aboriginal studies etc. However, even when human rights are incorporated, the time allocated is totally insufficient. She stated that many students who have not chosen 'humanities- type' subjects slip through the human rights net. Maisie Warburton explained that there is an 'informal way' of teaching human rights through practice and by example. Teachers, for example, can encourage 'democracy' in the class room and promote democratic values. The most important thing, however, might be to give teachers a training in human rights. This requires more funds for teacher training and resource sharing.

Prof. George Zdenkowski, in his presentation, stressed the importance of human rights education for law enforcement agencies: police, prosecutors, courts and correctional officials. However, he added that there is no point in pursuing educational objectives about particular human rights if they do not exist or are not practiced. Therefore, he argued for a broad approach to human rights education among law enforcement agencies. As Cherif Bassiouni has explained, the development of educational programs should involve certain stages, he said. He also stressed the importance of the implementation of human rights at the municipal level. Unless this occurs, many of the rights will be fragile. He referred to the manual developed by the UN Centre for Human Rights for social workers and law enforcement agencies. "While these are positive initiatives to develop a culture of human rights in general, the law enforcement sector encounters many particular impediments." He argued that NGOs also could be involved in educational programs for law enforcement agencies. "This is not a message to States to divest themselves of this responsibility but to encourage the recognition of the importance of independent well-resourced NGOs in the delivery of effective human rights education and the desirability of co-operation between NGOs and States." He also argued that "because of uneven progress towards the implementation of human rights principles and human rights education programs in the law enforcement sector, there is a great need for regional co-operation and information exchange."

Plenary IV: Strategies for the Promotion of Human Rights Education

Four inspiring short presentations were made at this plenary by Mr Sonny Inbaraj, The Nation Newspaper (Bangkok); Mr Ravi Nair, South-Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre; Melinda Jones, Editor, Australian Journal for Human Rights; Bill Barker, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Australia); and Bruce Petty, a popular cartoonist of the Melbourne Age.

Sonny Inbaraj overviewed the changes taking place in the media with the advancement of new communication technology. He suggested that the distance between the media and its audience has been eliminated and that the advance of satellite television and 'cyberspace' has created a larger 'global audience'. He criticised the notion of Asian values. The prevailing trend in the Asian media is to champion the 'so-called Asian values'. There is a feeling among editors that for too long the Asian media has allowed western news agencies to set the agenda in Asian coverage. This discussion lead Sonny to pose some important questions: 'does development come before human rights' and 'can there in fact be a single set of Asian values?'. Sonny maintained that the concept of 'Asian values' is untenable, he further argued that 'Asian values are being used to suppress people by governments of the region'.

Sonny Inbaraj made some useful suggestions with regard to the role of the media from a human rights education perspective. He called for the need to seek out alternative media channels eg. the Internet and the subsequent need to train activists to use alternative media. Human rights educators need to know how to effectively engage and use the media. Alterative media is necessary, Sonny argued, as mainstream media has failed to sensitise the world on human rights issues.

Ravi Nair gave a brief and informed outline of the role of information technologies in human rights education. As early as 1974, UNESCO recognised 'information' as a human right. This human right needed to be translated into reality by increased 'access' to information, including human rights information. Ravi asserted that the personal computer (PC) was a major advancement in regards to promoting greater access. The advent of the Internet has raised much consternation and alarm as concerns about nation sovereignty come to the fore. In Bhutan, for example, there is no satellite TV, whilst in Singapore the government continues to ban contentious web sites. All this shows, Ravi suggested, that governments are 'reacting'. But, as he further pointed out, 'the area of interactive communication is with us and the government intervention in this area is extremely difficult'. The Internet is simple to use and we need to work to dispel myths about its use. Ravi in closing, said that we need to democratise the media further.

Bill Barker spoke of the importance of national action plans based on his experience in developing the Australian National Action Plan in 1994 and his experiences in Vienna in 1993. A national action plan provides opportunities to bring together other actors 'to make it easier to move ahead'. Bill Barker asserted that the basic principle behind a national action plan is to facilitate appropriate, non-confrontational action which allows people to act on their own terms, with the national action plan acting as a guide. The importance of the plans are to be dynamic, with structured participation in developing the plans and the need for a process of review. He outlined the advantages of an action plan. He suggested that the plan should be a guide for administrators and educators. Additionally, a national action plans provides opportunities for the involvement of the civil society. He concluded by urging all to initiate national action plans which follow a holistic, pluralist, participative approach in its design and implementation.

Melinda Jones outlined three new principles/strategies in education that could be used in human rights education. (1) To include all people. For example, the segregation of children with disabilities leads to lower expectations. By integration, other students will adapt to these students and supportive friendships may occur. (2) An inclusive school curriculum to eliminate racism and discrimination and to present a positive image of all peoples. She mentioned the South Australian Education Department's anti-racism policy. They identified racism in education which involved less teaching attention and open disrespect for certain communities. They developed grievance procedures and trained 150 principals who participated partly to become aware of their legal duties. eg. Gender bias in law school courses. To overcome this situation, resources were slotted into existing courses not into separate 'women issue' courses. Another initiative was the human rights and literature project for children. Australian novels that raise human rights concerns were recommended to schools.

(3) Inclusive teaching strategies. This includes cooperative learning initiated by the Syracuse University. The strategy is to teach human rights through activities that require social skills, listening, and group work on tasks to achieve a shared goal. This is a transformative process whereby students compare their classroom to the society around them, ie. cooperation and the valuing of all members of a group or society.

By way of cartoon drawing, Bruce Petty showed how the Arts could be used in human rights education. He drew cartoons that were to describe human rights to a lay person. He drew a human brain, one side being the mechanical side, the other the imaginative side. The former representing the rights based on money and government and the competition that exists for those rights. The other imaginative side presents rights based on religion, faith and trust. He then drew power triangles depicting capitalists with their money on top and all others below. Then it was the global institutions on top and others below starting to compete with each other.

A second cartoon depicted education. Firstly, as a series of pipes pouring knowledge from the university to the academic, then to the students. The student already has some knowledge and this should be fished out, or allow backflow in those pipes from the students head back into the teachers head. The cartoon then progressed to depict the mirrors the educators should hold up to reflect the context and history of human rights, to allow the student to see society from a different perspective. Artists could and should be used in the region for the promotion of human rights. During the discussion it was highlighted that a compilation of human rights cartoons should be gathered from around the region for educational purposes. It was mentioned that satire and stand up comedy can also be a useful tool.

Annex I

STATEMENT OF WORKSHOP ON ASIA-PACIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION:

THE RIGHT TO HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Among the peoples of the Asia-Pacific region, there is growing realisation of the deprivation of basic human rights. Voices of protest are calling for fundamental change in order to ensure respect for the human dignity of all. The political regimes which during the past decades have sought to divorce development from democracy are faced with an unprecedented wave of mass protest. Aspirations for a better future are increasingly being articulated in the language of human rights. The objectives of human rights education must reflect the context of intense social conflicts in society. Such education should enable society to achieve the basic changes which are prerequisites for the protection and promotion of human rights, with special emphasis on those sections who have suffered the most intense violations of their rights. Enabling every person to participate fully in bringing about such change is the primary goal of human rights education.

From 22-25 August 1996, human rights educators and representatives of human rights NGOs from across the Asia-Pacific region, from Bangladesh, Burma, East Timor, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Thailand, as well as Australia, met in Sydney to discuss the main tasks of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education (1995-2004) in the Asia-Pacific region.

The participants at the Workshop of Asia-Pacific Human Rights Educators agreed upon the following principles and tasks:

Concept of Human Rights Education

1. Human rights education is not an end in itself, but must aim to promote **social transformation**. The widest participation of all sectors and actors of society is essential to overcome obstacles to the achievement of human rights in different social contexts. As affirmed in the 1993 *UNESCO World Plan of Action on Education for Human Rights and Democracy*, human rights education must be "participatory", "creative, innovative and empowering at all levels of society". Human rights must be brought into all aspects of education and social discourse.

Fundamental Principles

2. The protection and promotion of human rights are a matter of **legitimate international concern** and the advocacy of human rights can not be considered an encroachment upon national sovereignty. As affirmed in the 1993 *Bangkok NGO Declaration*, there is emerging new understanding of universalism encompassing the richness and wisdom of Asia-Pacific cultures. Historical conjunctures and cultural and religious traditions are relevant in the implementation of international human rights norms. Human rights education efforts should address and respect the real-life struggles and experiences of learners and engage different cultural and religious traditions.

3. All human rights are **indivisible and interdependent**. They are essential for the survival and development of humankind. In human rights education, there must be a holistic and integrated approach to all human rights, civil, cultural, economic, political and social, both individual and collective.

4. **Economic development** in the Asia-Pacific region is often accompanied by wide-scale violations of human rights. Human rights education should emphasise the need for balanced, people-centred development, an integrated approach to civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, equity and social justice, and a fair distribution of income, resources and power. Human rights education should equip learners to hold national and multinational corporations, and national and multilateral institutions of development, finance and trade accountable to international human rights, environmental and labour standards.

5. The protection of the environment and environmentally sound and sustainable resource management practices are essential for the well-being of present and future generations of humankind. Human rights education should promote the concept of people-centred sustainable development and incorporate **education about environmental and developmental rights**.

6. The protection of human rights is achieved most effectively in **secular, democratic societies**. Genuine participatory democracy requires that the people have a voice not only in periodic elections but at all levels of decision-making, including the basic rights of initiative, referendum and recall. Education about participatory democracy is an important element of human rights education.

7. **Human rights education** is itself a **human right**. The right to human rights education is a right of all individuals and groups, irrespective of class, gender or national, ethnic, religious or linguistic background. So too is the right to impart human rights education.

8. All too often, important human rights struggles have been erased in history books and in national memory. There is an important role for human rights education in the **recovery of human rights history and human rights truths**.

9. Human rights education cannot contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights in the absence of **basic structural reforms**. Human rights education must be accompanied by efforts to address deficient monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, a lack of redress and remedies for victims of human rights violations, inadequate judicial institutions and interference with such institutions, where they exist.

10. Documents further **elaborating** the **UN Plan of Action for the Decade for Human Rights** Education must reflect regional and sub-regional priorities, needs and experiences, defined through the fullest participation of NGOs and institutions of civil society.

Obstacles to the Promotion of Human Rights Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

11. In many countries in the Asia-Pacific region, feudal and patriarchal social conditions, military regimes and authoritarian political systems persist. Increasingly, non-State actors are becoming major violators of human rights. These include civil society actors, national and multinational corporations, and national and multilateral institutions of development, finance and trade. **Gross violations of human rights** are widespread, including executions, disappearances, torture, arbitrary detention and curtailment of freedoms of expression, association and assembly. Abuse of women, exploitation and neglect of children, attacks on the rights of workers and trade-unions, and violence against foreigners, refugees, displaced persons, indigenous peoples, minorities, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable groups are endemic. The perpetrators of gross violations of human rights and their accessories often enjoy wide-spread *de facto* and *de jure* impunity.

12. Within the Asia-Pacific region, there is a **low level of ratification** of major international human rights treaties. Where international human rights instruments have been adopted, they are the subject of extensive reservations. There is frequently a gap between the text of human rights instruments and their implementation. Inadequate and inappropriate allocation of resources by national governments is inconsistent with the fulfilment of their international human rights obligations. All too often, there is a failure to incorporate international human rights standards into domestic law. At the national level, there is an absence of effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. Monitoring and enforcement by national judiciaries and human rights commissions often prove inadequate. Mechanisms for monitoring the human rights impact of the activities of **non-State actors**, and holding them accountable to international human rights standards, are non-existent.

13. Within the Asia-Pacific region, there is **no regional or sub-regional human rights instrument** or enforcement mechanism. Efforts to promote regional machinery encounter arguments about cultural, religious and linguistic heterogeneity, a prioritisation of economic growth over individual human rights, a lack of geographical agreement on the region and the absence of a regional political system. Opponents of regional machinery also cite the selective invocation of human rights rhetoric in the foreign policy of governments, as well as the discriminatory imposition of human rights conditionalities in development assistance. It will be vital to ensure that any regional human rights arrangements do not derogate from or lower existing international standards.

14. A number of governments in the Asia-Pacific region refer to distinct "**Asian values**" and challenge the legitimacy of international action for the promotion of human rights. The prevailing trend in the Asian media is similarly to champion Asian values. The extreme understanding of Asian values as a unique set of preferences found only in Asia is untenable. Whilst there must be recognition of contextual diversity and cultural specificity in the implementation of human rights, it is incorrect to posit distinct Asian human rights notions.

15. At the **international level**, as well, there is continuing **inadequacy of mechanisms for the monitoring and enforcement** of international human rights obligations. Inadequate allocation of human and financial resources to UN human rights mechanisms reflects down-grading of human rights among the core purposes of the United Nations. Cynicism and the promotion of self-interest on the part of governments limit the effectiveness of existing procedures. Effective participation by NGOs is impeded.

16. Few Asia-Pacific governments are likely to have the political will to promote actively the objectives of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education. In the Asia-Pacific region, peoples' plans of action and the efforts of human rights educators and NGOs have much to contribute towards the realisation of the objectives of the Decade. In the context of the Decade, it will be essential to respect the autonomy and strengthen the capacity of **NGOs and civil society institutions** to play a central role in the provision of human rights education. In the Asia-Pacific region, the United Nations and its specialised agencies have a particular responsibility to catalyse and support human rights education activities and programs in the non-government sector.

17. The present UN Plan of Action for the Decade envisages a global understanding. But human rights education is ineffective if not contextualised. The Decade's Plan of Action needs to reflect the **priorities, needs and experience of the Asia-Pacific region**. Implementation of the Plan of Action envisages national governments as the primary actors. In the Asia-Pacific context, it is important that national implementation not itself become a mechanism for governmental monopolisation, control and repression of human rights education activities.

Tasks for Human Rights Education in the Asia-Pacific Region

18. In many countries in the Asia-Pacific region, a majority of people live in conditions of poverty and are without basic rights to adequate subsistence, health care, shelter and education. There is a close link between poverty and illiteracy. Human rights education must be promoted together with measures for the **eradication of poverty, and the elimination of illiteracy and all forms of discrimination**, as a matter of human rights priority.

19. For those living in poverty, there is particular potential for human rights awareness. The assertion of human rights can be a prerequisite for economic survival and development. In human rights education, an understanding of the **connection between economic conditions and access to rights** can raise awareness about the need for enhanced civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

20. In the Asia-Pacific region, appropriate and effective **strategies for human rights education** should emphasise popular and participatory education. Human rights education must be rooted in the lives of learners, especially those most marginalised and vulnerable. The educational process should be inclusive, action-oriented and empower people and the civil society to improve their quality of life and build a culture of peace based on democracy, development, mutual understanding and respect.

21. The Asia-Pacific region is characterised by ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. Current trends promoting intolerance, discrimination and inequality frequently produce communitarian and sectarian conflict. Educational processes should **promote attitudes of tolerance and pluralism** and bring about understanding and friendship amongst different countries and ethnic, religious and linguistic groups. A major task for human rights educators is to foster just ethnic relationships, design anticipatory educational strategies and promote education for conflict resolution and peace-building.

22. In the Asia-Pacific region, there is an urgent need to hold personnel in **law enforcement, the administration of justice and military and security forces** accountable to international human rights and humanitarian law standards. This requires basic structural reforms and reorientation and sensitisation of personnel through human rights education. Governments have primary responsibility for ensuring such reform and education, with the fullest participation of NGOs and civil society actors.

23. Within the region, there is a particular need for increased awareness of the role of human rights in **development cooperation** and of the human right to development. Support for human rights education efforts should be provided through development assistance. Officials involved in development cooperation, in both donor and recipient countries, must ensure transparency and participation in the development process. All development cooperation should be imbued by human rights education.

24. As affirmed in 1974 by the UNESCO Intergovernmental Conference, **information** is an essential part of the nation's resources and access to it one of the **basic human rights**. An important task for the UN Decade for Human Rights Education is to ensure international action to prevent increasing attempts at censorship of the internet. There is a need for training human rights activists and educators in the strategic use of information technology.

25. The Asia-Pacific region is home to many indigenous peoples, whose identity as indigenous is frequently denied by governments. An important task for human rights educators is to increase knowledge about the **existence and rights of indigenous peoples** in the Asia-Pacific region, in particular their rights to self-determination, their land and their natural resources.

Priorities and Action Plans for Human Right Education Activities

26. **UN Plan of Action.** The Workshop of Asia-Pacific Human Rights Educators is concerned that the UN Plan of Action for the Decade places **undue emphasis on national structures** for coordination and implementation of human rights education. The Plan of Action marginalises the role of NGOs and institutions of civil society. In many Asia-Pacific countries, national focal points, plans of action and resource centres are likely to become instruments for centralised governmental control of human rights education. Any national processes must exercise a promotional and facilitative, rather than regulative role with respect to human rights education activities. They must respect the autonomy of human rights NGOs. The UN Decade for Human Rights Education must guard against the diversion of scarce financial and material resources away from the human rights education activities of NGOs and organs of civil society.

    The Workshop urges that an important objective of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education be to liberate human rights education from the clutches of international, national and professional bureaucracies. The Workshop stresses the critical importance of peoples' plans of action to promote the objectives of the Decade.

27. **National Action Plans.** The UN Plan of Action for the Decade calls for the completion during 1995 of **action-oriented national plans** for human rights education to be transmitted to the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Workshop of Asia-Pacific Human Rights Educators urges governments of the region, in consultation with relevant NGOs and peoples' organisations, to catalyse the elaboration of such action plans and to define targets for human rights education.

28. **Human rights education programs.** The Workshop applauds the efforts of human rights education programs and initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region. However, there is an urgent need to strengthen existing capacities for human rights education, as well as to develop new capacities, at regional, national and local levels. During the Decade, there must be coordinated efforts to enhance the capacity of human rights education programs for:

- provision of human rights education to people in difficult situations;
- contribution to sustainable capacity-building through the further education of human rights educators;
- development of strategies for human rights education which address the diverse conditions of learners and build on local concepts and cultural sensitivities;
- provision of public access to primary human rights documentation in relevant forms and languages;
- provision of information about international human rights supervisory procedures, including information about opportunities for NGOs and individuals to participate in those procedures.

Human rights education programs should address:

- particular vulnerable groups, including women, children, indigenous peoples, minorities, refugees and displaced persons, the elderly, workers, peasants, persons in extreme poverty, disabled persons and persons with HIV/AIDS;

- particular professional groups, including security, military, police and prison personnel, judges and lawyers, public officials and decision-makers, officials involved in development cooperation, media personnel, health professionals and social workers;

- the formal education sector, including early childhood, primary and secondary schools, higher education, teacher training; and

- non-formal learning, including general public information, education within trade-unions and women's and youth organisations, and education in difficult situations such as armed conflicts and internal tension.

29. **Formal education.** The Workshop calls on education authorities in the Asia-Pacific region to work with human rights educators to:

- incorporate human rights values and awareness as a key element in education in primary and secondary schools;

- revise school curricula to integrate human rights education into the curriculum at all levels of formal education, produce human rights training and educational materials for students and teachers, and develop in-service teacher training courses;

- ensure that human rights is a subject of teaching in universities, including in schools of law, economics, medicine, politics and social work.

30. **Mass Media.** A media sensitive to human rights concerns can contribute significantly to education about human rights, including amongst persons at all levels of literacy and living in rural or remote areas. Within the Asia-Pacific region, the media have tended to trivialise and sensationalise human rights issues. There is a particular need to strengthen the capacity and role of the mass media in the coverage of human rights issues and furtherance of human rights education.

31. **Information technologies.** The increased use of wire-less data transmission is fashioning information as a powerful weapon in struggles against authoritarian governments and oligopolies. There must be increased efforts to ensure equitable access by the global human rights community to the benefits of this technology.

32. **Human rights education for democracy and pluralism.** There is a need to develop regional and national human rights education strategies with respect to democracy and pluralism. Human rights education should impart skills for the promotion of the space of civil society, as well as for monitoring legislative and other developments which threaten to erode democratic institutions.

33. **Protection of human rights educators.** There is an urgent need for guarantees to ensure the safety of human rights educators and the integrity of their work. During the International Decade of Human Rights Education there must be concerted efforts to ensure adequate standards and procedures for the protection of human rights educators. During the International Decade there should also be efforts to elaborate standards and objectives for human rights education. These should delineate, inter alia, the relationship of human rights educators and national governments in the provision of human rights education.

34. **NGOs.** The Workshop urges the NGO community in the Asia-Pacific region to mobilise to:
    - safeguard the integrity of all human rights education activities;
    - undertake evaluation of the impact of human rights education activities;
    - forge solidarity alliances to address the human rights education needs in particularly different country situations;
    - enhance the exchange of experiences, knowledge and skills in the area of human rights education; and
    - prevent monopolisation of human rights education activities by national governments and human rights commissions.

35. **National governments.** National governments have an obligation to promote human rights education in all its aspects. The Workshop urges governments to ensure non-discriminatory NGO participation in the planning and implementation of human rights education activities. The Workshop also exhorts governments to respect fully the autonomy and integrity of human rights education activities in the non-governmental sector. Officials in all areas of government should receive human rights education.

36. **National human rights commissions.** In all their human rights education work, national human rights commissions should facilitate non-discriminatory NGO participation. At the same time, human rights education activities of national human rights commissions must not preempt activities in the non-governmental sector. The Workshop urges national human rights commissions to develop, as a priority, cooperative human rights education programs with NGOs. It is essential that the structures and functioning of national human rights commissions comply with the 1991 *Paris Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions.*

37. **UN Secretary-General.** The Workshop urges the UN Secretary-General to implement the request of the General Assembly to establish **a voluntary fund for human rights education**, with special provision for the support of the human rights education activities of NGOs. The Workshop deplores the downgrading of human rights within the core objectives of the United Nations. The Workshop calls on the Secretary-General, as a matter of utmost priority, to increase allocation of material and human resources to human rights within the UN system.

38. **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.** The Workshop calls on the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in his role as coordinator of all human rights activity UN-system-wide, to support the human rights education activities of NGOs and peoples' organisations in the Asia-Pacific region. The Workshop urges the High Commissioner to convene regional meetings so that Asia-Pacific priorities, needs and experiences are reflected in UN human rights documents, including those concerning the UN Decade of Human Rights Education.

39. **UN High Commissioner for Refugees.** The Workshop exhorts the UN High Commissioner for Refuges to initiate a global education effort to reinstate its mandate of the protection of refugees and the internally displaced, as a matter of urgent human rights priority. The Workshop urges the High Commissioner to initiate human rights education outreach programs, as well as sensitisation of UNHCR personnel.

40. **UN Centre for Human Rights.** The Workshop urges the UN Centre for Human Rights to expand its capacities within the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, the Workshop calls on the Centre for Human Rights to develop closer relationships with the Asia-Pacific human rights community, including NGOs, and to upgrade the provision of information and services to those engaged in human rights work in the region.

41. **Human rights treaty bodies.** The Workshop emphasises the important role of human rights treaty bodies in the realisation of the objectives of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education. The Workshop calls on the treaty bodies to adopt general comments on the obligations of States with respect to human rights education and public information. The Workshop urges the treaty bodies, in their examination of State reports, to investigate compliance with obligations regarding human rights education and public information.

42. **UN bodies and specialised agencies.** The Workshop calls on UN bodies and specialised agencies, including ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO and FAO, to monitor the impact of development on human rights and to foster financial and technical cooperation in human rights education and literacy programmes.

43. **ESCAP.** The Workshop urges the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia, in its efforts to promote economic and social development in the region, to accord higher priority and allocate adequate resources to human rights education.

Annex II

List of Papers

1. Evelyn Balais-Serrano (Vice-Chairperson, Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates), "Needs and Strategies for the Promotion of Human Education in the Region."

2. Bill Barker (Director, Human Rights and Indigenous Issues Section), " The Objectives of Human Rights Education."

3. Akram Chowdhury (Secretary-General, Bangladesh Institute of Human Rights), "Human Rights Education: Bangladesh Perspective."

4. Rosaline Costa (Commission for Justice and Peace, Bangladesh), "Human Rights Education for the Vulnerable Groups."

5. Clarence J Dias (President, International Centre for Law in Development), "Towards Liberalisation, Distraction or Deconscientization: Tasks for the UN Decade for Human Rights."

6. Barbara R Ferguson (Coordinator, Graduate Programs in International Social Development, The University of New South Wales), "Human Rights Education for Vulnerable Groups: Refugee Women and Children."

7. Basil Fernando (Executive Director, Asian Human Rights Commission), "Problems Related to Human Rights Education with Special Emphasis on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights."

8. Laksiri Fernando (Executive Director, Diplomacy Training Program), "Need for an Integrated Approach to Human rights training."

9. Manuel Guzman (Executive Director, Human Rights Documentation System International), "Human Rights Information Providers and Materials for Human Rights Education."

10. Sonny Inbaraj (Editor, Editorial Page, The Nation, Bangkok), "Media and Human Rights: A Critique."

11. Melinda Jones (Editor, Australian Journal for Human Rights), "Innovation in Human Rights Education."

12. Jose Ayala Lasso (United Nations High Commissioner for Human rights), "Tasks for the UN Decade for Human Rights Education in the Asia-Pacific Region."

13. Pene Mathew (Lecturer in Law, The University of Melbourne), "A HECS on Human Rights Education?"

14. Banyar Naing (Mon Student from Burma, University of Wollongong), "Human Rights Education in the Non-Formal Sector."

15. Ravi Nair (Director, South-Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre), "Civil and Political Rights: A Possible Model for Human Rights Education in South Asia."

16. Garth Nettheim (Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of New South Wales), "Human Rights Education Needs in the Asia-Pacific Region: Formal Human Rights Education."

17. Jose Ramos-Horta (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate), "Human Rights, Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution."

18. I A Rehman (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan), "Human Rights Education: South Asian Context."

19. Jane Reid (Coordinator, Australian Human Rights Information Centre), "Human Rights Information Providers and Materials for Human Rights Education."

20. John Scott (Office of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Inslander Social Justice Commissioner), "Human Rights Education for Aboriginal and Strait Islander People."

21. Max Sujadinatha (Pastor, Congregational Church), "The Role of Conflict in Human Rights Education: A Pastoral Perspective."

22. Songphorn Tajaroensuk (Associate Secretary General), "Human Rights Education Needs in the Asia-Pacific Region: Experiences of Forum-Asia."

23. Deepika Udagama (Director, Centre for the Study of Human Rights), "Human Rights Education Needs in the Asia-Pacific Region: A Sri Lankan Perspective."

24. Krishna P Upadhyaya (Program Coordinator, Informal Sector Service Centre, Nepal), "Grass-Roots Human Rights Education: Nepalese Perspective."

25. Laurie Wiseberg (Executive Director, Human Rights Internet), "Assessment of Human Rights Education Activities."

26. George Zdenkowski (Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of New South Wales), "Human Rights Education for Law Enforcement Agencies."

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Annex III

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Ms Evelyn Balais-Serrano, Vice-Chairperson, Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates.
2. Mr Bill Barker, Director, Human Rights and Indigenous Issues Section Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
3. Mr Michael Blume, Workshop reporter.
4. Ms Helen Brereton, Workshop reporter.
5. Ms Kabita Chakma, Jumma Peoples Network of the Asia-Pacific.
6. Mr Akram Chowdery, Bangladesh Institute of Human Rights.
7. Ms Margie Cook, Public Affairs Manager, Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.
8. Ms Rosaline Costa, Commission for Justice and Peace, Bangladesh.
9. Dr Clarence J. Dias, President, International Center for Law in Development.
10. Mr Chicka Dixon, NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Aboriginal Community Contact Program, The University of New South Wales.
11. Ms Vicki Fair, Aboriginal Education Program, The University of New South Wales.
12. Ms Margaret Fahy, Australian Human Rights Information Center.
13. Dr Barbara Ferguson, Professor School of Social Work, The University of NSW.
14 Mr W.J. Basil Fernando, Executive Director, Asian Legal Resource Center and Asian Human Rights Commission.
15 Dr Laksiri Fernando, Executive Director, Diplomacy Training Program, The University of New South Wales.
16 Mr Jan Fischer, Director, United Nations Information Center, Sydney.
17 Mr Kieren Fitzpatrick, Senior Adviser to the Human Rights Commissioner, Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.
18 Mr Andre Frankovits, Executive Director, Human Rights Council of Australia.
19.Dr Montserrat Gorina, Workshop reporter.
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21.Mr Manuel Guzman, Executive Director, Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems International (HURIDOCS) Geneva.
22 Ms Samantha Hausler, Workshop reporter
23 Mr Sonny Inbaraj, Editor, Editorial Page, The Nation Newspaper, Bangkok.
24 Ms Melinda Jones, Faculty of Law, The University of New South Wales.
25 Mr Peti Lafanama, Papua New Guinea.
26 Mr Malcolm Langford, Workshop reporter.
27 Ms Ana Lopez, Workshop reporter.
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30 Mr Banyar Naing, Mon Student Activist, Burma.
31 Mr Mark Newton, Workshop reporter.
32 Mr Ravi Nair, Executive Director, South Asia Human Rights Documentation Center.
33 Professor Garth Nettheim, Faculty of Law, The University of New South Wales.
34 Mr Jose Ramos-Horta, Special Representative, National Council of Maubere Resistance, Founder-Diplomacy Training Program.
35 Mr Bruce Petty, Cartoonist, Melbourne Age and Filmmaker.
36 Ms Julie Potter, Indigenous Programs, Community Aid Abroad.
37 Professor Paul Redmond, Dean, Faculty of Law, The University of New South Wales.
38 Ms Jane Reid, Co-Ordinator, Australian Human Rights Information Center
39 Mr I.A. Rehman, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.
40 Ms Naomi Sharp, Workshop reporter.
41 Ms Sharmini Sherrard, ACFOA Human Rights.

42 Mr Chris Sidoti, Human Rights Commissioner, Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.
43 Mr Eric Sidoti, Human Rights Council of Australia.
44 Mr Sameer Sondhi, Workshop reporter.
45 Professor Songphorn Tajaroensuk, Associate Secretary General, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development.
46 Rev. Max Sujadinatha, Congregational Church, New York.
47 Dr Kieth Suter, President, Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, The University of Sydney.
48 Ms Cheryle Taylor, Indigenous Program, Community Aid Abroad.
49 Dr Deepika Udagama, Director, Center for the Study of Human Rights, Colombo.
50 Mr Khrishna Prasad Upadhyaya, Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) Nepal.
51 Mr David Whitcombe, Workshop reporter.
52 Kevin Williams, Aboriginal Education Program, The University of New South Wales.
53 Dr Sein Win, Prime Minister, National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma.
54 Ms Laurie Wiseberg, Executive Director, Human Rights Internet.
55 Mr Robert Wynn-Jones, Workshop reporter.
56. Dr Sarah Pritchard, Faculty of Law, The University of New South Wales.
57. Ms Maisie Warburton, Australia-Burma Council.
58. Ass. Prof. George Zdenkowski, Faculty of Law, The University of New South Wales.