AIPO

ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATION

27TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

10 - 15 SEPTEMBER 2006 ▲ CEBU CITY, PHILIPPINES

27GA/06/Soc/01

RESOLUTION

ON

LEGAL COOPERATION TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Referring to the AIPO 23rd General Assembly Resolution on combating trafficking in women, the 25th General Assembly Resolution on the Role of Parliamentarians in combating trafficking of women and children and the 26th General Assembly Resolution on legal cooperation to combat trafficking in women and children and;

Recalling the Resolution 26GA/2005/Soc/03 which mandated the National Assembly of Viet Nam to host the AIPO Meeting on legal cooperation to combat trafficking in women and children in July 2006 in Ho Chi Minh City;

Underlining the seriousness and urgency of the problem of trafficking in persons in the ASEAN region, recognizing the importance of legislators and parliaments contributing to the prevention and prosecution of trafficking in persons and the protection of victims of trafficking;

Considering the deliberations in the above-mentioned meeting, the AIPO delegates and special observers note that:

1. Trafficking in persons, not only in women and children but also in men, is a complex and diverse problem that exists in every ASEAN country whether they are affected as a source, transit and/or destination country. Therefore, it is essential to harmonise the perceptions and various levels of awareness throughout ASEAN in this regard and whether source, transit or destination must have a shared responsibility in undertaking appropriate measures to prevent and combat trafficking in persons;

2. Despite some success in fighting against trafficking, ASEAN countries recognise that in the pursuit of this common goal, it requires due regard to the UN Protocol against Trafficking in Persons, supplementing the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime;

3. The importance of strong cooperation at national and regional levels in combating trafficking in persons and the need to synergise initiatives in legal cooperation by AIPO, as well as lawmaking and monitoring measures by AIPO members, with ASEAN and ASEAN member countries' initiatives;

4. The difficulty in coordinating among national legal and judicial approaches and therefore the utmost importance of legal frameworks in enabling prevention and prosecution of trafficking in persons and the protection of victims of trafficking;

5. The importance of legal frameworks tackling illegal financial gains in combating trafficking in persons;

6. The useful experience and stronger impact made in countries through a single piece of legislation relating to combating trafficking in persons.

Accepting all of the above, the 27th AIPO General Assembly hereby resolves to:

1. Establish an AIPO Expert Working Group that consists of representatives of AIPO members, special observers and other relevant parties. The expert working group is tasked with (i) assessing existing legal frameworks through common tools; (ii) developing a regional strategy on legal cooperation including information exchange and capacity building to prevent and combat trafficking in persons; and (iii) to report the above to the 28th AIPO General Assembly. The working group will seek close cooperation with other relevant organisations active in the area such as UN agencies, other IOs and NGOs.

2. Promote the effectiveness of combating trafficking in persons through strengthening cooperation between AIPO and ASEAN.

3. Advise AIPO members, Special Observers and Observer Parliaments to:

    a. review their legal frameworks related to trafficking in persons and develop specific legislation on trafficking in persons, based on a common understanding of what is involved in trafficking taking into consideration criteria laid down in the UN Protocol and the effective criminalisation of all acts related to trafficking;

    b. advocate, as appropriate, for their governments to accede to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children;

    c. monitor and oversee the implementation of laws and regulations on combating trafficking in persons;

    d. strengthen cooperation among legislative and executive bodies at national level in promoting the effectiveness of combating trafficking in persons.

4. To call on UN agencies and international organizations to provide technical support and funds to implement AIPO cooperation activities among legislative bodies to combat trafficking in persons.

Adopted this 14th day of September, 2006 in Cebu City, Philippines.