

7/29/93 DoCIP ARCHIVES

[Mrs Panai Varahan]

(27) 29 July 93

I.

Madame chair,

Distinguish Delegates,

Honorable members of the Working Group

<1> On behalf of the delegation of Asian ^{Indigenous} Women and the ~~Alliance of~~ ~~Taiwan Aborigines~~, I would like to have a ~~part~~ ^{statement} of the first Asian Indigenous Women's Conference. The conference was convened in Bagio City, Philippines in January 25 ~ 30, 1993. It was sponsored by the Cordillera Women's Education and Resource Center. The main reason for Asian women being Bagio City was captured in the conference theme "Sharing Commonalities and Diversities: Forging Unity Towards Indigenous Women's Empowerment." There were almost 100 indigenous women who came from 13 Asian countries and from Guatemala.

<2>. The most significant accomplishment of the First Asian Indigenous Women's Conference was the collective consciousness which evolved among the participants. The consciousness that as indigenous peoples and as women we are presently experiencing similar patterns of oppression.

For example, according to the number of cases of crimes against Dalits of the 1992 ~ 1993 Annual Report of Government of India, there were more than 13,400 criminal cases among the ~~Dalit~~ ~~and other~~ including more than 1,200 Dalit women were raped.

In Taiwan, there are indigenous women become prostitutes because they are either sold by their parents or tricked into it

with the promise of better future.

Indigenous peoples areas in the Cordillera and Mindanao in the Philippines are targets of the "total war" policy of the government.

Indigenous women in these areas are raped, sexually harassed, and forcibly recruited as paramilitary.

~~Indigenous women in Burma and Thailand have the similar situations.~~

<3> The development of tourism has also directly affected indigenous women. Sexual trafficking becomes a new phenomenon in some indigenous communities in Asia. For example, in Thailand, numbers of young indigenous women are being brought to the cities and forced to become prostitutes. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in the numbers of people infected with the AIDS virus.

<4>. However, health services for indigenous women are rarely available.

Most of indigenous ~~communities are peoples live in~~ live in remote areas which cannot be reached by vehicles. ~~The only concern of government is seemingly about depopulation programs.~~

Besides the problems of sexual trafficking, rapacity, health and militarization, Asian Indigenous women ~~also suffer~~ from ethnocide and culture genocide.
transmigration

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(5) Although military repression is a major factor affects the life of indigenous women in many Asian countries, the prevailing global economic and political order, which is mainly controlled by rich nations and transnational corporations, plays a key role in perpetuating our oppression. We are aware that this is not the nature order of things and we are convinced that there is a potential force of indigenous women to help bring about substantial changes to this world.

(6) After the five-day conference, we have elaborated ~~following~~ resolutions ^{and I highlight the main ones as the following:} and some action plans ~~as following~~

1. Prioritize the building-up of indigenous women's organizations in areas where there are none.
2. Develop consciousness-raising programs among women and men on indigenous women's situation and issues.
3. Bring an agenda of Asian indigenous women to the attention of appropriate international bodies. Ensure that the composition of decision-making bodies of regional, national and local formations of indigenous peoples is gender-balanced.
4. Launch an Asia-wide campaign against state violence vs. women and demand a stop to the militarization

of indigenous peoples' areas.

5. Facilitate exchange visits among the different indigenous women with goal of learning from more advanced experiences of organizing work among indigenous women.

6. Created the Asian Indigenous Women's Network of which the Cordillera Women's Education and Resource Center (CWERC) was assigned to be the secretariat.

7. ~~Divide Asia into Southeast Asia, South Asia, East Asia, Indochina and the Philippines, five subregions.~~
 AND TO PRESENT THE RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE TO THE UNWGIP AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES.

27). After making the statement may I appeal to the all indigenous representatives and participants of the Working Group to support the struggle of Asian Indigenous women to fight against militarization, ~~transmigration~~, sexual trafficking, rapacity, ethnocide and culture genocide.

Thank you, Madame Chair.