This year is the 25th anniversary of DTP’s first human rights training course in 1990 with DTP Founders Nobel Peace Prize winner and former President of Timor Leste, José Ramos-Horta and Emeritus Professor Garth Nettheim. We will be publishing a series of contributions reflecting on the new human rights challenges posed by political, economic, social and environmental changes since 1989 and what these mean for human rights and capacity building looking forward. We invite our readers and alumni to contribute to these reflections.

- This issue we reproduce a keynote address by Basil Fernando to the Fifth Human Rights Cities Forum in Gwangju, South Korea "We need a new frontier in the human rights field. This frontier is the frontier of institutional reform." Basil Fernando is Executive Director of the Asian Human Rights Commission and on the International Advisory Council of DTP.

- A number of events are planned for the 25th Anniversary of DTP, and among them we are delighted to be hosting the 1st DTP Fellowship Program later in the year. We are also focusing on improving our contacts with DTP supporters through an improved web site and the use of social media. We encourage you to take a look at and ‘like’ the DTP Facebook page.

Nepal Earthquake

- DTP has had a long association with NGOs and others in Nepal and many Nepalese have participated in DTP Programs. The 24th Annual Program was jointly organized with our partner INSEC in Kathmandu and Pokhara in November last year. It was therefore with shock and concern that we heard about the two devastating earthquakes that occurred there in April and May. We wish to express our solidarity with the people of Nepal and condolences to those who have lost loved ones. We have been in touch with many of our alumni and friends in Nepal and thankfully they survived and are ok – and are involved in helping others. Many urgent appeals for assistance have been launched.

- Bijaya R. Gautam, Executive Director of DTP partner INSEC issued a press release on May 10 reporting on the impact of the earthquakes.

Capacity Building and Training Opportunities

DTP Programs: 2015 Draft Schedule

- **January 26-29** - The Human Rights of Migrant Workers – Sri Lanka – 2nd session
- **March 16-17** - The Human Rights of Migrant Workers – Sri Lanka – practical lobbying exercise
- May 11-14 - The Human Rights of Migrant Workers – Sri Lanka – 3rd session – completed
- May 24-28 – 4th GCC Regional Program on the Rights of Migrant Workers in the Middle East – Doha, Qatar – in partnership with MFA, Qatar Foundation and Georgetown University
- June 8-11 with Oxfam – 1st Module: Rights and Advocacy - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Program Australia
- July 20-23 - The Human Rights of Migrant Workers – Sri Lanka – 4th Session
- July 21-24 - with Oxfam – 2nd Module: Rights and Advocacy - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Program Australia
- September 7-25 (3 Weeks) - DTP’s 1st DTP Fellowship Program (25th Anniversary) Australia
- October – The Human Rights of Migrant Workers – Sri Lanka – 5th Session
- November - The Human Rights of Migrant Workers – Bangladesh – 1st Session
- December - 25th Annual Regional Human Rights Defenders Program TBC

Please check the DTP website for details, program information and application forms. Please send enquiries to dtp@unsw.edu.au

Reports
- This report reflects on the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) and Migrant Forum Asia’s (MFA) activities to build the capacity of advocates for the rights of migrant workers in Asia and the Middle East since 2004.
- The 2013 DTP Annual Report is now available
- 24th Annual Regional Human Rights and Peoples’ Diplomacy Training Program – Nepal (Nov 2014), Executive Summary

Other Training Programs
- Online Certificate Course in Human Rights and Social Justice Training 19 June-20 July

PLEASE DONATE

- DTP relies on donations of time and funds to provide quality training to human rights defenders so that they can promote and protect human rights effectively in their societies. Please help if you can. Donations over $2 are tax-deductible. Please send your donation to DTP now online, or by credit card or EFT with this donation form

ACTION OPPORTUNITIES – CALLS FOR SOLIDARITY – CALLS FOR COMMENT

- Proposed Gulpur Dam (Poonch River, Pakistan): If anyone is in touch with communities that will be directly affected by the project or has connections with groups that work in the area, please email Samir samir@internationalrivers.org and Tanya tlee@internationalrivers.org
- **Petition to the Australian Government** to ensure that any Free Trade Agreement, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership, specifically ban the trade in all asbestos and require the listing of all asbestos on the Rotterdam Convention
- Action appeal, Philippines: [False charges filed against human rights defender Jomorito Goaynon](https://dtp.org.au/)
- **Global Fund Launches Human Rights Complaints Procedure on Health**
- [OHCHR global online consultation on Accountability and Remedy Project – deadline for input, 1 Aug](https://dtp.org.au/): Ensuring access to effective remedy for those impacted by business-related human rights abuses
- Petition in support of Indonesian farmers: [Indonesian President Jokowi: Stop the Central Java Coal Plant](https://dtp.org.au/)
- Petition for justice, Thailand: [Justice for murdered land rights defenders in Surat Thani](https://dtp.org.au/)
- Urgent action, China: [Court Sentences human rights defender Liu Jiacai to 5 years in prison](https://dtp.org.au/)
- Urgent Appeal, India: [Stop Forced Eviction of Indigenous Communities for Construction of National Sports University and Asian Development Bank (ADB) Financed Asian Highway 1 In Manipur](https://dtp.org.au/)
- Petition, Malaysia: [Rescue the Rohingyas](https://dtp.org.au/) and from the Penang Stop Human Trafficking Campaign Human, Trafficking and Opportunities for Action
- [Endorsement of joint NGO statement on Cambodian draft Law on Associations and NGOs](https://dtp.org.au/)
- Urgent action, Timor Leste: [Stop the Arrest and Torture of Dozens of Individuals in Baucau](https://dtp.org.au/)
- Call to endorse NGO statement on Rohingya refugees

**Contributions from DTP Alumni**

- From Hubertson Tomwilson in India: [Handing over Mortal Remains of Indian migrant workers - Question raised at Indian Parliament - 7086 Dead Bodies of Indian Nationals sent from foreign countries to India in one year](https://dtp.org.au/)
- From Chris Hannock in Queensland, Australia: [Kowanyama Land Office News](https://dtp.org.au/)
- From Lissy Joseph in India: [Postcard campaign on the rights of migrants and domestic workers](https://dtp.org.au/)
- From Regimon K in India: [Life as an illegal expat in Oman is ‘beyond imagination’](https://dtp.org.au/)

**Where Are They Now – News of DTP Alumni**

- DTP regrets having to inform our readers that [Moses Havini, an alumnus from Bougainville](https://dtp.org.au/) died on May 2 aged 68. Moses was a good friend of DTP. He was a tireless campaigner for his homeland, Bougainville, and used the many contacts and friends he made through DTP to promote autonomy and independence for his birthplace. DTP extends its condolences to Moses’ family.
- [Mong Marma](https://dtp.org.au/) is an Indigenous man from the Chittagong Hills Tracts in Bangladesh. In 2005 Mong won a scholarship to attend Southern Cross University in Australia and subsequently in 2007 interned with DTP. He is an alumnus of the DTP 19th Annual Program in Timor Leste and of the Regional Human Rights Program for Indigenous peoples in Darwin in 2009. Since then he has been involved in human rights work in the Philippines and Nepal and was recently appointed as the Human Rights Program Officer with the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact in Thailand. Read his interesting story here.
- [Pratistha Koirala](https://dtp.org.au/) was an alumna of the DTP 24th Annual Program. We hear from her that she and her family are safe after the devastating earthquakes in Nepal. Pratistha told us of her involvement in the Nepalese Government’s response to the list of issues raised by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

**DTP’s Thematic Priorities**

Human Rights and Business
• Oxfam highlights human rights abuses linked with International Finance Corporation lending in Cambodia, Guatemala, India, Honduras and Laos
• UNICEF publishes reports on children's rights in the extractive industry
• Cambodia: Mitr Phol pulls out sugar plantations after years of allegations of land rights and environmental abuses
• Expansion by Indonesia’s largest palm oil company frozen for disobeying RSPO standards
• UN expert group on business and human rights: “The lessons of Rana Plaza have still not been learned”

Indigenous Peoples’ Rights
• Brazil and UNDP announce the first "World Games of Indigenous Peoples", October-November 2015
• Indonesia: Oil palm plantations expand in West Papua, bringing some development but costing many indigenous peoples their land & livelihoods
• Intervention of the Indigenous World Association on The Failure of the United Nations System to Decolonize the Non-Self Governing Territories and Violations of the Right to Self-Determination

Migrant Workers’ Rights
• Australia: Labour exploitation, slave-like conditions found on farms supplying biggest supermarkets
• Migrant-Rights.org highlights best practices and basic guidelines for reporting on migrant issues
• Vinci Construction to be investigated in France over Qatar forced labour claims following legal complaint by Sherpa
• Indonesia to stop sending domestic workers to Mideast and Will Indonesia's Mideast maid ban backfire?
• Philippines pushes for ASEAN protection of migrant workers

Women’s Rights
• Women’s Progress Report 2015 provides the key elements of a far-reaching new policy agenda that can transform economies and make women’s rights a reality
• UN CEDAW Committee Finds the Philippine Government Accountable for Grave and Systematic Violations of Women’s Rights under CEDAW

EVENTS


NEW PUBLICATIONS/WEB-BASED RESOURCES

• International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN) New Annual Report 2014
• The Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law has recently launched a new website
• OHCHR: “Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Migrants in an Irregular Situation”
• WITNESS Tool Kit: Filming for Human Rights - Tips and Techniques
• OHCHR: Booklet on the Treaty Body System (describes the treaty body system and its main functions)

HUMAN RIGHTS – GENERAL NEWS

• UN: Applying a Human Rights-Based Approach to Climate Change Negotiations, Policies and Measures
• Joint statement by Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM), Imparsial (Indonesia), Cross Cultural Foundation (Thailand), Lawyers for Liberty (Malaysia), Vietnamese Overseas Initiative for Conscience Empowerment (VOICE) and Amnesty International “Southeast Asia: ASEAN governments must end the clampdown on freedom of expression”

Human Rights Council
• Strengthening NGO access and participation at the UN

Treaty Bodies and special procedures
• Developments in relation to the new Treaty Body Capacity Building Programme established under General Assembly resolution 68/268 "Strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system"

UPR
• Reminder: Palau, Solomon Islands, Singapore will be reviewed at the 24th session of the UPR which will be held in Jan/Feb 2016. The deadline for NGO submissions is 22 June (tentatively). Guidelines for submissions are found here.
• How-to Guide for the use of the On-line UPR Submissions Registration System

Development
• UN calls for suspension of TTIP talks over fears of human rights abuses
• CSOs outside the World Bank demand the Bank be more accountable on human rights abuses
• From Sunil Pant: External debt is a cancer to Nepal; Cancel it now!
• UN rights experts call for a central role for civil society to guarantee inclusive post-2015 development goals

Death Penalty
• Transnational campaign against death penalty in Indonesia began with political prisoners
• Statement by the International Commission against the Death Penalty: two Indonesian nationals executed in Saudi Arabia
• First Asian Regional Congress on the Death Penalty - 11 & 12 June, Kuala Lumpur: Registration

HUMAN RIGHTS – REGIONAL NEWS

• ASEAN Parliamentarians condemn Indonesia’s treatment of migrants
• Bridges Across Borders Southeast Asia Community Legal Education Initiative (BABSEA CLE) Inaugural Quarterly Newsletter
• Crisis at sea in Southeast Asia
• Fortify Rights Press Statement: “Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia: Coordinate Sea Rescues, Protect Asylum Seekers and Trafficking Survivors”
• Joint Statement by UNHCR, OHCHR, IOM and SRSG for Migration and Development

HUMAN RIGHTS – COUNTRY SPECIFIC NEWS

Australia
• UNICEF urges Australia, Cambodia to protect rights of child refugees in Nauru
• UN Human Rights Committee: Australia’s ‘national security’ visa refusal violated Iranian’s right to family life
• UN rights experts urge Nauru to set up monitoring body for asylum-seekers detained on island
UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues backs fight against closure of remote Aboriginal communities in Western Australia

Indigenous incarceration rates are a national shame

Burma/Myanmar

- Three student human rights defenders in Myanmar are in hiding after authorities brought charges against them following a peaceful student protest in March 2015
- FIDH: Arbitrary detention and sentencing of human rights defender and land rights campaigner Thein Aung Myint
- Briefing Paper on Voices of Refugees - Situation of Burma’s Refugees Along the Thailand-Burma Border
- Amnesty International: Release media workers jailed for peaceful journalistic activities
- ICI: Conviction of six human rights defenders after an unfair trial lasting less than five minutes

Cambodia


Indonesia

- Komnas HAM calls for new inquiry into killing of students in Papua
- Minority Rights Group: New footage of West Papua massacre casts spotlight on military abuses
- President Jokowi pardons five political prisoners in Papua
- Indonesian fishermen tow migrant boat to Aceh

India

- From Ravi Nair: “Gujarat’s Anti-Terrorism Bill, Another Building Block in the Edifice of Authoritarianism”

Malaysia

- Human Rights Commission, SUHAKAM calls for end to death penalty

Maldives

- Amnesty International: Assault on Civil and Political Rights

Pakistan

- Sabeen Mahmud, Pakistani human rights activist, shot dead in Karachi

Thailand

- HRW: Mass Graves of Rohingya Found in Trafficking Camp

Vietnam

- Civil Rights Defenders: “We Will Not Be Silenced” - Bloggers and the Human Rights Movement in Vietnam

May 2015 E Newsletter compiled, edited and designed by André Frankovits and Patrick Earle

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