



# DIPLOMACY TRAINING PROGRAM

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

## Indigenous People, Human Rights and Advocacy

### A Human Rights Training Program for Indigenous Advocates in the Asia-Pacific Region

Hosted by the Menzies School of Health Research and Charles Darwin University  
3 – 12 May 2006  
Darwin NT, Australia

Funded by Oxfam Australia, Caritas Australia, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NZ Agency  
for International Development

## Final Project Report

***Because the DTP provides the best training program, I'd like to see in the near future (this year or next coming year) DTP working together with my organisation, ELSHAM, West Papua, to implement a DTP in that province.***

*West Papuan Human Rights Defender, DTP Course, June 2006*

### Executive Summary

From May 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006 over 20 Indigenous Peoples' Rights advocates from six countries participated in the Diplomacy Training Program's *Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights and Advocacy* capacity building program held in Darwin, Australia. This is the report on the program. The report draws on participant evaluations of the program, as well as the reflections of facilitators.

The program focused on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and on economic, social and cultural rights and the right to health, within the broader human rights framework. It included the participation of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, Professor Paul Hunt, as an expert resource person.

Twelve of the participants came from different parts of Australia, with the remainder from other countries in the region: The Philippines (1), Indonesia (3, including 2 from West Papua), East Timor (4), Malaysia (1) and New Caledonia (1).

While all the participants face challenges in their work to promote and protect human rights, all involved in this program were acutely aware of the personal risks faced by some advocates in this training program. While there have been many advances in human rights, it remains the case that some human rights defenders in the region brave detention,

torture, “disappearance” or death as the price for defending human rights in their communities.

Participants ensured that discussions of international human rights standards, and UN processes and mechanisms remained very practically focused on real life situations. The sense of solidarity and friendship that developed among the participants was a significant feature of this program. The opportunity for participants to share experiences and perspectives, and to learn from and be inspired by each other, was consistently highlighted in participant evaluations.

The program was funded by grants and support from OXFAM Australia, New Zealand’s Agency for International Development (NZAID), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Caritas Australia. The Diplomacy Training Program expresses its gratitude and appreciation for the support they provided. The program was also made possible by the many trainers, including the UN Special Rapporteur, who donated their time and expertise to the program.

The official host of the program was the Menzies School of Health Research, with training facilities generously provided by the School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems (SAIKS) at Charles Darwin University (CDU). The Diplomacy Training Program would like to acknowledge the assistance and support of Professor Mary-Ann Bin-Salik, and staff at CDU. The Diplomacy Training Program would also like to acknowledge Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Education (BIITE) and the personal contribution of BIITE staff member and DTP Alumna, Alma Mir.

Since the training program was conducted the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the new UN Human Rights Council and will be considered for adoption by the UN General Assembly later 2006.

## **Program Objectives**

The 10 day program had the following objectives:

- To provide Indigenous Peoples’ advocates with an awareness and understanding of international human rights law, with an emphasis on the human rights standards and mechanisms most relevant to Indigenous Peoples.
- To build the capacity of Indigenous advocates to apply human rights instruments and principles to the different challenges they face
- To build the capacity of Indigenous advocates to engage with the UN system, other intergovernmental organisations, national/state governments and corporations
- To provide opportunities for Indigenous advocates to share and learn from differing experiences within the region and to develop their support networks.

The training program provided a rare opportunity for Indigenous advocates in Australia, Asia and the Pacific to share experiences and to build regional and international networks.

Reflecting evaluations of previous programs and the priorities of NGOs in Australia, this program had a particular focus on the Right to Health. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health was invited to participate in the program as an expert resource person. The

timing of the program was determined partly by the availability of the UN Special Rapporteur.

The program was co-facilitated by Emeritus Professor Garth Nettheim (DTP Foundation Board Member), Minnie Degawan (The Indigenous Peoples Network for Change, Chiang Mai, Thailand) and Patrick Earle, Executive Director, Diplomacy Training Program.

### **Background to the Program**

The training program was the third *Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights and Advocacy* organized by the Diplomacy Training Program in the Northern Territory since 2004. The program aims to develop the capacity of Indigenous advocates to respond effectively to the existing and emerging human rights issues they face.

Indigenous communities across the Asia-Pacific region confront a range of challenges. While the differences between countries are great, there are common issues. Through their life experiences and work, the participants in the program had experience of many of these challenges.

As accelerating processes of economic development and resource extraction encroach on the traditional lands of Indigenous Peoples, the pressure on traditional ways of life, on the environment and on the natural resources that sustain many communities has grown.

Indigenous communities can be seen as standing in the way of broader economic progress. There is pressure to change traditional systems of land ownership and custodianship to attract inward investment. Loss of traditional land rights can further marginalize Indigenous communities and worsen poverty. Where statistics are available they show that the health, educational and employment outcomes for Indigenous communities are significantly worse than for the wider community. Disputes and unresolved grievances over resource-use and unrecognised land rights cause conflict and human rights violations.

Environmental degradation through destructive forestry and mining practices is threatening the lives and livelihoods of Indigenous communities in many parts of the region. As a result Indigenous communities can find themselves further excluded from the benefits of prosperity generated through exploitation of the land and resources on which they live.

Increasingly the traditional knowledge and intellectual property of Indigenous communities is being sought or appropriated by companies searching for new medicines and products, often without adequate and informed consent – and without benefits flowing back to communities.

Among the many challenges facing Indigenous community advocates in Australia, and elsewhere in the Asia-Pacific region, are the lack of representative bodies at a national level, lack of familiarity with relevant human rights standards by official agencies and the refusal by governments to acknowledge the particular rights of Indigenous communities.

Earlier in 2006 the official report of the Indigenous Social Justice Commissioner of the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission was tabled in the Australian Parliament. The report documents the continuing disparities in health outcomes

between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, and identifies this disparity as one of Australia's most pressing human rights challenges. It calls for, and set-outs, a human rights-based approach to health. The Diplomacy Training Program's focus on the right to health in this program was therefore particularly timely.

This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Aboriginal stockmen's strike of 1966, led by Vincent Lingiari, that marked the birth of the modern land rights movement in Australia that led directly to the Northern Territory Land Rights Act of 1975. This anniversary provided a fitting background for the training.

Also informing discussions at the DTP course was the knowledge that one of the first tasks facing the new UN Human Rights Council would be consideration of the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### **Program Outline**

The schedule was developed in consultation with DTP's training advisory committee, taking account of the advice and lessons of previous years and the availability of particular trainers.

Elements of the program such as the Opening Ceremony and the Closing Ceremony and the field trip were organised by DTP with the assistance of Alma Mir and BIITE. The two day field trip to Kakadu was replaced with a one-day field trip to Litchfield National Park. A number of the evaluations noted that a visit to an Indigenous community would have been a valuable part of the program.

Following a Welcome to Country by a representative of the Traditional Owners, the Larrakia Nation, the program was officially opened in the 1<sup>st</sup> session, Monday 3 May with addresses from Professor Mary-Ann Bin Salik, (Dean, Indigenous Research and Education, CDU), Mick Gooda (CEO, Collaborative Research Centre on Aboriginal Health) and Professor Garth Nettheim (DTP foundation board member).

Following brief introductions by participants, local advocate, Don Christopherson provided a compelling brief history of Indigenous Peoples in the Northern Territory, their relationships to each other and to the land, and of the struggle for land rights in this part of Australia.

The 40 years since the landmark strike of Indigenous pastoral workers at Wave Hill, have seen many changes. Indigenous controlled organizations now have recognized custodianship of large parts of the Northern Territory. As a result mining and resource companies have, as a matter of course, to negotiate with traditional owners of the land – either directly or through the Indigenous controlled Land Councils. The right of traditional owners to participate in the management of national parks is increasingly recognized. Indigenous people are major economic stakeholders, and are an electorally significant force. While there were no Indigenous Members of Parliament forty years ago, there are now six Aboriginal MPs, including four women and two cabinet ministers, in the elected government of the Northern Territory.

At the same time, the social and economic marginalization of Indigenous Peoples is still a daily reality. The human rights to an adequate standard of health, to housing, and to education are not enjoyed equally by Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory or elsewhere in Australia.

The opening speeches and the introductory sessions provided a solid foundation for an intensive ten days of presentations, discussion and small-group work as participants drew on each other's knowledge and that of the expert presenters.

Mick Gooda in his opening address highlighted some of the key lessons learned in a long career of administration and advocacy for Indigenous People's Rights – the need to be strategic, to think creatively, to be flexible and to make it easy for those you are lobbying to say yes - and hard to say no. These lessons were emphasized later in the program in sessions by experienced Indigenous activists, Jacqui Katona and Olga Havnen. Jacqui is Director of the Lumbu Foundation and was one of the leaders of the successful campaign of the Mirrar people to prevent one of the world's largest mining companies opening a new uranium mine in the Northern Territory. Olga Havnen has played a leading role in national campaigns around recognition of Native Title, in gaining broad community engagement in struggles for Indigenous Peoples rights and in mobilizing international support for Indigenous Peoples in Australia.

***She (Jacqui) gave a lot of recommendations and practical advice to conduct advocacy campaigns.***

Anonymous participant evaluation

Professor Garth Nettheim explored some of the existing regimes for recognition of Indigenous Peoples land rights, before Dr Sarah Pritchard explored the international framework for human rights and the international standards and mechanisms with particular relevance for Indigenous Peoples.

Professor Nettheim emphasized the importance of change at the national level - that it is national legal regimes and governments that are the starting and end point in relation to the recognition and realization of human rights. The significance of work at the international level is in the establishment of basic standards and in its potential to encourage and influence change at the national level.

Dr Sarah Pritchard gave participants a thorough introduction to the international human rights system. This system includes both core human rights standards, the mechanisms for holding governments accountable to these standards and the various forums that are available for promoting Indigenous Peoples rights. Dr Pritchard's presentations reflected the changing international situation – the end of the UN Human Rights Commission and the establishment of the new UN Human Rights Council and the prospects for advancing the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

These issues became the focus of the program's major role play, under the supervision of Minnie Degawan and Professor Nettheim. Participants were divided into governments and Indigenous Peoples representatives and were given the task of coming up with an acceptable resolution on the Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the UN Human Rights Council. The role play ran for a number of days with much negotiation

and verbal arm-twisting being conducted in breaks, over lunch and before and after training each day before the UN Human Rights Council was called into session on the penultimate day of the training.

***The UN practical exercise – although difficult at the beginning, it became easier as the task went on.***

Anonymous participant evaluation

Professor Paul Hunt, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health took the participants through a day focusing on economic, social and cultural rights, and the relationship of these human rights in particular to poverty and development. His inside knowledge of the UN system and experience as former member of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights made his sessions on the working of UN Treaty Bodies and UN Special Procedures especially valuable.

***Sessions held by Paul Hunt illustrated the breadth of work of a Special Rapporteur and awareness of one of the ESC rights with concrete examples.***

Anonymous participant evaluation

Australia's record in relation to Indigenous People and the Right to Health was a particular interest for a number of the Australian participants who work in the area of Aboriginal health. On a daily basis they deal with human costs of the denial of the right to health to many Indigenous Australians. International participants were genuinely shocked to hear of the situation, that it could persist in such an affluent country.

Through his own example Professor Hunt may, unintentionally, have given the impression that all UN officials are similarly wise, patient, accessible and friendly to NGO advocates. It was explained by another facilitator that Paul Hunt was not necessarily representative of all such officials and that advocates needed to prepare for circumstances in which officials at the UN could be obstructive, uncommunicative and sometimes unfriendly.

Philip Chung rose above technical difficulties at the computer labs at CDU to deliver a day of teaching internet skills that took participants through from use of the internet for Web research and advocacy through to the basics of website design.

***The website design and internet session is remarkable and most helpful too!***

Anonymous participant evaluation

There was a field trip/recreation day that included morning tea and a welcome from the Director at Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. This was followed by a Welcome to Country at Coomalie Cultural Centre by traditional owners of the land – land that includes Litchfield National Park. After viewing the giant termite mounds, and a BBQ lunch at Wangi Falls there was a visit to Buley Rockholes.

Training in media skills was delivered by Ursula Raymond, an experienced Indigenous woman broadcaster and NGO advocate, who now works with the Fred Hollows Foundation. Participants were provided with an opportunity to work together to prepare media releases and to hold a media conference and face sometimes hostile questioning in a role play that involved both laughter and serious lessons. Another perspective on media

work was provided through a brief presentation by Aaron Ross, an Indigenous media professional who has worked for many years as media officer for governments in New South Wales and now for the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory.

Minnie Degawan and Professor Paul Redmond led sessions dealing with some of the emerging international issues and trends relevant to Indigenous peoples rights. Minnie Degawan explored some of the standards and policies around the environment that have particular relevance for Indigenous Peoples – these include the Convention on Biological Diversity and the policies of the World Bank, the Asia Development Bank and the UN Development Program. Minnie also explained the role of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the work that is being conducted in this forum on recognition of Indigenous knowledge and on the intellectual property rights of Indigenous communities – and the difference in emphasis that this has compared with the focus on individual and corporate intellectual property rights in the World Trade Organization.

Professor Redmond led discussion around the emerging standards and guidelines relating to human rights and corporations. These were issues of great interest to some participants in particular whose communities have been adversely impacted by the activities of mining companies. Use of different strategies was explored through a number of scenarios that were the focus of small group work. There was some discussion of the OECD Guidelines on Multi-National Enterprises and a recent complaint lodged in Australia about the company that administers Australia's immigration detention regime. A number of international participants were surprised to hear that the Australian government had contracted out this core area of government responsibility – the detention of individuals in its jurisdiction – to a multi-national company.

***I have not come across any international discussion on corporations in the past. It would be of great help in my work to have further and a more in-depth knowledge of corporate obligations and accountability.***

Anonymous participant evaluation

On the final day of the training there was a visit to the NT Parliament and morning tea with Aboriginal MP, Barbara McCarthy, followed by discussion of key challenges to human rights.

In the closing ceremony, Garth Nettheim introduced another NT Aboriginal parliamentarian, Matthew Bonson, and presented participants to him for the award of certificates of satisfactory completion of the course. Mr Bonson addressed the group on the challenges and opportunities of being a parliamentarian committed to the realization of human rights and of having to represent both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal constituents on a daily basis. The closing dinner was held in Darwin.

## Program Logistics

- **The Partners**

The assistance of Professor Mary Ann Bin-Salik in ensuring that there was a level of institutional support and cooperation from Charles Darwin University (CDU) is gratefully acknowledged. Staff from the Aboriginal Support Unit were very accommodating and welcoming and helped establish an atmosphere that was conducive to learning.

DTP graduate Alma Mir, was again very helpful in gaining institutional support from both CDU and from Batchelor Institute for Indigenous Tertiary Education (particularly in relation to the field trip).

- **Venue**

The School of Aboriginal and Islander Knowledge Systems generously provided their staff seminar room as a venue which provided a nice location. CDU also generously made their computer labs available for the internet training.

- **Accommodation**

Most participants and trainers were accommodated at Nth Flinders House at CDU. As share rooms are no longer available, all participants were in single rooms. For health reasons some participants were accommodated in rooms with ensuite facilities. One of the participants, attending with children, needed to be accommodated at a local bed and breakfast.

Accommodation at the University during term time is not to be recommended. Sharing facilities and space with regular students has various drawbacks, including disruption to sleep and the general amenity and cleanliness of the shared facilities.

- **Catering**

The local campus cafe provided breakfasts and lunches on the weekdays. Tea and Coffee and morning and afternoon snacks were arranged by DTP. Evening meals were arranged both in Darwin and with BBQs cooked by participants and course facilitators. This made for significant savings, and was good for group dynamics, but imposed additional burdens on staff and volunteers.



## **The Program Participants**

There were over 70 applications for the program, with significantly more international applications than the previous year. The number of applicants from Indigenous Australia was lower. It is not clear why this was the case, but less time was devoted to preparing and updating distribution lists for promoting the course and this may have been a factor.

While considerable time was devoted to the selection of participants, these efforts were undermined by problems with visas. As a result of these difficulties, the number of participants in the program was less than planned. Two participants from Burma/Thailand, one from India, one from the Philippines and two from Indonesia missed out on the program as a result.

In the end there was a good gender balance among participants, a balance of ages and a good balance between national and international participants. There was also a good balance of knowledge and experience. A number of the participants commented on the positive atmosphere generated by the presence of children in the background of the course (one of the participants travelled with her two young children and accommodation, schooling and after school-care had to be arranged). Participant's children joined the field trip and some of the evening activities.

This was a particularly harmonious group of participants. The balance between participants from around Australia and the region enabled a rich sharing of experience. All the participants were keen to learn of the situation of each other, and to offer support.

## **Some Issues Highlighted By Participants**

The participants highlighted a number of issues that are currently receiving little attention. These include the killings in the Philippines of environmental activists, human rights defenders, Indigenous peoples activists and journalists. There is considerable concern within the human rights community in the Philippines at the failure to find or hold accountable those responsible for the killings.

In West Papua, the activities of the large international mining company Freeport McMoRan continue to be a source of concern and conflict, in an atmosphere of wider tension over issues of political autonomy. For some advocates in West Papua it is clear that there is a climate of fear sufficient to mean it is unsafe to engage in normal activities of peaceful dissent and to make individual human rights advocates vulnerable.

In Indonesia and in New Caledonia there is both anger and frustration at the apparent failure of government to hold companies accountable for the impact of their activities. Concerns at mining in New Caledonia have for example led to major protests and to violence, yet activists feel that the foreign based companies are effectively beyond accountability to the local communities that must live with the long term impacts of their activities.

Similarly the participants from Indonesia and the Philippines, are concerned that their governments' need for foreign direct investment and to create a conducive climate for

mining operations is coming at the cost of major environmental damage and harm to communities.

For participants from East Timor, and from Australia, the challenge to get government to reflect human rights in their allocation of resources is shared even if the national context is very different. In East Timor many former civil society advocates have gone into government, and the government has been constrained by a lack of resources. Consequently there is a need to build a strong civil society that can hold government to its human rights commitments.

In Australia the challenges facing advocates include the perceived reluctance of some levels of government to deal with Indigenous controlled organizations, the shift away from recognition of the right to self-determination, and the failure to recognize that human rights treaties place particular obligations on governments, obligations that should inform policy and practice.

There are great regional differences and across the north of Australia there has been a growing focus by Indigenous controlled organizations on issues around natural resource use and resource sharing. Recognition of the right to land, as a result of the Northern Territory Land Rights Act and the Mabo decision requires addressing land and sea management issues, including changing relationships with other stakeholders. How to use recognition of land rights to secure economic development, employment opportunities and improved health and education outcomes are pressing issues. There is also a perception that Indigenous knowledge and labour vital to natural land and sea resource management is not adequately recognized and is too often seen as cheap labour.

In addition there is a perception among advocates in Indigenous (and non-Indigenous NGOs) organizations in Australia that the Commonwealth government is using its funding of NGOs as a way to seek to minimize dissent from official policy approaches on Indigenous issues.

There was considerable interest among the Australian participants in how international human rights standards and mechanisms could be used practically to focus resources and political commitment on addressing the rights of Indigenous Australians. At the international level it is clear that there is a growing recognition of poverty as a human rights issue, and of the relationship between poverty and other human rights issues such as discrimination. International development agencies recognize international human rights standards as a framework for more effective strategies to address poverty and disadvantage.

The recent report of the Social Justice Commissioner in the 2005 Social Justice Report which calls for a human rights based approach to health to address the Indigenous health crisis, was cited as one way of developing greater understanding of the value of human rights to addressing key national issues facing Australia.

The life stories of a number of the participants provided eloquent testimony of the challenges Indigenous Peoples face on a daily basis, but also of the courage and commitment that exists to change the societies that currently foster racism, or tolerate the marginalization and exclusion of the vulnerable.

## **Participant Evaluations**

At the end of the training participants were asked to fill in two anonymous evaluation questionnaires. Following are some of the responses to some of the questions asked:

### Will the training assist you in your work? How?

- *100% Yes! The training did not only enrich our knowledge on human rights and teach us skills we can use to do good things at the right time, but it also gave the participants the opportunity to build strong networks with one another*
- *Yes, I have attained a greater understanding of my rights in the workplace and the rights of indigenous peoples*
- *Greatly, knowledge is power and I have learned so much from the input and sharing*
- *It will help us to use alternative existing tools to incorporate people's rights in environmental development projects*
- *Yes, it has provided me with a great insight into the United Nations system and the law on human rights, which will equip me with the tools to make positive change*
- *Yes, it can help me establish international solidarity, strategic allies and networking as well as to share information and further the human rights agenda*
- *I have learnt a lot about the strategies that can be utilized and the ways in which I can solve a problem in my work both as an individual and as a member of an organisation. My networking has also been strengthened because of my consultation with the other participants*
- *Yes, it has strengthened my resolve*
- *Yes, of course! I'm a person who comes across many cases on Indigenous peoples and sometimes it's too difficult to solve those cases because I've never known how I could help. Now, I have obtained a lot of experience from the training that will improve my own and my organisation's ability to better respond*
- *Yes, with better diplomacy and understanding of advocacy strategies*

### How will you share what you have learned?

- *I am expected to conduct an echo session in my organisation. Aside from this, I will integrate the new knowledge that I have acquired in the lectures and the trainings that I give*

- *I will share what I have learned with my organisation and my community by conducting campaigns and providing information about the human rights of Indigenous peoples*
- *Provide broad training on UN systems and the media as well. I may also develop a training package – an appropriate one on the right to health*
- *Strategic planning, writing reports including proposals on the development of human rights processes, and coalition building*

### **What was the best thing about the training program?**

- *Sharing and learning about our rights as Indigenous people and the absence of our voices in the law*
- *The dynamics of the group and the remarkable speakers allowed for a well-balanced training involving theory, practical advice and illustrations and experience sharing with all the participants. Efforts made by Patrick, Garth, Sarah and Manjita to accommodate us and organise extra-training activities were very appreciated – Very grateful about that.*
- *The trainers and lecturers were excellent and had a great manner when explaining the materials*
- *Strategies used to maximise learning advocacy principles*
- *Networks; Learning about other states' human rights issues; Information, systems, processes and laws and how to apply them*
- *Having an opportunity to further my duty to advocate and lobby for the better human rights conditions in West Papua by talking to other participants and a member of the NT Parliament – Ms Barbara*
- *The camaraderie between participants*
- *It brought together a diverse group. This was a great idea for Australian and Asian groups to come together, share their experiences and knowledge with other participants*
- *The quality of the speakers, such as Paul Hunt, and their invitations for discussion during classes*
- *Jabiluka case study and how the campaign was developed and implemented*
- *Getting to network with our Indigenous brothers and sisters around the world*

### **Comments on the length of training program?**

- *Perfect length. A visit to Kakadu would have been fantastic for the last week. Quite intense schedule but good!*
- *Daunting at first, but understandable with the amount of information that needed to be learned*
- *So far so good! Need more in Media and Advocacy Strategy*
- *It was a little long. It took me away from an already busy job, so I had to work after, and sometimes within, hours, which was a bit frustrating. However, the course was so beneficial. So don't cut it back!*
- *Too short and there was no space for participants to reread and review what was taught*
- *Apart from the Internet training and the website course which needed a little bit more time, it was good*

#### **How could the training program be improved?**

- *Teach us how we can become NGOs registered with the UN*
- *Include 2 days in an Aboriginal community*
- *Though the presentation of Jacqui Katona covered a bit of the issue of inequalities between female and male Aboriginal people in their struggle, some cultural practices may also hide huge situations of discrimination, particularly against women. This additional disempowerment is harmful to the struggle and is in itself a violation of women's rights. Gender equality should have been more mainstreamed throughout the course*
- *Clearer, more-structured (if possible) course delivery. Otherwise, it was fantastic*
- *Having the training once or twice a year and holding it in different places in order to get information on different situations*
- *Bring in more Indigenous participants and speakers*

#### **Comments on the degree of difficulty of this training program?**

- *I found the presentations well-balanced with theory complemented by concrete situations and exercises*
- *Advocacy is very complex. The concept of advocacy is broader/more complex than originally expected. This training program delivered to me a better understanding of strategies and formal processes required to put advocacy in practice*

- *The degree of difficulty for me, considering that I had limited prior knowledge of human rights, was high. I feel like I would have benefited from readings before the training started, which may have provided me with a better knowledge of human rights and the UN*
- *Nil, no difficulty. The training was well understood*
- *Difficult only from the perspective of the amount of information-overload! But again – don't cut it back!!*

## Reflections and Recommendations

- **Partners.** There is a need for DTP to develop better partnerships based on a shared understanding of capacity building needs. The partnerships could be with academic institutions and, NGOs and Un Agencies. **Recommendation 1:** *Explore the possibility of establishing a partnership with local tertiary institutions and Indigenous organisations in the Northern Territory that involves local partners offering genuine support and involvement in the development and implementation of the program.* **Recommendation 2:** *Explore developing a regional partnership to enhance the impact of the training program and of relocating the program to an international location in 2007/8 – possibly Chiang Mai, Thailand, West Malaysia or New Zealand.*
- **Program Focus, Training Schedule and Content.** There is a continuing tension between trying to cover too much and not going into enough depth on some things. It was possible to give more time than initially scheduled for the issues of corporate accountability and human rights – and the program benefited from this. The balance of advocacy skills training also needs further work perhaps with greater emphasis on lobbying/negotiation skills. The focus on the right to health was useful this year and there is a need for DTP to look at program for 2007 e.g. implications of DRIP, children's rights, or on natural resource management based on the human rights framework. **Recommendation 3:** *DTP to hold discussions with partners on future program focus.*
- **Participants.** The 50/50 balance between Indigenous Australia and international participants worked very well. There was also value in having a UNDP staff member in the training. Her reflections on the value of participating in such a training program, and of the potential of such a program to assist in the development of working relationships between UNDP staff and NGOs should be explored more systematically. **Recommendation 4:** *DTP to explore developing funding partnership/capacity building partnership with UNDP* **Recommendation 5:** *DTP to follow up with the Department of Immigration to ensure that agreed visa processes are followed and issues in relation to individual applicants resolved in good time.*
- **Regional Issues.** The input of participants is important way for DTP to build its understanding of human rights challenges in the region. As an example the human rights situation in the Philippines seems to be getting sharply worse with human rights defenders being targeted for killing. Participants also highlighted mining issues in New Caledonia, and violence & intimidation in West Papua. There is a need for DTP to explore how it might respond helpfully to these situations with its capacity building programs. **Recommendation 6:** *DTP should exploring the possibility of holding a*

*program in New Caledonia in 2007 and continue discussions with West Papuan organisations on increasing work with West Papuan advocates.*

- **Location.** Holding the program in the NT, which has more Indigenous MPs than the rest of Australia combined, and a long and rich history of Indigenous struggle for recognition of land rights has many advantages. DTP has developed positive and productive working relationships with many individuals in Darwin. Darwin also has the advantage over other locations of relative low cost/ease of access (compared with Alice Springs). Consideration should be given to holding more of the program in Jabiru/Kakadu – with time on Indigenous controlled land. **Recommendation 7:** *DTP should explore the options of holding the 2007 program in Darwin/Bachelor, and/or Alice Springs with the Institute of Aboriginal Development.*
- **Future programs.** Indigenous Australian advocates have much to give and much to learn from other Indigenous advocates in the region. DTP has a significant role to play in enabling this exchange and developing the capacity of Indigenous advocates in Australia and the region. Fulfilling the potential of this role depends on developing its partnerships and responding to the feedback from its alumni. A further program will be conducted in 2007 to build on the exchanges and the work done to date.