



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

18th Annual Human Rights and Peoples' Diplomacy Training Program

**A Capacity Building Program for Human Rights Defenders and Community Advocates
24 November- 12 December 2008
Sydney and Canberra**

Program Report

"I have been into a few regional and international training programs. But I have never been in a program like DTP. I would not hesitate to rate DTP at the highest level and I feel good to promote DTP so that many HR defenders like me benefit from it."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

"The lectures from trainers, interactive group exercises, practical field visits for lobbying—all were unique and useful methods, a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet with the prominent figures in academia—Awesome planning from the DTP."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Executive Summary:

The Diplomacy Training Program's (DTP's) **18th Annual Human Rights and Peoples' Diplomacy** training course took place in Sydney and Canberra from November 24th – December 12th, 2008 coinciding with the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The program was officially opened at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) by the Commonwealth Attorney General, the Hon Robert McClelland, MP. There was an official Welcome to Country on behalf of the traditional owners, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation.

The Diplomacy Training Program was privileged to work with a diverse group of human rights defenders and community advocates in this program. There were 29 participants, 15 women and 14 men, from across the region including Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, PNG, Bougainville, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tibet and Timor-Leste.

These participants work at the frontline of the region's pressing human rights challenges – fighting censorship and discrimination and promoting equality and democracy in Fiji, monitoring human rights in Afghanistan, improving the situation of women workers in Sri Lankan free trade manufacturing zones, campaigning against extra-judicial executions and forced "disappearances" in the Philippines and Southern Thailand, working against the displacement of communities by development projects in Laos, the differing challenges of respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples and realising the right to self-determination in Tibet, Bougainville, Mindanao, Southern Thailand, Australia, Burma and West Papua, and building peace, reconciliation and cultures of human rights in societies enduring or recovering from conflict. The often moving accounts of participants provided personal and powerful testimony of how much remains to be done to fulfil the promises made 60 years ago with the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This annual comprehensive Human Rights and Peoples' Diplomacy Training course is the oldest established such program in the region. It is an intense program. Each year the curriculum is

adjusted to take account of recent developments in human rights law and practice. Each program is designed to take advantage of opportunities provided by its location and timing. The curriculum covers the international human rights framework and the UN system, as well as exploring some of the human rights challenges associated with globalization. It includes training on using the internet for research and advocacy, as well as intensive sessions on media skills.

This was the first time in over ten years that DTP's annual human rights defenders program has been held in Sydney. For the first time program sessions were also held in Canberra. This year's program coincided with the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Australia was one of the original drafters of the UDHR following World War II. The commitment from the new Australian government to re-engage positively with the UN system and international efforts to promote and protect human rights enabled significant engagement between participants and government officials, members of parliament and the broader community during the program. Highlights of the program included:

- a special commemorative event for the 60th anniversary of the UDHR with Justice Elizabeth Evatt and Lord Bingham;
- meeting with Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade;
- witnessing the Parliamentary motion marking the 60th Anniversary of the UDHR;
- presentations from leading Indigenous advocates including Mick Dodson (2009 Australian of the Year), Dalee Sambo-Dorough, Rob Williams and James Anaya (UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous People);
- human rights day lunch with the Australian Forum of Human Rights Organisations (AFHRO)
- the inaugural Human Rights Day Football (soccer) Tournament;
- participation in the Human Rights Arts and Film Festival;
- practical lobbying sessions with officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and AusAID;
- Justice Michael Kirby's participation in the closing ceremony on his last official sitting day on the High Court of Australia.

On December 12th, Justice Michael Kirby formally closed the program and presented participants with their certificates of completion. The Diplomacy Training Program would like to record its appreciation to Justice Michael Kirby, the Hon Robert McClelland, MP and to the presenters including: Emeritus Professor Paul Redmond; Dr Sarah Pritchard; Emeritus Professor Garth Nettheim; Dr Hilary Charlesworth; Philip Chung; Professor Andrea Durbach; Janelle Saffin MP; Professor Andrew Byrnes; Professor Mick Dodson; Graeme Innes (Human Rights Commissioner); Ineke Boerefijn; Justice Elizabeth Evatt; André Frankovits; Bill Barker; Susan Harris; Josh Cooper and Sam Gregory.

Evaluations of the program by the participants were very positive. The following report draws on these evaluations and seeks to capture some of the richness of the experience of 29 human rights defenders coming together for three weeks to reflect, to share experiences and to learn together.

The program was made possible through grant support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the New Zealand Agency for International Development, as well as the financial support of a number of NGOs including Caritas Australia and Oxfam Australia and DTP's individual supporters. DTP would also like to acknowledge the in-kind support offered by the Australian National University. Special thanks to the Law Faculty of the University of New South Wales, which generously hosts the Diplomacy Training Program and to its Dean, Professor David Dixon who helped to launch and close the program.

Background and Context of the Training

This was DTP's 18th Annual Regional Training Program for Human Rights Defenders. Previously the annual program has been held in Fiji, Thailand, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, New Zealand and Timor Leste. Holding the program at the UNSW Faculty of Law enabled DTP to access the rich resources of human rights expertise at the Faculty of Law and in Australia more generally.

There is a long history of human rights activism and advocacy in Australia. It was one of the first countries in the world to recognise women's right to vote, and to recognise and regulate labour rights, and was one of the original signatories of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Australia's history has also been marred by racism and the denial and abuse of the human rights of Australia's Indigenous Peoples, even as Australia took a stand in the global struggle against Apartheid in South Africa.

At the end of 2007 a new Australian government was elected, with the promise of re-engaging positively with international efforts to promote human rights and to work collaboratively with the UN system and with civil society. Its first act was an official apology to Indigenous Australians, and it subsequently signalled its intention to ratify key human rights agreements and to accept international scrutiny of its human rights record.

The advocacy of Indigenous rights activists, labour, peace, refugee and human rights advocates, and broad community support for international efforts to address poverty created a rich political and cultural environment for a regional human rights training program. DTP's long experience of organising such programs ensured that opportunities were built into the program for engagement between participants and civil society in Australia, and that longer-lasting relationships of support and solidarity were fostered. The occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the UDHR also provided a timely opportunity for human rights defenders in the DTP course to engage with both government and civil society in Australia.

"I managed to get contact with Asia-Pacific Forum on Human Rights and Human Rights Council. And also contact with AusAID which I intend to follow-up."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Participants

The 18th Annual Program was advertised through DTP alumni and networks, and through the networks of its partner organisations in the region. Over 150 candidates submitted applications. Applicants were requested to complete an extensive application form and to outline the relevance of the training to their experience and to their future plans for human rights advocacy. Applicants were also asked to provide two references. The selection process is always a difficult one with many high quality applications. Consideration was given to gender and regional balance and to selecting participants working on a diverse range of issues. It is regrettable that not all of the selected participants were able to attend the program, partly due to problems obtaining visas to Australia.

This year there was greater representation from the Pacific with the first participants in a number of years from Bougainville, as well as participants from PNG, West Papua (Indonesia) and Fiji. Also taking part in the program was DTP's first participant from Afghanistan. Participants ranged in age from early 20s to 50s.

Methodology

The Diplomacy Training Program takes a participatory approach to the training. This reflects recognition and respect for the knowledge, experience and skills that participants bring to the program. The program explores how human rights values and principles can be applied in practice in different societies and contexts, and in response to different challenges. Space is therefore made in the program for exercises, case studies and small group discussion. Each participant is also asked to make a short presentation to inform others about the work that they do, the challenges they face and the change they are trying to achieve.

This participatory approach is also reflected in the way the program is organised. At the beginning of the program participants are divided into small groups and each group is given responsibility to manage a particular day – including time-keeping, energiser exercises, and feedback on the previous day. This process helps to break down barriers, build working relationships and involve participants in the practical issues of organising and running a training program.

“Excellent presentations, participatory exercises, visit to the different GOs/NGOs and people, sufficient training materials, cooperative and friendly environment etc...were the best part of this program.”

“Learning through discussion in a small group is the best parts of this program. Some participants can provide their idea, experience without feeling to make any mistake.”

“Practical exercises and field trips – putting into practice HR theory ‘sealed the deal for the Day!’”

Quotes from anonymous participant evaluations

Course Materials

The DTP Manual was the core reference material for the course. The Manual is both accessible and comprehensive, with chapters written in plain English by recognised experts. Introductory chapters were emailed to participants in the weeks before the training. Specific chapters refer to and support particular sessions of the course.

The course materials were provided in both hard copy and on CD at the conclusion of the training, along with copies of the presentations and papers prepared by the individual trainers. This provides participants with a valuable and useful resource to take home and to use and share with others.

The Program

The program was held over three weeks. The first and third weeks were held at UNSW in Sydney. The middle week was hosted by the Regulatory Institutions Network (RegNet) at the ANU in Canberra. The schedule was designed to provide participants with a solid introduction to international human rights standards, an understanding of human rights in the UN system, and to provide opportunities to build knowledge and skills in different advocacy approaches.

International Human Rights Law

“DTP is to be commended for organizing such a professional training in empowering participants on the human rights issue and how they could contribute or address the issue nationally and internationally.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

At the start of the program participants are given a crash course in international law and human rights standards, and were given an overview of human rights in the UN system. This provides a valuable foundation on which to build knowledge of specific human rights agreements, the different mechanisms that exist to hear grievances, and to hold governments accountable. Since 1948, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted, an extensive system of human rights standards has been adopted in response to continuing violations of human rights, and in recognition of the vulnerability of particular groups. Two separate binding treaties elaborate on the UDHR, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Together with the First Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights these are known as the International Bill of Rights.

Dr Sarah Pritchard led participants through the contents of the International Bill of Rights in an interactive exercise that encouraged participants to identify the human rights issues in their own countries, and to discuss how they would present these concerns in a meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Today there are six additional core human rights treaties in force – on the elimination of racial discrimination and discrimination against women, on the abolition of torture, and on the rights of children, migrant workers and persons with disabilities, as well as a new Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and on Human Rights Defenders. Over the three week program it was possible to look in more detail at some of these specific standards, and to explore their relevance for government policy and practice across the region.

Women’s Rights are Human Rights

“I will share what I have learnt in this training with women in my community and Bougainville as whole. The training itself has empowered me to submit a shadow report on CEDAW for to be included with the PNG report to the UN.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Dr Hilary Charlesworth led the sessions on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol. These sessions explored how an understanding of the particular human rights violations experienced by women, and an awareness of their particular vulnerability, sometimes arising from longstanding patterns of discrimination, had led to the development and adoption of this key human rights agreement. The sessions also explored the Convention’s acknowledgement that many of the violations women experience take place in the private sphere, in the home, and are committed by individuals, rather than the state, forcing the human rights community and governments to acknowledge the positive responsibility of governments to protect human rights, and to hold individuals accountable.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities

“Thanks to DTP for giving us a wonderful opportunity to participate in the program [...] Opened my eyes to look in others HR issues like-environment and climate change, disabilities issues etc.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

The dynamic nature of the international human rights system in responding to the experiences and situations of vulnerable groups, of those most denied their human rights, was emphasised in Professor Andrew Byrnes’ sessions on the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is the most recent of the core international human rights treaties to come into force, and one of the quickest to be drafted and adopted. Professor Andrew Byrnes worked closely with the advocates from disability, human rights and other NGOs in the process of drafting and adoption of the new

Convention. Awareness of this new treaty outside of the disability movement remains limited, even though disabled persons often experience multiple denials and violations of their rights over prolonged periods.

“International convention on the right of disability session is the most useful. It’s a new convention and I think my community should know it.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Indigenous Peoples’ Rights and the UN – The Inside Story

“We met real people and were taught in practical ways through people working/using the HR mechanisms.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

In Canberra, DTP’s participants were treated to a special panel presentation from three of the world’s leading Indigenous Peoples’ Rights advocates. Professor Mick Dodson from Australia and Dalee Sambo and Professor Rob Williams from the United States have worked for over twenty years to gain recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples by governments of the world, to create mechanisms to hold governments accountable in relation to Indigenous Peoples Rights, and to make a space for Indigenous Peoples in the UN system – a system dominated by governments responsible for the invasion and colonisation processes that have wreaked such devastation on Indigenous Peoples worldwide.

Together they were able to share a remarkable story of successful advocacy. As a result of this advocacy governments have adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, there is a UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, a UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has been established, and the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has been created giving Indigenous people their own space and voice in the UN system.

These achievements would have seemed almost unimaginable twenty years ago. Yet, as participants heard, change was made possible through hard work—through learning and understanding the existing international system and how it needed and could be changed, through being creative in the range of strategies and tactics used, through building alliances and coalitions, and through very difficult negotiations where some ground had to be ceded. Importantly, the presenters also stressed their refusal to give up, the importance of persistence and principle. Having won recognition of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the challenge of implementing the rights was emphasised.

Emerging Issues – Trade, Business, Climate Change and Human Rights

“I was not that much serious about this issues but after watching the documentary and the session of Jane, made me more serious to work and see the issues of climate change with HR.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

The human rights framework has emerged, sometimes slowly, in response to the changing patterns of human rights violations people experience on a daily basis. Advocates working on the ground to directly support the victims, and to expose and prevent violations have helped to develop new international standards and to lobby for their adoption by governments and for their implementation.

The 18th Annual Regional human rights defenders program also examined emerging issues that impact on human rights, and are rising up the global policy agenda. These include the growing importance of international trade agreements with their implications for government policy and

practice, and through their impact on vulnerable groups. The program also focused on the associated increase in reach and influence of business and particularly trans-national corporations, and the challenges this presents to advocates concerned at the use of child labour, exploitation of women and of migrant workers, and at the impact on communities of mining and forestry operations.

It is also becoming clearer that processes of climate change will have profound impacts on communities across the Asia-Pacific region, and is beginning to do so already. This will have major impacts on many different human rights, and there is an increasing focus internationally on the human rights impacts of climate change. Exploring how advocates can respond and ensure that human rights are considered in global responses to climate change is a major new challenge.

“Human right and climate change, because now it becomes the international human right issue. The south and third world countries are being exploited from the industrial countries. Corporate responsibility, because it may improve HR equality.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

The UN System and Human Rights Accountability

In her sessions, Dr Pritchard provided an overview of the UN human rights system and how this system has evolved over the last sixty years. The promotion of human rights was included as a key purpose in the UN Charter when the organisation was established. There are now a number of different avenues for seeking government accountability to agreed standards. André Frankovits, Ineke Boerefijn and other presenters looked at how the UN treaty system could be used and the significance of the UN Treaty Bodies' *General Comment*.

“The sessions on how to use the optional protocols and importance of ‘general comments’. Also being specific and concise. I have a better idea on where to go to get the right meaning and also what will be required in making submissions.”

Quote from participant evaluations

The UN Human Rights Council and the Universal Periodic Review

“I now know about the Universal Periodic Review, the Optional Protocols and various committees to which our organisations can make submissions.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

In 2006 the UN Human Rights Council replaced the UN Human Rights Commission as the UN's central forum for discussion and decision making on human rights. Its membership, like that of the UN Security Council, is made up of official government representatives. Accredited NGOs have limited speaking rights in some of its sessions, and can attend most sessions as observers. The Council is an important venue in which human rights violations can be highlighted and governments shamed. The Human Rights Council reflects the broader ideological divisions, and regional alliances of the outside world.

Lengthy negotiations on procedural rules and over the text, even the punctuation, of resolutions can seem far removed from the reality of human rights violations witnessed and worked on by participants in the program. However, the decisions of the Human Rights Council have a bearing on the effectiveness of efforts to stop human rights violations, to promote and protect human rights across the world, and to achieve international action. The Human Rights Council is therefore a key battleground for human rights advocates, and it is important for advocates to learn about the Council. Josh Cooper of the Hawaii Institute for Human Rights has been a key member of the NGO

lobby at the Human Rights Council since it was established. He joined the DTP program in Canberra to share lessons learned so far with participants.

The greatest innovation in the establishment of the UN Human Rights Council is the Universal Periodic Review, a process by which the human rights records of all UN member states are reviewed by other governments. Records are reviewed on a rotating, periodic basis, with each government reviewed every four years. The process is still very new, and NGOs are working hard to ensure that it is effective, even as they fight to have a voice in the process.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

In 1993, following the World Conference on Human Rights, a new post of High Commissioner for Human Rights was established together with a new Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has grown in significance, and now includes a number of presences in the field including in Asia and the Pacific. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights provides support to the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the human rights treaty bodies, and the UN's special procedures.

Human Rights Treaty Bodies

"We are at stage of struggle to restore our rights. UN system is important to approach because it aims to maintain peace. We will focus on CEDAW/CRC to approach and use these mechanisms to gain back our human rights."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Every government in the world has ratified at least one international human rights treaty, and in doing so has accepted its accountability to the international community for implementing human rights. Most countries, including in Asia and the Pacific, have ratified more than one treaty. Following ratification, governments have to report periodically to specific treaty bodies, comprised of independent experts. These treaty bodies engage the government in dialogue over legislation, policy and practice relevant to human rights. They also provide authoritative interpretations of specific human rights, such as the human right to education.

Professor Ineke Boerefijn facilitated discussion on the developing work of these UN treaty bodies, NGO advocates' engagement with them as an advocacy strategy, and the emerging understanding of the positive human rights obligations of governments. A practical role play exercise with Professor Boerefijn, Patrick Earle and Justice Elizabeth Evatt helped to deepen knowledge and understanding of using the treaty reporting process as part of a wider human rights advocacy strategy and developed presentation, lobbying and collaboration skills. DTP was particularly fortunate to have the involvement of Justice Elizabeth Evatt who has served on the UN Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

UN's Special Procedures for Human Rights

Participants also learnt of the development of the UN's special procedures for human rights – the individuals and groups of experts with a special mandate to explore, investigate and in many cases to act on, specific violations of human rights, such as torture, enforced disappearances, extra-judicial executions, violence against women, the right to education and the right to health. These special procedures have different mandates, but most have the capacity to respond quickly to reports of individual human rights violations, to make representations to individual governments and to conduct country visits.

In a special international human rights day lunch organised with the Australian Forum of Human Rights Organisations, DTP participants had the opportunity to meet with, and hear a presentation from, the new UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Professor James Anaya.

Human Rights and the UN's Specialised Agencies

"The knowledge I gained from the session on Economic Social and Cultural rights will be of great use in designing my upcoming project on starvation/hunger death in India."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

As part of the reform of the UN initiated by the former Secretary General, Kofi Annan, human rights was made a central part of the mission of all UN agencies, such as the UN Development Program (UNDP), UNICEF, UNIFEM, WHO and others. A new human rights based framework to guide the programs and policies for all UN agencies in developing countries was formally adopted. For many NGOs, this provides considerable new opportunities for engaging the UN system at the country level on very practical issues such as addressing patterns of discrimination and allocation of resources.

André Frankovits, one of the driving forces behind the adoption of the human rights based approach to development in the UN and in bilateral development agencies, explored with participants the possibilities for human rights advocates to use this approach to engage positively with governments and development agencies, and to seek both greater community participation in decision making and greater accountability of governments. In particular the challenge of implementing economic, social and cultural rights offered the potential for advocates to change the terms of the human rights dialogue from criticism over violations to positive steps to realise rights. As part of these sessions participants took part in a practical role play exercise involving a lobbying meeting with representatives of a bilateral development agency.

"Bill of HR was the most useful one and of course the HR and development & video advocacy and UPR since they very much relate to my day to day work in defending HR. They have really provided sound knowledge and theoretical framework to my work. The session on social, economic, and cultural rights was also very useful."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Building Skills

While advocacy skills building is integrated into the entire program, a considerable part of the three week program is also dedicated to developing specific skills, such as lobbying, using the internet effectively, and media and communication technology skills.

Using the Internet for Research and Advocacy

"This is the first time for me to learn about legal research free web based resources and information."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

The rapid spread in accessibility and speed of the internet has transformed human rights advocacy in the Asia-Pacific region in recent years. Huge information and accessibility gaps remain—both between countries and between cities and rural areas—but for an increasing number of advocates the internet is an essential tool. The internet is vital both for access to information and for gaining attention to human rights violations and reaching new audiences through email, websites and social networking. At the same time advocates using this technology need to be aware of risks to their own personal safety and options for minimising risk.

Participants spent a day of the program in the computer lab with Philip Chung, Director of the Australasian Legal Information Institute (AustLII). Philip gave a very practical session full of information and tips on finding information on the internet, and not leaving tracks that might compromise personal safety. Time was also spent learning how to use available free access software, and on building basic websites.

Video Advocacy

"[Sam] explained everything very clearly. [...] We had seen a lot of video case studies and it helped to motivate us to use video advocacy with our work back home."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Human rights advocates across the world have embraced advances in new technology. For the past four years DTP has worked with Sam Gregory from WITNESS, a New York based NGO. Sam works with NGOs around the world to build the skills of participants in integrating video into their advocacy planning. Sam's two full day sessions integrated hands on work with small video cameras, as well as examining messages and formats most appropriate for reaching and influencing different audiences. Sam explored the risks associated with documenting and exposing human rights violations using video, and using video to build awareness and support for an issue. Sam's interactive sessions use many examples from Asia, Africa and Latin America and have become a highlight of the annual DTP course.

Lobbying Skills

"Strategic human rights advocacy – setting objectives and developing strategy. Because very clear cut presentation is more effective for politician and diplomats."

"It was useful because the thought of meeting officials and MPs is particularly a daunting exercise. By participating in the activities I have more confidence to engage with officials and MPs in my own country."

"Perfect – lobbying & establishing relationships with these offices was a break-through. A moment of truth where our voices could be heard."

Quotes from anonymous participant evaluations

Lobbying is essential to human rights advocacy—of trying to change policy and practice. Wherever possible, DTP seeks to integrate into its program practical exercises in lobbying. In this course DTP was fortunate to be able to call upon a number of experienced human rights lobbyists, and to provide opportunities for practicing skills with visits to the Department for Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade (DFAT) and AusAID in Canberra. Participants also met with the Australian Parliament's Human Rights and Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Sub-Committee.

Janelle Saffin, MP, Susan Harris, President of Australian Lawyers for Human Rights, and Bill Barker, former senior official with the Department of Foreign Affairs, spent time with participants to discuss effective lobbying skills – including setting clear, realistic objectives, active listening skills, and sound knowledge of the issues.

There was a last minute problem with arrangements for participants to visit the Department of Foreign Affairs for a practical lobbying exercise with country desk officers. Apparently it is Departmental policy to prohibit meetings in government buildings with representatives of the Tibet Information Office. This meant that one of the program participants would not be permitted to take

part in the lobbying training exercise at DFAT. Participants were torn between proceeding with their own meetings, and refusing to go ahead without their colleague from Tibet. Following discussions, DFAT officials came to ANU to deliver an introductory session on DFAT's work and human rights, followed by separate meetings between participants and officials at DFAT. Participants and DTP conveyed their concerns at the restrictions placed on meeting with the advocate from Tibet. It proved to be a very practical exercise in diplomacy and lobbying.

"I think it was a good chance to inform the situations to them. Then to discuss how to work together and it might lead to some actions after keeping in contact with them. However I do not agree with the discrimination on Tibet."

"It was useful in the sense that I realize how strongly we need to prepare ourselves to meet/engage with DFAT. DFAT has its own agenda, priorities and rationale and mainly later to human rights issues if it can be made relevant to them."

"We can ask about Australian Government policies that are related to our country. For some issues we can share our perspective and give DFAT information."

"It was painful that one of our colleague was not allowed inside. At the same time I appreciate the understanding of DTP and the way it respected our feeling and permitting me to communicate my protest to DFAT."

"It is useful but not much time is given and I did not get to meet and talk with them...more interaction and time needed."

Quotes from anonymous participant evaluations

Participants then went to the AusAID offices for a series of meetings with AusAID officials concerning their issue of concern and/or country, providing participants with an opportunity to raise human rights issues and the relevance of these issues to Australia's aid program and development strategies. These meetings at DFAT and AusAID were valuable for participants, and for some were the highlights of the program. DTP expresses its appreciation to all of the DFAT and AusAID staff who made them possible, and gave their time to participate.

"The trip to AusAID was useful for me. When I explained the objective to them they were interested to fund for some work. Also I was asked to establish a connection in my country. Then request for funds and said will definitely I will get support from AusAID."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

DTP aims to build the confidence and skills of advocates to operate in different environments. In planning this program DTP sought to provide a number of different opportunities for the participants to lobby and network in Australia, with the hope that longer lasting solidarity links might be developed. With the support of Janelle Saffin MP, participants had a special meeting in Parliament with the Human Rights Sub-Committee of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade. Participants also had the opportunity to observe parliamentary proceedings and to witness the motion moved by the Prime Minister and supported by the Leader of the Opposition to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"Meeting with the Parliamentary Committee was of a great opportunity for me but it was only a short meeting. Australia has a High Commission Representative visits to Bougainville to meet with all stakeholders including us- the women. Australia has contributed a lot in the negotiation process for peace in B/ville and again with the rebuilding of infrastructure."

“The presentations from my partner participants. Training sessions. Visits to HR organizations, DFAT and AusAID. All the above accumulate to enhance my work and knowledge on HR issues and connections.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Another highlight for participants was the special Human Rights Day Football (soccer) Tournament organised with *Football United!* The Tournament was held at UNSW to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Teams from refugee communities in Sydney and local NGOs participated including *Football United!*, Caritas, Oxfam, the Wilderness Society, Childfund Australia and the Darfur Australia Network. Teams also included the Diplomacy Training Program staff and participants, teams from the Sydney Burmese Community and teams representing the Faculty of Law, UNSW. The winning team was the Darfur Australia Network.

Participant Evaluations

“The whole program was great – up to me to put it into action.”

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

Each DTP course is evaluated through anonymous questionnaires at the conclusion of the program. In addition individual trainers are also evaluated anonymously by participants. Participants are asked to reflect on what was most useful about the program, which sessions were least useful and how they might apply the training to their work.

“All the things I have learnt will empower me to defend HR’s of the poor and voiceless in the office and in society.”

“With this training, I know the UN mechanism and this is important for international campaign.”

“The knowledge I gained out of DTP would have a definite impact in the quality of the training program that my organization will have to do in the coming days. I am sure I would be in a better position to influence the design, context and quality of such training program.”

“Human rights and UN system will influence me to consider more insight indigenous peoples needs and values. Before we do some project we need to think the impact for their values.”

Quotes from anonymous participant evaluations

On this occasion participants were also asked to comment on whether it was useful for them that the program was held in Australia. These are some of the responses to that question:

“Yes, it was timely with 60th anniversary. Also resources (HR) are fantastic – ability for the DTP to engage with prominent professionals is the cream of the cake.”

“Yes – some Pacific Islands receive funding from Aus govt. – able to lobby directly.”

“Yes I do. Many important organizations are located in Australia – can learn and share more easily.”

“Yes. Because although Australia is developed and stable country, it still has human rights violations issues such as Indigenous rights, racial discrimination, detention without warrants etc. Having DTP program at a time when the Australian Government is trying to improve human rights treatments was a bonus.”

“Yes, it is. But if DTP can, should hold the program in other country, focus on issues.”

"Yes. Because participants can apply their skills & knowledge when has meeting with DFAT and AusAID."

"Not really & would prefer to hold the program in a country where the scope for interacting with real time issues, victims, NGOs, movements, HRDs are very high. A country like Timore Leste, Fiji or even India would have been better."

"Of course it is. We can see how democratic country looks like and what ways people are exercising their rights."

"Yes, I do. Because By this program, we have contact here in Australia with the government, NGOs and also parliament."

"For the next two years it's okay, because there are a lot of experts/speakers are living/staying in Australia. But it would be better if DTP committee can establish a plan to conduct this program in the other country especially in Asia and Pacific region."

"It was very important, because HR campaign in my local or Southern Thailand wants to monitor Thai govt. and support HR campaign and funding."

"Australia is rich in terms of resource persons, good environment. It is useful to meet UN officials, know the peoples, cultures, human rights of Australia."

"I think it was useful for this program to be held here in Australia because Australia is seen as a neutral ground and safe."

The evaluation included a section asking participants to rate the extent to which the program met the objectives DTP set for it. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which objective was met on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning the objective was achieved and 5 meaning the objective was not achieved. Participants were also given the opportunity to comment on each objective. This section of the evaluations is included below with the numbers below each objective indicating the number of participants who selected each response.

DTP Program Objectives

Please comment on the extent to which the following objectives were achieved for you at the 18th Annual Program and provide examples from your experience.

- 1) *To build the capacity of community advocates and human rights defenders in the Asia-Pacific region to apply human rights instruments and principles to the different challenges they face in their advocacy work*

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
	Achieved	Somewhat Achieved		Not Achieved	
Number of Participants	20	6	1	1	

- 2) *To enhance capacity of advocates to engage effectively with international processes and dialogues to promote and protect human rights and the rule of law*

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
	Achieved	Somewhat Achieved		Not Achieved	
Number of Participants	18	7 2	1		

3). To facilitate collaboration and networking among human rights defenders across the region and facilitate the strengthening of links between the human rights and development community in Australia and the Asia-Pacific Region

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
	Achieved		Somewhat Achieved		Not Achieved
Number of Participants	16	3	7	1	

4) To provide an opportunity and a forum for participants to share perspectives and experience and identify key issues for further work in the area

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
	Achieved		Somewhat Achieved		Not Achieved
Number of Participants	20	4	3		

Some Additional Comments from Anonymous Participant Evaluations:

- *“The session on Bill of HR were really of great value. The session on HR, Poverty and Development was yet another priority one though. The session on the convention of the Right of People with Disability was very useful. The session on UN monitory mechanism, UPR and video advocacy were of great value.”*
- *“This program is very useful for me because I could learn more information about other countries (A P region and Indigenous rights). Also I could find good activists as my best friends. This will be a good power for me to work in future as a group/network for advocacy in international level too.”*
- *“Overall, the content was too heavy. It was difficult to digest so many things all at once.”*
- *“Language. Most of the participants, English is not first language. So DTP should send hand out by email to participants before coming to attend in the program.”*
- *“Presentation session. Some participants just presenting their organizations, not their experience.”*
- *“State/Govt obligation for respect, protect and fulfil because it make me more and comprehensive how to focusing on HR from universal to domestic interim and govt.’s obligation also. UN mechanism and reaction support. Networking and people to people connection and organization.”*
- *“I [received] a better understanding on use of instruments and principles in my work. Many tools required for advocacy.”*
- *“It’s really helpful to build networks in the region and to learn about the HR situation across the whole region.”*
- *“Advocacy requires sound knowledge about various HR instruments and regional, international situations. I sincerely feel DTP has provided me that, the knowledge I gained on Bill of HR help me in advocacy day to day HR violation.”*

External Evaluation

This program was also the focus of an external evaluation conducted by a PhD student from Queensland University of Technology, Lutz Hoff. Lutz observed many of the sessions and held private interviews with a number of the participants during the program. His evaluation is available on request.

Conclusion

"I am more excited and rejuvenated to work in the area of human rights. The people I met inspire me especially my fellow DTP students and who are working on very challenging human rights issues."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

"The Training provided a venue for me to look back retool. I will be back home with more than just a burst of enthusiasm for human rights work."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

"The knowledge I gained out of DTP will have a definite impact in the quality of the training program that my organisation will have to do in the coming days. I am sure I would be in a better position to influence the design, context and quality of such a training program."

Quote from anonymous participant evaluations

The impact of DTP's work rests on its ability to attract highly motivated individuals committed to working with others to protect and promote human rights—individuals capable of applying the knowledge and skills they have developed to the often confronting and difficult challenges on the ground in countries across the region.

DTP's 18th Annual Program provided valuable training to key human rights defenders and community advocates at the frontline of human rights challenges in the Asia-Pacific region. The program provided an opportunity for them to reflect on their own experiences and to learn from the experiences of others, to develop their confidence and their skills so that they can be more effective in their work for change. Each of the participants returned to their organisations to share their knowledge and skills. DTP is fortunate to attract such a high calibre of participants, and is confident that the bonds of friendship and solidarity formed by the participants during this course will be of practical and moral support to each of them in the years ahead.

Appendix 1: Schedule

WEEK 1	Monday November 24	Tuesday November 25	Wed, November 26	Thur, November 27	Fri, November 28	29/30
8:30 – 9:00am		Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	
Morning 1 9.00 to 10.30	Opening – Welcome to Country Welcome Ceremony UNSW Law Faculty Keynote: Robert McClelland, Attorney General	Feedback session An introduction to Public International Law-	Feedback session Human Rights and International Accountability – – an Introduction to the Special Procedures	Using the Internet for Human Rights Research and Advocacy (Part 1)	Feedback session Globalisation, Human Rights and Trade	Sat: Tribal Warrior – Harbour Cruise and BBQ from 12.45 to 2.45 pm.
Trainer(s)		Dr. Sarah Pritchard	Dr Sarah Pritchard	Philip Chung	Gillian Moon	
Break 10:30-10:45						
Morning 2 10:45-12:30	Participant Introductions, Expectations, Outline of Training, Logistics	The Human Rights Framework – International Standards and State Obligations	Practical Exercise	Using the Internet for Human Rights Research and Advocacy (Part 1)	Human Rights, Poverty and Development – Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Sunday Travel to Canberra
Trainer(s)	Facilitated by DTP	Dr. Sarah Pritchard	Dr Sarah Pritchard	Philip Chung	Andre Frankovits	
Lunch 12:30-2:00						
Afternoon 1 2:00-3:30	Human Rights and Australia – An Overview	An Introduction to the UN System	Field Visit – HREOC The Role of National Human Right Institutions and the Asia-Pacific Forum	Using the Internet for Advocacy – Websites (Part II)	The Human Rights Based Approach and Advocacy – A Rights Based Analysis & Country Strategies - Practical Exercise	
Trainer(s)	Garth Nettheim/Dea Delaney/Teena Balgi	Dr. Sarah Pritchard	Pip Dargan/Suraina Pasha	Philip Chung	Andre Frankovits	
Break 3:30-3:45						
Afternoon 2 Topic 3:45-5:30	What are Human Rights – The International Bill of Rights, Values and Principles	Human Rights & The UN System – practical exercise	Human Rights in Australia and the work of Australian Human Rights Commission	Using the Internet for Advocacy – Websites (Part II)	The Human Rights Based Approach and Advocacy – A Rights Based Analysis & Country Strategies - Practical Exercise	
Trainer(s)	Andrea Durbach	Dr. Sarah Pritchard	Graeme Innes	Philip Chung	Andre Frankovits	
Evening	Dinner Kingsford Chinese	Free	Reception in Sydney G+T 6-8pm	Free	Participant Cooking	

WEEK 2	Dec 1st	Dec 2nd	Dec 3rd	Dec 4th	Dec 5th	Dec 6/7 (Weekend)
8:30 – 9:00am	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	
Morning 1 9:00-10:30	Feedback Welcome to Country Opening Ceremony Strategic Human Rights Advocacy – Setting Objectives and Developing Strategies	Feedback The Struggle for Recognition of Indigenous Peoples Rights – DRIP, Australia and Beyond	Parliament - Morning Tea with JSCFDT & HR Sub- Committee	Feedback The Rights of Women in International Law – CEDAW and its Optional Protocol	Feedback Practical Lobbying Exercise – Desk Officers – DFAT	Saturday Return to Sydney
Trainer(s)	Janelle Saffin	Professor Mick Dodson, Robert Williams & Dalee Sambo Dorough	Janelle Saffin	Professor Hilary Charlesworth		
Break 10:30-10:45					DFAT	
Morning 2 10:45-12:30	Strategic Human Rights Advocacy – Setting Objectives and Developing Strategies	Indigenous Peoples and the UN System – UNPFII	11.30-12.30 Parliament – Tour of Parliament House – Carmel Cook	10:45 - 12 The Rights of Women – Practical Exercise	Practical Lobbying Exercise – Desk Officers – AusAID	Sunday and Human Rights Film Festival - Closing Night
Trainer(s)	Patrick Earle	Professor Mick Dodson, Robert Williams & Dalee Sambo Dorough		Professor Hilary Charlesworth		
Lunch 12:30-2:00			Parliament – Informal Lunch with MPs and Staff	12:15 – 1:45 Lunch Roundtable – Hosted by AFHRO	AusAID	
Afternoon 1 2:00-3:30	Human Rights in International Relations – Opportunities for Solidarity and Action	Lobbying The Australian Parliament and Australian Government – Opportunities for Promoting Human Rights and Lobbying Skills	2.00 – 4.20 Parliament – Question Time and Motion on UDHR	2:30 – 4.00 The Universal Periodic Review and Opportunities for Advocacy	Review of Lobbying Visits – Outcomes – Lessons Learned.	
Trainer(s)	Patrick Earle	Susan Harris		Josh Cooper – Hawaii Institute for Human Rights		
Break 3:30-3:45						
Afternoon 2 3:45-5:30	Human Rights and Regional Arrangements	Foreign Policy, Human Rights and the Role of Diplomats	Debriefing	Preparations for Lobbying visits		
Trainer(s)	Imelda Deinla and Patrick Earle	Bill Barker		Bill Barker/ Susan Harris /Patrick Earle		
Evening	Dinner at ANU	Dinner at ANU	Solidarity Evening	Dinner at ANU	Dinner at ANU	Dinner at ANU

WEEK 3	Dec 8	Dec 9	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12	Dec 13 (Saturday)
8:30 – 9:00am	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	Participant Presentations	
Morning 1 9:00-10:30	Feedback UN Treaty Bodies, Treaty Reports, Individual Complaints and Emerging Understanding of Positive Obligations	Feedback The Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Feedback Video Advocacy	Feedback Video Advocacy	Feedback	Participants return Home
Trainer(s)	Dr. Ineke Boerefijn	Professor Andrew Byrnes	Sam Gregory	Sam Gregory		
Break 10:30-10:45						
Morning 2 10:45-12:30	UN Treaty Bodies and NGO Advocacy – Lessons and Future Directions	The Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities	10.30 – 12.00 – International Human Rights Day: Justice Elizabeth Evatt and Lord Bingham	Video Advocacy		
Trainer(s)	Dr. Ineke Boerefijn & Justice Elizabeth Evatt	Professor Andrew Byrnes	AHRC/IHHR/DTP	Sam Gregory		
Lunch 12:30-2:00						
Afternoon 1 2:00-3:30	Human Rights , the Environment and Climate Change – Emerging Challenges and Connections	Globalization , Corporations and Human Rights	Video Advocacy	Video Advocacy	Feedback and Evaluation	
Trainer(s)	Jane McAdam	Professor Paul Redmond	Sam Gregory	Sam Gregory		
Break 3:30-3:45						
Afternoon 2 3:45-5:30	Sam Gregory – Introduction to Video Advocacy & work of WITNESS	Globalization, Corporations and Human Rights – Practical Exercise	Video Advocacy	Video Advocacy		
Trainer(s)	Sam Gregory	Professor Paul Redmond	Sam Gregory	Sam Gregory		
Evening	Free	Soccer 5.30pm – 8.30pm	HR Day Dinner – AGSM	Participant Cooking	Closing Ceremony - Justice Michael Kirby	

Appendix 2: List of Participants

Name	Organisation	Place of Origin
Josephine Kauona Sirivi	Bougainville Women for Peace and Freedom (BWPF)	Buka, Autonomous Region of Bougainville, PNG
Jayachithra Velayudan	Women's Centre	Ja-Ela, SRI LANKA
Aida Tura	Yakan Integrated Resources Development Foundation, Inc. (YIRDFI)	Lamitan, Basilan, Philippines
Maria Roda Cisnero	Legal Assistance Centre for Indigenous Filipinos (PANLIPI)	La Union, PHILIPPINES
Geeta Gautam	Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC)	Kathmandu, NEPAL
Wea-isma-eal Neasea	Working Group on Justice for Peace (WGJP)	Pattani THAILAND
Manolinh Thepkhamvong	Village Focus International (VFI)	Vientiane, LAO PDR
Nanthini Ramalo	ERA Consumer Malaysia	Petaling Jaya, MALAYSIA
Ek Vinay Sayyalath	Land and Natural Resources Research and Information Centre	Thakhek, LAO PDR
Moung Thowai Ching	Green Hill	Rangamati Hill Tracts, BANGLADESH
Krongkaew Panjamahaporn	Tsunami Volunteer Center (TVC)	Takuapa, THAILAND
Festus Maiginap	Media Niugini Limited-EMTV	Port Moresby, PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Ngodup Gyaltzen	Tibet Information Office Inc.	Tibet
Louis M	Peoples Watch (PW)	Madurai, Tamil Nadu, INDIA
Swandaru	Impartial	Jakarta Pusat, INDONESIA
Siti Khoirun Nikmah	International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID)	Jakarta, INDONESIA
Dorothy Henry	Heart Foundation	Perth, AUSTRALIA
Hona Holan	Haku Women's Collective – Bougainville Women for Peace and Development	Buka, Bougainville, PNG
Carolus Wamafma	Tongoi Papua Kuala Kencana-Timika, Papua	INDONESIA
Photchanat Intaramanon	Changrai College of Agriculture and Technology	Changrai, THAILAND
Mariano Duarte Quintao Carmo	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT)	Dili, TIMOR-LESTE
Lyndsay Urquhart	Independent Expert on Indigenous Issues	Grasmere NSW, AUSTRALIA
Wiwat Tamee	Highland Peoples Taskforce (HPT)	Chaing Mai, THAILAND
Violet Udite Savu	Fiji Media Watch (FMW)	Suva, FIJI
Bunthann Phou	3S Rivers Protection Network (3SPN)	Phnom Penh, CAMBODIA
Mosmi S.D. Bhim	Citizen's Constitutional Forum (CCF)	Suva, FIJI
Said Abdul Qader Rahimi	Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC)	Kabul, AFGHANISTAN
Joao Soares Reis Pequinho	Forum Tau Matan (Eye on Human Rights, FTM)	Dili, TIMOR-LESTE