



# BEIJING+20 IN ASIA PACIFIC

20 NOVEMBER 2014 | ISSUE 5



## HIGHLIGHTS

The United Nations Conference Centre was the place to be on November 17 and 18 as representatives of more than 50 countries worked to finalize the draft declaration to be presented at the ministerial segment of the Asian and the Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review in Bangkok.

Under the chairing of Ambassador Ms. Rosario Manalo from the Philippines, the discussions were robust and engaging, and reflected the desire in the region to include strong and clear

language for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, within a framework of consensus.

The draft document which calls for strengthened institutions, increased financing, enhanced accountability, stronger partnerships and strengthened regional cooperation, will be presented in the ministerial segment of the conference (November 19 and 20) for adoption.

*Reported by: Ellie van Baaren, UN Women Fiji*

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

**"This is my call to you today: to have the resolve to take urgent and sustained action to accelerate implementation including the almost universally ratified Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women."**



**Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**  
Executive Director of  
UN Women



## YOUTH DIARY

#Beijing20

### TIMOR-LESTE'S YOUTH DELEGATE: FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE

"When I think of my future I believe that I want to be in a place like this, a place where people come together from all over the world to discuss international issues. I want to represent my country, to be a diplomat of sorts!" Yane Elfrida Domingas Maia is an alumnus of Timor-Leste's National Youth Parliament, attending this week's conference as the nation's youth representative, supported by UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality and International Women's Rights Action Watch, Asia Pacific (IWRAP).

At home, Yane's passions have made her a visible and relevant advocate for the rights of women and girls at the national

level. "Right now my advocacy efforts are focused on the inclusion of comprehensive sexual education in our curriculum. We have challenges concerning early pregnancy all across our region, and I believe that education is the best way address this." UN Women will be following Yane's career progression in politics and gender issues closely, and we all look forward to seeing her at future regional events.

*Reported by: Christina Yiannakis, UN Women/Timor-Leste*

**Yane Domingas Maia**  
Alumnus of Timor-Leste's  
National Youth Parliament



Event:

### "We are not all the same"

Challenges and opportunities towards rural women's empowerment: Agrarian transformations and the changing role of women in agriculture and food systems

20 November 2014, 8.00-9.00 am  
Conference Room 4, UNCC  
Organized by: FAO and UN Women



## ARTICLE



**Betty Barkha**  
Asia-Pacific Forum for Women,  
Law and Development (23, Fiji)

"I think it's crucial for young women to be part of the negotiation process and this has been an extremely informative experience for me. We are being trained to be women in leadership positions, so it's important that we have hands-on experience with all the

moving parts so that we are ready when we get the opportunity to take up those positions. At least within the Pacific delegation here at the Beijing +20 review, young people's voices have been heard, so I think we are on the right track. We need to keep doing what we are doing; we need to get in touch with what's happening around us and keep up to date."

Reported by: Ellie van Baaren, UN Women Fiji

## THE MEDIA REPORTS

## MUCH WORK REMAINS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN ASIA-PACIFIC

Twenty years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), an unprecedented global initiative for gender equality and women's rights, women in the Asia-Pacific region continue to face challenges.

To review the progress and assess the challenges in the implementation of the BPfA in the Asia-Pacific region, 400 civil-society groups from 35 countries, 700 government delegates from 44 countries, as well as donors and media representatives will convene in Bangkok, Thailand, from Nov. 17 through Thursday Nov. 20.



**Roberta Clarke**  
Asia Pacific Regional Director, UN Women

"There has been progress in the last 20 years, but there is still a huge implementation gap. We need to accelerate implementation to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment are central to the post-2015 development framework," Clarke said.

Reported by: Rita A. Widiadana, The Jakarta Post

## EVENT'S TODAY | 20 NOVEMBER

08:00 - 09:00 Side event on rural women by FAO and UN Women. CR-4

11:15 - 12:30 Special Session on ending violence against women and girls by UNITE campaign CR-2

09:30 - 16:30 Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review  
Full programme here: <http://ow.ly/Elbuz>

09:00 - 17:00 Reporting for the Beijing + 20, Youth Engagement and Gender Responsive Advocacy for media in Asia and the Pacific.  
Full programme here: <http://ow.ly/ElbAi>

## BEIJING+20 IN THE EYES OF THE MEDIA

"Human rights are equally valid for everybody – and it is all that Beijing+20 should be about," says Soprach Tong, *The Phnom Penh Post* columnist who reported on some of the most sensitive issues such as gang rape and sexual violence by intimate partners in Cambodia. "I am especially glad that Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities (SOGI) people were recognized by the Member States in the final document. If we did not include them, the universality of human rights will be compromised," reflects Soprach on the negotiations between Member States on sexual and reproductive health and gender identities.



**Srorn Srurn**  
Human Rights Activist

In Cambodia, where SOGI people still face discrimination and hate speech, media can according to a Cambodian activist and Soprach's friend Srorn Srurn "play an important role in changing their image".

Participating in the Media Training, co-convened by UN Women and UNFPA within the framework of the Beijing+20 Regional Conference, is strengthening Soprach's understanding of the role of media in the fight for gender equality. "The acceptance of equal rights is improving and there is also slightly

less violence against women in Cambodia and this is mostly thanks to the civil society, the media and their awareness-

raising activities," says Soprach who besides being a journalist is also an independent researcher. In his *Love and Sexual Relationships* study on perceptions of St. Valentine's Day in Cambodia, almost half of 376 men surveyed declared that they were willing to engage in non-consensual sex with their female partners on this occasion if their advances were refused. This figure is 14 per cent lower than in 2009 when Soprach first undertook this study, which he believes should be replicated in other countries. The young and active exponent of gender equality remains positive about global advances in human rights and hopes that the Beijing+20 conference will help to move his country towards better opportunities for everyone.

Reported by: Veronika Stepkova,  
UN Women/Cambodia



**Soprach Tong**  
Phnom Penh Post columnist

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This newsletter is produced daily by the UN Women Asia and the Pacific Regional Office Communications Team. If you are interested to contribute kindly submit your articles, pictures or information to:

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The editorial committee will review and edit the submissions and will try as much as possible to include all the contributions received.

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