

FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASIA PACIFIC FORUM OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

ROTORUA, NEW ZEALAND
7-9 August 2000

REPORT ON FORUM ACTIVITIES

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1. BACKGROUND

The following is a summary of the Forum's operations and developments during the period since the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Forum in September 1999, focusing on the work of the Forum Secretariat.

The Secretariat is currently located at the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission where it receives important institutional support. It receives core funding from the Australian Government, though AusAID. In addition, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the New Zealand Government provide funds to the Secretariat on a project-by-project basis.

During 1999-2000, the Secretariat's operations concentrated on three main areas of activity

- (i) the development and delivery of technical assistance and cooperation projects
- (ii) information dissemination, and
- (iii) administrative support for the Forum and its activities.

2. TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

The objectives of these projects, which are developed jointly with partner institutions or governments, are to:

- improve the levels of appropriate skills and knowledge among members and staff of national institutions in the region
- enhance national institution structures and procedures in accordance with the Paris Principles^{1[1]} to facilitate a more effective system to protect and promote human rights
- provide governments in the region wishing to establish a national institution with assistance and information as requested to facilitate the development of a national institution in accordance with the Paris Principles.

Projects developed within the framework of the Forum generally fall into two categories

- (i) country-based or bilateral projects which tend to be medium to long term technical assistance activities focused on the development and strengthening of national human rights institutions and
- (ii) regional projects which focus on identified areas of common need or concern in the region.

The Secretariat's approach to developing technical cooperation projects is a very practical one. Forum members help and support each other to strengthen human rights observance through the provision of joint training, advice and institutional capacity building programs.

The Forum is not a funding agency and has no funds of its own to apply to technical cooperation activities. Rather, its role is to develop proposals that can then be taken to potential funding organisations, whether government or private, for consideration. It is important therefore that any proposals for technical cooperation be developed in a comprehensive manner and in formats that fit with the requirements of the funding agency.

The Forum has found that this comprehensive approach can be facilitated through the mechanism of a *needs assessment mission*. Such missions have been undertaken with respect to Indonesia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The result of such a mission is a global view of the requirements of the commission or government concerned. It is likely that potential donors will be more likely to take a favourable view of project proposals if they are

^{1[1]} *Principles Relating To The Status Of National Institutions*, Commission on Human Rights resolution 1992/54 of 3 March 1992. Annex (Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 2 (E/1992/22), chap. II, sect. A): General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993, annex.

satisfied that a comprehensive assessment has been made. Such an assessment serves the further useful purpose of facilitating coordination among the various activities of different donors with respect to the same commission or government.

Details of some of these projects are outlined below, under 'Regional projects' and 'Country related activities'.

3. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The exchange of information was identified by Forum members at their first meeting as one of the Forum Secretariat's fundamental roles. The objectives in this area are to

- improve awareness among political and administrative decision-makers and the wider community of the value and importance of national human rights institutions
- improve awareness among relevant regional governments and agencies of appropriate functions, powers, structures and legislation for national institutions established in accordance with the Paris Principles
- improve awareness among regional national human rights institutions of the legislation, casework, techniques, procedures and outcomes of other national institutions both within and outside the region
- provide information about Forum activities to member institutions, governments, United Nations agencies, non-government organisations and the general community.

The Forum encourages the participation of governments and human rights non-government organisations in the annual Forum meetings as observers. This has been an important process to promote the establishment of new institutions, the effectiveness of existing institutions, closer partnerships with governments and non-government organisations and greater awareness of the Forum's activities.

Members of the Forum and Secretariat staff also promote the work of national human rights institutions and the Forum by attending and speaking at various international, regional and national seminars and meetings.

The Secretariat has commenced work on updating its original information booklet titled *The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions ... a partnership for human rights in our region*. This will provide up-to-date information about the recent projects as well as the future directions of the Forum.

In November 1999 and March 2000 the Secretariat published the second and third editions of the *Forum Bulletin*. First published in March 1999 *Forum Bulletin* is now a regular newsletter to keep Forum members, governments and non-government organisations informed of important policy, legal, administrative and training developments in the region.

Building on the success of the video produced for the Third Annual Meeting of the Forum in Jakarta in September 1998 the Forum is now developing and filming a video documentary. The documentary will examine what national initiatives are being undertaken by independent national human rights commissions in the Asia Pacific region in addressing human rights issues within their own countries. It will be educational and informative to the general public and an important resource for human rights organisations, governments and United Nations bodies. Further details on this activity can be found in a separate report to this meeting.

4. FORUM ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

The Secretariat organises and services the annual meetings and workshops of the Forum; implements decisions of the Forum; undertakes research; develops technical cooperation projects; seeks funding for projects and facilitates the provision of expert assistance to governments in the region concerning the establishment of national institutions.

5. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

i) Fourth Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions

This meeting was held in Manila, the Philippines, 6-8 September 1999. The meeting was hosted by the Philippines Commission on Human Rights. The Meeting demonstrated the strong interest in the region in the promotion of national human rights institutions. The annual Forum meetings are now the largest and most representative human rights gathering held annually in the Asia Pacific.

Financial assistance was provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Government of Australia, through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

The Secretary of Justice of the Republic of the Philippines, Mr Serafin Cuevas, opened the Meeting on behalf of the President of the Philippines, HE Joseph Ejercito Estrada. The special theme for the Meeting was *National Human Rights Institutions and Economic and Social Rights*. The keynote speakers were Justice P C Bhagwati, Regional Representative of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Deputy Chairperson of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, and Professor Virginia Dandan, Chairperson of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Participants included senior representatives of the seven national human rights commissions that comprise the Asia Pacific Forum and the Special Adviser to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Brian Burdekin representing the High Commissioner. Observers included representatives of regional governments, national human rights commissions from outside the region, inter-governmental organisations and a large number of non-governmental organisations from the region and beyond.

The Forum called on governments to give explicit effect to their commitment to the realisation of economic, social and cultural rights, including through their input into the policies and programs of international financial institutions and of international and regional economic forums. The Forum expressed its continued concern at the detrimental impact that some policies and practices of international financial institutions and multinational corporations have upon the enjoyment of human rights. It noted its concern that, as non-state actors, these institutions are not subject in law to international human rights treaties and are not formally accountable for compliance with them. The Forum welcomed the initiative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to establish a dialogue with United Nations agencies and programs, international financial institutions, international agencies and non-state players. The Forum also encouraged the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to continue and extend its dialogue with all these bodies in its work. The Forum agreed to further explore means of promoting and protecting economic, social and cultural rights and resolved to explore closer engagement with relevant organisations.

A full report of the meeting has been placed on the Forum's website.

The Meeting had a number of important outcomes, including

- The Fiji Human Rights Commission was formally accepted into the Forum, increasing the Forum's membership to seven.
- The Forum agreed to hold a workshop in 2000 on the advancement of women's human rights and asked the Secretariat to take appropriate steps to prepare for the workshop, in consultation with the NGO community.
- The Forum endorsed the nomination of the following members of the Advisory Council of Jurists: Sir Ronald Wilson (Australia), Mr Fali S Nariman (India), Professor J E Sahetapy (Indonesia), Mr Sedfrey Ordonez (the Philippines), the Hon Justice Dame Silvia Cartwright (New Zealand) and Mr R K W Goonesekere (Sri Lanka).

ii) Workshop on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions and other Organisations in the Protection and Promotion of the Human Rights of Children

This workshop was held immediately following the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum in Manila, Philippines from 9-10 September 1999. The OHCHR funded the meeting and sub-contracted the Forum Secretariat to manage the workshop and write the report.

The attendance of two Chairpersons and the Vice-chairperson of three United Nations treaty bodies was a particularly welcome aspect of the workshop and demonstrated the willingness of the UN's treaty bodies to engage in practical ways with regional human rights initiatives. It also reflected the importance attached by UN treaty bodies, notably the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Human Rights Committee to the key role which independent National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) can play in promoting and protecting the human rights of children. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has consistently recommended the establishment of independent human rights institutions for children during its examination of States parties' reports under the Convention.

The workshop enabled participants to look at a variety of institutional models – both free-standing and those located within national human rights institutions – which different countries have adopted for the purposes of protecting and promoting the human rights of children. The focus of discussion was on identifying successful, practical strategies in order to promote good practices across differing jurisdictions. The workshop was also useful in allowing participants to identify specific outstanding problems or issues that could be addressed through regional or international cooperation.

Participants addressed the mandates, functions, jurisdiction and duties of national institutions, the development and use of national action plans for the rights of children, the role and contribution of civil society, research, education, training, awareness and advocacy as well as the role and functions of the international human rights monitoring mechanisms.

The purpose of the workshop was to explore the contribution of national institutions to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child and to identify practices of, and challenges faced by, national institutions in this area. The workshop was structured to enable national institutions to present their practices, successes and challenges and to discuss with representatives of the international human rights bodies practical means for working together.

The workshop was specifically intended to:

1. explore the contributions of NHRIs and other national monitoring bodies to the protection and promotion of the rights of the child;
2. identify national human rights institution practices and challenges in the protection and promotion of the rights of the child.

The workshop produced three specific outcomes:

1. Initial input for a compilation of practices of national human rights institutions for the protection of the rights of the child;
2. Recommendations to enhance the protection and promotion of the rights of the child on the national level and through cooperation at the regional and international level;
3. A Workshop report.

iii) Forum Regional Workshop: The Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Advancing the International Human Rights of Women

At its Fourth Annual Meeting in 1999, the Forum agreed to hold a workshop in 2000 on the advancement of women's human rights, in consultation with the NGO community. The Fiji Human Rights Commission (FHRC) agreed to host this Workshop to enhance the profile of human rights in the Pacific sub-region.

The Workshop was organised by the Secretariat of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, in collaboration with the host institution, the Fiji Human Rights Commission. It was co-sponsored by the OHCHR and financially supported by OHCHR, the New Zealand Government, through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), and the Australian Government, through its Agency for International Development (AusAID) as part of its continuing program of support for the Forum Secretariat.

The Workshop was held from 5 – 7 May 2000 in Suva, Fiji Islands. It was preceded by frequent consultation between the Forum Secretariat, the FHRC and the OHCHR.

The Forum Secretariat and the FHRC actively sought balanced participation between national institution representatives, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governments and the OHCHR. Particular efforts were made to facilitate participation from governments and NGOs in the Pacific sub-region.

The Prime Minister of the Fiji Islands, the Hon Mr Mahendra P Chaudhry, opened the Workshop at a function that was also addressed by the Chairperson of the Fiji Commission on Human Rights, Mr Justice Kupa, the Special Adviser to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Brian Burdekin, and Justice Dame Silvia Cartwright, Committee Member, CEDAW and New Zealand High Court Judge.

The goal of the workshop was to promote better understanding and observance of the international human rights of women in the Asia Pacific region.

The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

- i) strengthen existing human rights institutions in the region, with a special focus on the Pacific and stimulate interest in developing new human rights institutions in the Pacific sub-region;
- ii) promote more effective cooperation and collaboration between the Forum, national human rights institutions and national and regional human rights NGOs on issues relating to the rights of women.
- iii) initiate steps by national institutions to ensure improved recognition of the rights of women within national institutions, both through appropriate structures and effective mechanisms and through relevant training programs for staff and members;
- iv) encourage development of a joint project by national institutions and NGOs to combat trafficking in the region;

The workshop was very successful in that it provided an opportunity for representatives of Pacific Island States (both government and NGOs) to attend the meeting. Often underrepresented and unable to secure funds to attend international human rights meetings, representatives from Pacific Island States expressed their strong appreciation for meeting being held in the Pacific and for the information provided. The workshop also produced a comprehensive statement of conclusions. Further details on this activity can be found in a separate report to this meeting.

Unfortunately, ten days following the workshop the elected Fiji Government was held hostage and overthrown by a civilian coup. The Forum Secretariat, however, hopes to continue to develop human rights projects that implement the conclusions of the workshop with Pacific island states.

iv) Fifth Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and the Inaugural Meeting of the Advisory Council of Jurists.

The Fifth Annual Meeting of the Forum will be held in Rotorua, New Zealand from

7-9 August 2000. The meeting is to be hosted by the New Zealand Human Rights Commission. The inaugural meeting of the Advisory Council of Jurists is being held concurrently from 8-9 August 2000. These meetings have received financial support from the New Zealand Government, OHCHR and the Australian Government. At the time of writing logistical and policy preparation for the meetings were being carried out by the Forum Secretariat and the New Zealand Human Rights Commission.

6. COUNTRY-BASED PROJECTS

Bangladesh

In February 2000 the Forum met with officers of Amnesty International (International Secretariat and Sydney office) to discuss Amnesty International's interest in human rights abuses in Bangladesh. The discussion was focussed on the ongoing efforts to establish a national human rights institution in Bangladesh.

China

In October 1999 officers of the Forum met with an officer from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs who was visiting Australia under the auspices of the Human Rights Technical Assistance Program coordinated by the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

In March 2000 the Director of the Forum Secretariat attended the United Nations Eighth Workshop on Regional Cooperation for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Asia Pacific Region held in Beijing, China.

East Timor

On 10 December 1999 an officer of the Forum participated in a symposium in Darwin on the establishment of a judicial system in East Timor, organised by the United Nations Transitional Authority in East Timor (UNTAET) and the School of Law of the Northern Territory University. The Forum officer accompanied the Australian Human Rights Commissioner to Dili, East Timor, where they met with local NGO representatives and the Director and officers of the Human Rights Unit of UNTAET.

In January 2000 at the request of UNTAET the Forum finalised two project proposals: the first a proposal for the establishment of an ombudsman's position in UNTAET; the second a project proposal for an East Timor human rights seminar. This seminar, developed by the Forum Secretariat and implemented by UNTAET, was scheduled to be held in Dili in August 2000 and it is expected that the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs Mary Robinson will participate.

Fiji

In April 2000 an officer of the Forum travelled to Fiji to hold discussions with the Fiji Human Rights Commission concerning the Forum's Regional Workshop on the Role of National Institutions in the Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights, which was held in Suva, Fiji 5-7 May 2000.

Information about the Forum's Regional Workshop on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Advancing the International Human Rights of Women is referred to under "Regional Activities" in this report. Further details on this activity can be found in a separate report to this meeting.

During the civilian coup the Fiji Human Rights Commission approached the Forum for assistance with the international distribution of the Commission's media statements and for the provision of legal advice on the status of the Commission since the abrogation of the *Constitution Amendment Act 1997* and the Commission's status under the *Human Rights Commission Bill 1999*.

India

In September 1999 the Forum hosted a visit by Mr Sankar Sen, Special Rapporteur and former Director General of the Indian National Human Rights Commission.

In May 2000 the Director of the Forum Secretariat met with the Indian Government's Attorney General, Mr Sorabjee and provided him with a briefing on the activities of the Forum.

Indonesia

The Forum continued its management of a two-year \$A2 million program of technical cooperation with the Indonesian Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM). This included the recruitment, selection and placement in May 2000 of a human rights educator at Komnas HAM for two years.

In May 2000 the Director of the Forum Secretariat provided a briefing on the activities of the Asia Pacific Forum to a group of Indonesian judges.

In June 2000 the Forum hosted a five-person delegation from the Indonesian Human Rights Commission, Komnas HAM. The program included an academic component and meetings with Ministers, the Judiciary, government and non-government representatives as well as focusing on national institution policy, legal, conciliation and education issues. The visit provided the delegation with knowledge of alternative institutional mechanisms for the protection and promotion of human rights and further developed linkages between Komnas HAM and the Forum.

Further activities in the overall program will include training in investigations for staff who deal with complaints, the computerisation of the complaints handling system, a workshop on strategic planning, training in alternative dispute resolution and the development and management of national human rights inquiries.

Iran

In February 2000 the Director of the Forum Secretariat travelled to Iran to meet with Iranian government and non-government officials to provide information about the work of the Forum.

Japan

In February 2000 the Forum hosted a visit from the Japan Bar Association. The visit was coordinated by Mr Akio Kawamura, a researcher from Human Rights Forum 21, a Japanese non-government organisation. The Japan Bar Association is studying the role of national human rights institutions in response to the 1999 Concluding Observations of the UN Human Rights Committee.

Malaysia

The Forum has continued to respond to requests for information from the Malaysian Government about national human rights institutions.

Mozambique

In February 2000 the Forum coordinated a visit of a delegation from the Government of Mozambique to the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. The objective of the visit was to gather information and develop an understanding of the role and functions of an ombudsman institution and the relationship of that institution with other government agencies.

Nepal

From 26 to 30 July 2000 the Special Advisor on National Institutions to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in association with the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF), at the request of and coordinating with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), conducted a mission to Nepal. The goal of the mission was to develop, in consultation with the NHRC and interested donors, an outline of a proposal for coordinated assistance to strengthen the capacity of the NHRC to fulfil its important mandate.

New Zealand

In April 2000 an officer of the Forum travelled to New Zealand for discussions with the New Zealand Human Rights Commission and the local community in Rotorua regarding preparations for the forthcoming Fifth Annual Meeting of the Forum and inaugural Advisory Council of Jurists meeting.

In June 2000, officers of the New Zealand Human Rights Commission, along with officers of the Forum Secretariat and the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission met as members of a working group to discuss proposals for the legal incorporation of the Forum. The OHCHR is also a member of the working group and has been involved in discussions. This working group was established at the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Forum in Manila in September 1999.

Philippines

The Philippines Commission on Human Rights hosted the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Forum in Manila, 6-8 September 1999. Further information about the meeting is provided under 'Regional Activities' in this report. The papers and final report of the meeting can be found on the Forum's website.

Sri Lanka

In May 2000 officers of the Forum met with a representative of the Sri Lankan Human Rights Commission and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The meeting provided an opportunity to bring the various parties up to date with the Forum's proposed program of technical cooperation with the Sri Lankan Human Rights Commission.

Thailand

In October 1999 the Forum in partnership with the Centre for Democratic Institutions organised a one-week visit of an eight-person delegation from Thailand. The objective of the visit was to strengthen the understanding of the delegation of the operation and functions of national human rights institutions and to develop institutional linkages with the Asia Pacific Forum. The delegation was comprised of a cross-section of people from the Thai community including members of Parliament, government officials and non-government representatives. The visit followed the passage of the *National Human Rights Commission Act* by the National Assembly of Thailand.

Vietnam

In October 1999 the Director of the Forum Secretariat provided lectures to 20 Vietnamese judges on the interrelationship between human rights and criminal law, the role of national human rights institutions and the activities of the Asia Pacific Forum. This project was in association with the Centre for Asian and Pacific Law at the University of Sydney. The project was funded by the United Nations Development Program.

7. INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

i) Eighth United Nations Workshop on Human Rights Arrangements in the Asia Pacific Region

In February 2000 the Director of the Forum Secretariat attended the 8th United Nations Asia Pacific Workshop on Regional Co-operation for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, in Beijing, People's Republic of China. The workshop was attended by representatives from over 35 countries, international experts, United Nations agencies and non-government organisations. Regional Member States agreed on a framework document for the provision of technical assistance to encourage and promote regional human rights arrangements. The framework document explicitly recognises the role of the Forum and provides for the allocation of funds for specific Forum activities.

ii) Regional Conference on Internal Displacement in Asia

To promote more effective solutions to the plight of those internally displaced in Asia, a Regional Conference on Internal Displacement was held in Bangkok, February 22-24, at the invitation of the Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, Dr. Francis M. Deng. It was one of a series of regional conferences being held on the subject of internal displacement. Participants in the Bangkok meeting came from 16 Asian as well as other countries and included representatives of NHRIs from Indonesia, Philippines and Sri Lanka, academic and research institutions, local, regional and international NGOs, media, and international organizations. The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions was represented by Professor Arjuna Aluwihare, then Commissioner of the Sri Lankan Human Rights Commission.

One of the main purposes of the conference was to promote the dissemination and application of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the first international standards on internally displaced persons, presented to the United Nations in 1998 by the Representative of the Secretary-General. The conference also sought to share information on the problem of internal displacement within the Asian region, identify effective practices for addressing it, and promote more regular networking among organizations involved with IDPs with a view to developing monitoring and documentation systems.

A separate report of this conference has been prepared.

iii) Fifth International Workshop of National Institutions, Rabat, Morocco

From 12-15 April the Director of the Forum Secretariat attended the Fifth International Workshop of National Institutions, held in Rabat, Morocco. At this meeting the accreditation sub-committee of the International Coordinating Committee recommended 35 institutions for accreditation.

iv) International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions

From 17-20 April 2000 the Director of the Forum attended the annual meeting of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions held in connection with the 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. At this meeting the ICC approved the recommendations of the accreditation subcommittee at its meeting in Morocco. It also formally agreed that the Indian National Human Rights Commission remain Chair of the ICC until the Human Rights Advisory Council of Morocco achieves full compliance with the Paris Principles.

v) 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights

In April 2000 the Director of the Forum Secretariat attended the 56th Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. Items of business of particular importance to the work of the Forum were resolutions relating to national human rights institutions and regional human rights arrangements in the Asia Pacific. Formal statements were presented to the UN Commission on the work of the Forum, the role of national institutions in United Nations meetings and the importance of the Paris Principles. In addition, meetings were held with representatives of the United Nations, including the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs Mary Robinson, concerning UN activities in relation to national institutions.

vi) Asia Pacific Conference on the Use of Children As Soldiers

The Asia Pacific Conference on the Use of Children as Soldiers, held in Kathmandu from 15 to 18 May 2000, was the fourth regional conference on this topic to raise general awareness of the problem and to encourage national governments; regional bodies and international organizations to commit themselves and to draw up plans and programmes to eradicate it. Participants included representatives of 24 Governments including Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Japan, North Korea, South Korea, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. In addition the Conference included 75 representatives of NGOs within the region and outside, 25 representatives of the UN and other international organizations, the Secretary of the Sri Lankan Human Rights Commission and a former Khmer Rouge child soldier. Mr R. V. Pillai, Senior Consultant to the Asia Pacific Forum, represented the Forum and chaired the entire Conference

A separate report on this conference has been prepared.

International visitors

During the reporting period the Forum Secretariat received representatives from many countries interested in learning more about the Forum and the role of national human rights institutions.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Secretariat wishes to gratefully acknowledge the Australian Human Rights Commission for its continued support, the New Zealand Human Rights Commission for its advice and leadership as Forum Convenor, the United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights for its co-sponsorship and financial assistance and the Australian and New Zealand Governments for their continued support and financial contributions. The Secretariat also wishes to thank student interns and other individuals who have contributed to the activities of the Forum Secretariat including Ms Shana Nishihira, Ms Ruth Nichols, Ms Jessica Wyndham, Ms Eva Hald and Mr Yorroh Batchilly.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Forum members at the 5th Annual Meeting of the Forum:

- Note the content of this report.
