

FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC FORUM OF NATIONAL HUMAN  
RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS  
ROTORUA, NEW ZEALAND, 7-9 August 2000

“THE ROLE OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS  
IN ADVANCING THE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN”

**BACKGROUND**

The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (the Forum) and its member institutions consider promoting and protecting the human rights of women as central to their role and functions. At its third Annual Meeting, in September 1998, the Forum considered a paper on *The Role of National Institutions in Addressing Discrimination Against Women*. At the meeting, Forum members committed themselves to according high priority to identifying the human rights problems of women and addressing and eliminating discrimination. They condemned violence against women in all its forms as a serious and pervasive human rights problem and requested governments to work towards protecting women by providing legal assistance, refuge and rehabilitation.

At its fourth Annual Meeting in 1999, the Forum renewed this commitment and agreed to hold a workshop in 2000 on the advancement of women's human rights, in consultation with non-government organisations (NGOs). 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 FHRC. It was co-sponsored by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (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<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> May 2000 in Suva, Fiji Islands. It was preceded by frequent consultation between the Forum Secretariat, the FHRC, NGOs and the OHCHR. A total of seventy-four participants attended the meeting including representatives from national institutions, NGOs, governments and the OHCHR. Particular efforts were made to facilitate participation from governments and NGOs in the Pacific sub-region.

The workshop produced a comprehensive statement of conclusions. These are attached. Further details on this activity can also be found in the attached report of the workshop.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Forum members at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Forum:

- Note the contents of the report of the workshop
- Note paragraphs 7,9,10,11,12 and 13 of the Concluding Statement
- Note the agreed cooperative activities contained in paragraph 17 of the Concluding Statement.

*Attachments:*

1. The Concluding Statement and Recommendations.
2. Report of the Regional Workshop.