

## **Asia Indigenous Women's Network and the BAI - the National Network of Indigenous Women in the Philippines and the Adivasi Women's Network- India**

### Agenda Item 7

Honorable Chairperson, Members of the forum, Brothers and Sisters:

Indigenous women in Asia continue to be marginalized, discriminated and vilified. The alarming intensity of the culture of impunity is ravaging not only our lands and territories but also the lives and persons of indigenous women.

In the Philippines, the indigenous women leaders and environmental activists who stand against the entry of foreign mining corporations to protect the environment and their ancestral domain have been targeted and vilified by the state. For this reason, many of them are now under attack. They have been killed, harassed and charged with trumped-up cases. Out of the 114 victims of extrajudicial killings under the present regime, 15 are women and girl-children.

Rape and other forms of violence continues to tear into the dignity of Jumma women in Bangladesh where reports of cases of violence against indigenous women by state security forces and state-sponsored migrants are at an alarmingly daily occurrence.

Development induced displacement, migration and trafficking, witch killing and state violence is rampant in Central India. The recent cases of witch killing and trafficking of two minor girls from Jharkhand and their suspicious death questioned the justice system of Indian government. There are many cases of operation green hunt where men and women are tortured and jailed in the false cases. Many women are raped, sexually assaulted by these security personnel and arms forces.

The loss of land, waters, and forests through state and corporate policies and programmes is deepening the poverty of indigenous women while increasing their domestic workloads and subsistence responsibilities. They have to work harder and longer to feed and nurture their families. Loss of livelihood and employment of indigenous women makes them feel powerless economically and this condition erodes their influence and participation in decision making.

Further, migration of indigenous women in search of livelihood opportunities increases their vulnerability to different forms of violence and abuse including sexual, domestic, and work-related. Uprooted from the communities, indigenous women who migrate lose the protection and support afforded by their communities and customary laws on women.

Recommendations:

1. For the UN through the UNPFII, UNHCHR, ILO, CEDAW, CRC and CERD to pursue state accountability on the fundamental freedoms and human rights of indigenous women including addressing this historical injustice and violence among indigenous women, youth and children.

2. For State Governments in Asia to respect, protect and fulfill their obligations to human rights, women's rights and the UNDRIP and pull out all military forces from indigenous territories including Oplan bayanihan in the Philippines, Oplan OTTURAN in Bangladesh and Operation Green Hunt in India.

3. Repeal of State laws, policies and program which are in the name of national security imposed on IPs such as AFSPA, Disturbed Areas Act, Chhatisgarh Special Public Security Act, Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, National Security Act, National Investigative Agency Act among others.

4. UN agencies, through their operational policies and country teams to ensure that the right to FPIC is respected and fulfilled especially by development actors.

5. We reiterate the recommendations forwarded by the indigenous women of Asia and Pacific during the UNCSW on its 57<sup>th</sup> Session last 4-15 March 2013.

6. For the CEDAW to strengthen and ensure that indigenous women are participating in the implementation and monitoring of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women at the local and national levels through developing more sensitive strategies and methods that takes into account the particularities of indigenous women and the kind of violence they experience. We also call on the CEDAW to look into the continuing persecution of indigenous women as witches in India

Contact person: Mila Singson: [singsonmila@yahoo.com](mailto:singsonmila@yahoo.com)