



PRESS RELEASE
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Australian Embassy
Bangkok

A public forum on
CROSSING BORDERS: WOMEN'S AND GENDER MOBILITY IN ASEAN
to mark International Women's Day 2015

The Australian Embassy, Bangkok is sponsoring a public forum on 18 March 2015 to encourage discussion of women's political, social and economic empowerment and priorities on the theme *Crossing Borders: Women's and Gender Mobility in ASEAN* to mark International Women's Day.

The Department of Women's Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University is organising and hosting the forum, which will be held at the university. Australian Government Social Development Specialist Mia Urbano will participate in the forum, sharing the Australian Government's experiences of working with ASEAN countries on women's mobility issues through Australia's aid program.

This year, International Women's Day commemorates the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, signed by 189 governments in 1995.

The Chiang Mai forum will explore regional progress towards the realisation of the commitments to women and to gender equality made in Beijing. It will explore women's mobility in ASEAN and raise awareness of further work that needs to be done to accelerate achievement of the Beijing +20 agenda.

Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, is a strong advocate of gender equality, and is committed to supporting and partnering with other countries to promote women's empowerment. In June 2014, Ms Bishop released a new performance framework for the Australian aid program, *Making Performance Count*, which requires that at least 80 percent of all ODA investments achieve positive gender outcomes.

The forum will also feature eminent Thai speakers on women's rights and gender equality issues including Dr. Varaporn Chamsanit (Manager, Women's Wellbeing and Gender and Sexual Justice), Pongsathorn Chanluen (Director, Mplus Foundation), Sulaiporn Chonwilai (Independent Researcher on Women, Gender, Gender Diversity and Women living with HIV/AIDs), Wannaporn Panthaloet (Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, Thammasat University), Dr. Sita Sumrit (Adviser, projects for Promotion of Women's and Children's Rights Project, Thailand Institute of Justice), Norairi Tungmuangthong and Kulsuwarak Puyee (Indigenous Women Network of Thailand).

Australia's Ambassador to Thailand, Paul Robilliard, said "Australia is committed to supporting and partnering with Thailand and other regional countries to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Ongoing dialogue on these issues will help to maintain momentum toward achieving the Beijing +20 objectives."

To register your participation or find out more information, please contact the Department of Women's Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University by telephone at 053 943572 ext.15, Fax: 053 219245 or e-mail: wsc@cmu.ac.th

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