

**Talitha Kum Japan is an established network group among Association of Major Superiors of Women Religious and Association of Major Religious Superiors in Japan in collaboration with J-CaRM (Catholic Commission of Japan for Migrants, Refugees and People on the Move) commissioned by CBCJ (Catholic Bishop Conference of Japan) to counteract trafficking in persons.**

## **TALITHA KUM SOUTHEAST / EAST ASIA CONFERENCE**

Four delegates from the steering committee of Talitha Kum Japan attended the TK Southeast / East Asia Conference in Hua Hin, Thailand on November 12 to November 16, 2017. The event was an occasion for us to pray, listen, share ideas, learn from each other, and see for ourselves some of the real situation of the migrant workers in Asia.



**Talitha Kum Southeast / East Asia delegates with Bishop Panya Kritcharoen**

Sixty-five (65) participants from eleven (11) Southeast Asian and East Asian countries attended; Thailand, Indonesia, East Timor, Philippines, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Cambodia, Laos and Japan. The delegates from TK Japan led by Sr. Junko Shioya, ACI, Fr. Wenceslao Laquidao, OMI, Sr. Abby Avelino, MM and Sr. Nida Indelible, CM reported on the situation of trafficking in persons in Japan particularly migrants from Vietnam, Philippines and Cambodia. The condition of trafficking in persons triggered from technical intern training program (TITP), Japanese-Filipino Children (JFC) and overseas students (ryuugakusei) in Japan. TK Japan had a meeting with other Asians counterparts; TK Korea and TK Philippines to strengthen the networking through prevention and protection of victims of human trafficking.

From this conference, we heard an informative and inspiring presentation on Thailand government's effort to protect the rights of workers in the fishing industry and the rights of women and children. We heard also from the country reports the complex nature of migration; no access to legal assistance; a need for education on risks and dangers of migration; need for continuous collaboration among congregations and dioceses who work for migrants (providing shelter, rehabilitation/reintegration programs for victims and providing pre-departure orientation, etc.)

It's heartbreaking to see the situation from the two days exposure field work; the sexual exploitation at the night market, street prostitutions in Hua Hin and the hardships that the migrant workers and local people in the fishing industry endure all in the name of "cheap labor."

We continue with resolve and commit ourselves to strengthen our commitment to the eradication of trafficking in persons through the strengthening of our network, sharing of information and the intensification of our common effort to prevent and protect the victims, with particular emphasis on women, children and the most-vulnerable migrant workers.

Lastly, we affirm the objective of this meeting which is "Combating modern-day slavery through network, prevention and protection" as an on-going advocacy. We also reaffirm our commitment to the "5Ps" against

## Update Networking

- We met with representatives of TK Korea and TK Philippines in Thailand to strengthen our networking for prevention and protection of victims of human trafficking.
- We agreed to the appointment of TK Japan as the Focal Coordinator of East Asia.
- December 2017- Meeting through video conference of the coordinators of TK Global, Asia, South East Asia, East Asia and South Asia.

## Upcoming Events

### Seminars

February 17, 2018 (Sat)

1:30 pm ~ 4 pm

at Nagoya Diocese Center

The Current Situation of Human  
Trafficking in Japan

& Support to the Victims of  
Trafficking in Persons

February 24, 2018 (Sat)

10 am ~ 4pm

at Nicola Barre

Yotsuya, Tokyo

New Forms of Human  
Trafficking

Church Efforts to Help the  
Victims Human Trafficking

*"Talitha kum!" (Little girl,  
I tell you, ARISE! - Mt 5:41)*

trafficking in persons: Prevention, Protection,  
Partnership, Prosecution and Prayer.

## Update and Recent Cases

### *HT/illegal recruitment case of overseas students in Kyoto.*

Last October 2016, twenty (20) overseas students from Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka came to study Japanese in a Japanese Language school in Kyoto.

Fifteen Filipinos were deceived by the owner of the Japanese school in the Philippines. When they came to Japan, the owner of the language school forced them to work longer hours. They didn't know it was illegal for a student visa holder. They worked until late at night and their salaries were taken by the school owner. They discovered later on many discrepancies and they complained many times, but to no avail, until they asked help from the Church in February 2017. The 15 students filed a criminal case of large scale fraud and illegal recruitment in the Philippines against the owner of the Japanese school. The case is still on going and the owner is trying to have amicable settlements by paying back the money to the students.

### *Technical Intern Trainees*

We have encountered various cases of technical intern training program especially migrants from Vietnam and Philippines. Many technical intern trainees from Vietnam asked for help from labor union and filed lawsuits against their employers due to unpaid overtime pay, working longer hours from 8 am to 3 am without overtime pay; living in unhealthy and crowded living conditions; verbal abuse and unjust treatment at work. Another case suffered injury and became ill due to heatstroke; etc. Another intern was fired by the employer for no reason and his family in Vietnam was threatened to be killed by the sending organization unless the case against the employer was dismissed. Many interns suffered from unjust low wages, long working hours, terrible working conditions, increasing cases of work-related injuries, unhygienic living conditions and many other unlawful living and working conditions.

Many of these intern trainees need financial support, shelter and legal assistance to fight for their lawsuit cases against their employers. There are a number of cases not being rescued or getting any support. They continue to work in unlawful living and working conditions. These are just some cases we got involved in and tried to help and support them financially or sheltering them even for a short-term period.

[We thank you for your generous financial support for Talitha Kum Japan. Your donation will be used to provide support for victims of human trafficking for sheltering, living expenses, legal case work, translation/interpreter, Newsletter, Seminars and Workshops Awareness Program]



Srs. Shioya and Abby with Dr. Monthip Sriratana Tabucanon, President of Asia-Pacific Regional Council (APRC) and International Council of Women (ICW) - one of the speaker who talked about the "Women's empowerment situation in terms of their economic condition".