



## President's IMD 2010 Message

As we commemorate International Migrants' Day 2010, we are in solidarity with the struggles of more than 200 million migrant workers here and everywhere.

In Singapore, HOME has been witness to the afflictions of 900,000 migrant workers. We have upheld that 'Domestic Workers are Workers' and should be covered by national labour laws. They should not suffer discrimination just because they are migrants, women and domestic workers. No domestic worker should be made to work 365 days in a year without a day off or to lose work because of pregnancy. It is a shame that Christmas day and other holidays are enjoyed by all workers except migrant domestic workers.

Migrant workers in Singapore continue to be heavily debt burdened, working long hours, earning low wages and living under unacceptable conditions. If they are HIV positive, they are immediately deported without post counselling or referral treatment services. Where protests against such conditions occur, repatriation thugs are brought in to force the deportation of would be 'trouble makers' or complainants. The work permit and security bond system perpetuates slavery like conditions. Passports are taken from the worker and job mobility is mostly not an option.

Not unlike migrant workers, migrant groups like HOME are also struggling to shout out "Migrant Rights are Human Rights". Our voices are muted even before they get hoarse. Our application for a permit to educate and campaign for the signing and ratification for the Migrants' Convention has been denied by the police. However, despite the disappointment, we pledge not to lose hope but to persevere in the long march to freedom from slavery.

Happy International Migrants' Day!

Bridget Tan  
Founder & President