

President's Message on May Day 2010

As Singapore and the world celebrate May Day 2010, let us remember workers among us who are not enjoying this public holiday. These are the 200,000 domestic workers in Singapore and the millions in other parts of the world.



May Day is the celebration of the historic struggles of the working class in the 1800s in America and Europe. Now all over the world organized labour have achieved through the power of labour unions to bargain for 'decent wages for decent work'. However there are still the millions of migrant workers and domestic workers who suffer discrimination and exploitation in many countries. Not only do they work under appalling conditions of inhumanity, some are deported penniless, indebted, injured and in poor health, mentally and physically.

HOME has since 2004 grappled with this hard reality in a world of globalisation where human persons are degraded into human machines – disposable like trash. How do we combat against players in a global market place where money spins the world and the world spins on money. Few are interested in the human right violations of the migrant worker and even fewer are willing to lend a hand to a sub human workforce working in the dangerous, dirty and demeaning work.

Today, this month, we invite policy makers and leaders in government, business, institutions and families to be the champions for change and for the dignity of work. We need champions impassioned to build a better world for all so that peace is secured across the globe. There will be no peace without justice.

May all migrant workers including domestic workers one day soon claim their rights to 'decent wages for decent work' under international labour standards. Let the governments and the trade unions of the world accept the demand of domestic workers for an ILO Domestic Worker Convention 2011.

Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bridget Tan', written in a cursive style.

Bridget Tan