

(Madam/Mister) Chair, to all leaders present here today, fellow civil society and stakeholders, good afternoon. My name is Sringatin, an Indonesian migrant domestic worker in Hong Kong, and chairperson of the Indonesian Migrant Workers Union.

During the COVID, many migrants have lost their jobs and have been repatriated back – with no available assistance for them. New migrant workers, who are harassed by recruitment agencies for their debts, receive no protection. Many of us overseas are overworked, stigmatized as virus spreaders, and excluded from government response. Last December, we mourned the death of Nuon Sokkheng, a Cambodian farm worker who died in a poorly heated makeshift shelter in South Korea. She was only 31 years old.

As the pandemic continues, migrants become more insecure, vulnerable and invisible. Unfortunately, the economic insecurity back home will force millions more, especially the youth, to find work abroad, with many being targeted by traffickers.

In this regard, we call on our leaders to veer away from a remittance-dependent economy and pursue a sustainable economic pathway based on human rights and justice, independent from foreign intervention, and people-centered. We need to recognize that the drivers of migration - poverty, unemployment, landlessness, climate injustice, conflicts - are caused and have been made worse by neoliberal policies imposed on economies and people for a very long time.

As this is developed, migrant-sending country governments should set standards for the protection of their nationals working and living overseas, and incorporate these in bilateral and multilateral agreements that receiving countries should recognize and uphold.

Concretely, we call on governments:

- a) Safeguard migrants from overwork, exploitation and being placed in inhumane living and working conditions;
- b) Enhance protection for migrants against abuses of recruitment agencies through policies that contain punitive provisions and abolition of recruitment fees for migrants;
- c) Recognize labor trafficking as trafficking and craft policies to protect us from it; and
- d) Uphold rights of migrant workers to free association, to form or join unions, and exercise their workers' rights.

Nothing about migrants without migrants. Let us all make vulnerability history. Thank you very much.