

# Concluding Recommendations

Judicial Declarations were developed following the conclusion of various Judicial Colloquiums. These include: the Bangalore Principles (1988); the Victoria Falls Declaration (1994); Hong Kong Conclusions (1996); Georgetown Recommendations (1997); Pacific Islands Judges Declaration (1997); and the Caribbean Conclusions (2011). Drafted and endorsed by judges, these Judicial Declarations contain the common commitments and aspirations of the participating judges. While not legal binding, these Judicial Declarations have played an important role in providing the judiciary with specific guidelines on different areas of law and judicial conduct. In particular, several of these Judicial Colloquiums have put forward strategies for action on the advancement of women's human rights and women's access to justice.

In the spirit of forging common understanding and collaborative efforts among members of the judiciary in SEA, Concluding Recommendations were drafted by the participants of the Judicial Colloquium. Based on an initial draft prepared by the organisers, the participants discussed the draft in small groups and at a plenary during the last day of the forum. It was also circulated to the participants prior to finalisation. The Concluding Recommendations reaffirm the judges' adherence to CEDAW, particularly the principles of state accountability, non-discrimination and equality in their legal system, and the significant and critical role of the judiciary in promoting gender equality and women's access to justice.

The Concluding Recommendations provide specific guidelines on the applicability of CEDAW and its principles to domestic judicial decision-making in the follow ways: as an interpretive guide; to resolve ambiguity; to fill gaps in domestic law; and to provide definitions, in particular definitions of concepts of equality and discrimination.

Among the strategies for action recommended is integrating into on-going judicial education programs training and continuing education for judges and judicial officers at all levels of the courts on CEDAW, its principles, and other relevant international human rights instruments and their application to all areas of law and procedure. Further, the trainings should focus on sexuality and sexual violence and include discussions on progressive gender-responsive interpretations of customary and religious norms to promote women's human rights. (See Annex 1, Concluding Recommendations, Judicial Colloquium on Gender Equality Jurisprudence and the Role of the Judiciary in Promoting Women's Access to Justice in Bangkok, Thailand on 4-5 September 2013)