

AICHR Note on Responsible Business and Migration in ASEAN

The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), in line with its mandate under its Terms of Reference, issues the following statement for the consideration of ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Entities, and relevant stakeholders.

Recalling the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration and the Phnom Penh Statement on the Adoption of ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (2012);

Reaffirming the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (2017), as well as other relevant ASEAN instruments on labour mobility, social protection, and sustainable development;

Guided by the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

Acknowledging AICHR's past initiatives on business and human rights, ongoing collaboration with the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW);

Recognising the deliberations and recommendations emerging from the Regional Dialogue on Responsible Business and Migration, held on 21–22 July 2025 in Bangkok, Thailand;

Notes that migrant workers play an essential role in ASEAN's development and continue to face challenges, including risks of exploitation, unsafe working conditions, and barriers to accessing justice and remedies;

Further notes that businesses, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), are vital contributors to ASEAN's economies, and supporting responsible business practices can strengthen competitiveness, resilience, and inclusive growth;

Stresses the importance of meaningful multi-stakeholder engagement, ensuring that the perspectives of migrant workers, civil society organisations, and the private sector are included in ASEAN's approaches.

This note is non-binding and offered for consideration of ASEAN Member States, relevant ASEAN Sectoral Bodies and Entities, and businesses in ASEAN:

1. **Consider** strengthening national policies and legal frameworks, building on regional studies, sharing experiences, and identifying good practices, and encourage coherence between national frameworks and ASEAN commitments;

2. **Promote** non-discriminatory business practices as well as encourage responsible business conduct by supporting ethical work environments to prevent discrimination against migrant workers;
3. **Encourage** integration of relevant responsible business conduct principles and, where relevant and appropriate given the national contexts, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights into national frameworks, particularly in migration-related sectors;
4. **Support** exploration of guidelines on responsible business conduct for migrant workers protection, in consultation with ASEAN Committee on the Implementation on the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW) and relevant stakeholders;
5. **Encourage** accessible grievance and remedy mechanisms at national and regional levels, including the promotion of cooperation on fair recruitment practices, prohibiting overcharging of worker-paid recruitment fees, and improved victim assistance;
6. **Promote** responsible supply chains management by supporting capacity-building, incentives, and peer-to-peer learning, and assist Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in aligning with relevant business and human rights standards while enhancing sustainability; and
7. **Encourage** enhanced monitoring, and reporting mechanisms, and support the sharing of regional data to strengthen accountability and evidence-based policy making.

As part of AICHR's commitment as a stakeholder in this matter, AICHR will:

- Continue to provide opportunities for inclusive and multi-stakeholder dialogue on business, human rights, and migration.
- Work in consultation with ACMW and relevant ASEAN bodies and entities to explore the development of responsible business conduct standards and protection of migrant workers.
- Contribute to *ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future* by supporting strategies and initiatives that advance migrant workers' protection and encourage sustainable, and responsible business.

AICHR reaffirms its commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights in ASEAN. Advancing responsible business conduct and safeguarding the rights and welfare of migrant workers are integral in building a people-centred, people-oriented ASEAN Community that upholds human dignity, shared prosperity, and sustainable development.

Dated this 14 November 2025