



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



UN and South-east Asian nations partner to end violence against women and children



Special Representative on Violence against Children Marta Santos Pais. UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferre

18 January 2012 –

Representatives from the United Nations and South-east Asian nations have teamed up to explore ways to address the multifaceted issue of violence against women and children in the region, holding a two-day meeting aimed at strengthening measures against the problem.

“Violence against children is hidden, widespread and occurs in all contexts, including where children are expected to benefit from special protection,” said Marta Santos Pais, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative on Violence against Children.

“With strong laws and policies and effective action, violence can be prevented, enabling children’s development to their full potential and ensuring high returns for society as a whole,” she added.

Violence against children is hidden, widespread and occurs in all contexts, including where children are expected to benefit from special protection.

Ms. Santos Pais was among the participants at the consultations held in Manila, the Philippines, this week that also brought together representatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations ([ASEAN](#)) Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), experts from the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)).

Kanda Vajrabhaya, Thailand’s representative for women’s rights and the Chair of the ACWC, said the dialogue would help ACWC as it prepares strategies to prevent and eliminate violence against women and children in the region.

“We appreciate the productive dialogue throughout the consultation and the rich experiences shared by the experts that provided valuable inputs for the five-year work plan,” she said.

Indira Jaising, CEDAW Committee expert, stressed that “violence against women must be seen as a manifestation of unequal power relations in society.

“All efforts to end violence against women must move from a welfare approach to a human rights approach. States, as duty bearers, have the duty to exercise due diligence to protect, respect and fulfil the rights of women. All religious and cultural discourses that perpetuate the subordinate position of women must be rejected,” said Ms. Jaising.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[UN rights chief welcomes new measure to stop violence against children](#)