

**Coalition of Service Providers for Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong  
Dismayed at the Exclusion of the Foreign Domestic Workers in SMW**

The Coalition of Service Providers for Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong composed of non-government agencies directly serving ethnic minorities, most of whom are Foreign Domestic Workers, are dismayed at the Executive Council's decision to exclude foreign domestic workers from the Statutory Minimum Wage law.



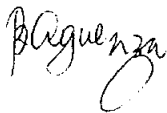




Foreign Domestic workers are part of the Hong Kong labor force performing the crucial role of providing peace, support, and opportunities for Hong Kong families to be cohesive, caring and productive members of Hong Kong society. They contribute their expertise, skills, care and dedication daily, despite the changing and difficult work environments they live in.

The conditions of their employment are protected by the same Employment Ordinance that applies to every working person in Hong Kong. The systems and procedures used in seeking redress and accessing fair treatment are the same systems and policies used by local laborers. How then can the salary provisions be an exceptional condition such that the foreign domestic workers are not included in the statutory minimum wage? This surely raises questions on Hong Kong's adherence to the International Labor Organization's (ILO) principles and standards.

As attested by the Race Discrimination Ordinance (RDO), Hong Kong advocates for fair and equal treatment of its ethnic minority population which includes all foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong. As they are predominantly female, this deprivation of the opportunity to be at par with the local workers in benefits and privileges and protection of rights also violates basic human rights provisions and advertently the rights of women. Hong Kong is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

If Hong Kong aims to fully live its principles and values of equity and equality for all, then we urge the Legislative Council to get beyond the immigration visa lines and look at labor rights and provisions in determining the actual fate of the foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong. We take pride in living and working in a decent territory that would uphold the highest of human values and integrity. Hong Kong can prove this through a greater appreciation of foreign domestic workers in practice and in law.

Signed this 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 by the *COALITION OF SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES MEMBERS*:

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