

Launch of Oxfam International's report "Trading Away Our Rights"



On Sunday 8 February, 2004 the Womyn's Agenda For Change hosted the launch of Oxfam International's Report Trading Away Our Rights. Women Working in the Global Supply Chain at our office in Phnom Penh.



The British Actress Minnie Driver participated and helped promote the launch. Ms. Driver spent the previous week in locations in Thailand and Cambodia learning about the lives of women involved in the production end of the supply chain. Also attending the launch were around 800 Cambodian Garment Workers, International Media, the Cambodian Government's Minister for Commerce, H.E. Cham Prasidh and representatives from Oxfam.

The event received global and national press coverage. The WAC office was set up in readiness for the forthcoming events with a long catwalk, lights and sound system, to show the workers life stories through the items that they produce.

The day was opened with a series of six songs sung by garment workers. Five were composed by the workers and they served to inform the audience about their lives. The other, Bread and Roses, served to show how the lives of Cambodian Women today mirror the experience of women in other countries around the early 1900s. In between the songs, two anonymous workers recounted their hardships and reasons for leaving their villages to work in the garment factories on Phnom Penh.

The next part of the launch consisted of a 30 minute 'life story parade' where 20 Cambodia Garment Workers shared their life stories. Interspersed with this parade was a narration of their lives in the villages, the city, migration, discrimination and their work.

Following this was the official launch of the Oxfam International report. The press conference was chaired by Mr. Alex Renton of Oxfam. The Minister for Commerce, H.E.



Cham Prasidh led the opening remarks, followed by Ms. Heather Grady of Oxfam. The Coordinator of WAC, Ms. Rosanna Barbero then spoke and then Ms. Minnie Driver gave her voice to what she had witnessed over the past week.

