

CHAPTER II

INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN THE ISSUE OF MIGRANT WORKERS IN QATAR

According to the Public International Law, International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) is a privately-established institution that organizes non-profit, non-state multi-national activities for the global society. INGO is motivated to work on specific issues like human rights, health, environment, and education irrespective of any political ideology and belief, that has an impact on the international level. The members of INGO might consist of individuals and/or national social organizations. INGO has several features that distinguish them from the intergovernmental organizations, which are structured, communal, non-profit, autonomous, voluntary, non-religious, non-political, charitable, legitimate, and international. The promotion of INGO's goals and activities is commonly achieved by delivering messages to national governments, multi-national corporations, and also the global mass (Suk-man, 2015).

There are many INGOs that have a concern on the issue of migrant workers. In handling the problem of migrant workers in Qatar itself, there are several INGOs who become the key actors. This chapter will describe more about these organizations, among which are:

A. Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch was originally named Helsinki Watch which began in 1978 designed to support the citizen groups formed throughout the Soviet bloc to monitor government compliance with the 1975 Helsinki Accords. Later in 1981, Americas Watch was founded to conduct extensive fact-finding during the bloody civil wars in Central America.

In rapid succession in the 1980s, Asia Watch, Africa Watch, and Middle East Watch were added to what was then known as "The Watch Committees." In 1988, the organization formally adopted the all-inclusive name Human Rights Watch.

For years, Human Rights Watch has broadened and strengthened its work on the rights of women, children, refugees, and migrant workers. In conducting its work, Human Rights Watch is actively researching, reporting, and advocating in more than 90 countries. There are currently more than 80 researchers work in Human Rights Watch to regularly work on a mission in conducting field investigations and interviewing victims and witnesses as the center of their reporting and advocacy.

Besides providing information, Human Rights Watch also focus on determining who can and should take responsibility for stopping rights violations, the detailed and specific steps they need to take. In order to make this happens, they cooperate with local civil society activists, lawyers, and journalists, and also seek contacts with state and government officials (Human Rights Watch, n.d.).

B. Amnesty International

The idea of establishing Amnesty International began after a British lawyer Peter Benenson was outraged when two Portuguese students were jailed just for raising a toast to freedom in 1961. His writing in The Observer newspaper entitled 'Appeal for Amnesty' and campaign have provoked an incredible response which sparked the idea that people everywhere can unite in solidarity for justice and freedom.

Amnesty International is based in London with several widespread offices in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. These offices are major hubs for the investigations, campaigns, and communications.

The focus of Amnesty International has broadened from seeking the release of political prisoners to upholding the whole spectrum of human right. They work to protect and empower people in need. Amnesty International works in activities like a) Research, to provide accurate information into human rights violations, b) Advocacy and Lobbying, analysis from the result of cross-checked research used to influence and press governments, companies and decision-makers, and c) Campaigns and Action, conducted by petitions, letters, and protests. (Amnesty International, n.d.).

C. Humanity United

Humanity United is a US-based organization which was initially founded as a social welfare organization in 2008 as a part of The Omidyar Group, which intended to catalyze social impact. In 2016, Humanity United was reorganized as a private foundation.

They focus on the issue of systems that suppress human rights and contribute to human suffering. Humanity United provides financial support and includes network development, advocacy, strategic communications, and provide initiatives in their work. In order to increase their influence in dealing with the human rights issues, Humanity United established ‘Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking’. This is a coalition to advocate the solutions for preventing and ending forced labor, debt bondage, sex trafficking, and other forms of modern slavery (Humanity United, n.d.).

D. Freedom United

Freedom United is a US-based organization which has the vision to end modern-day slavery through collective action by inspiring and mobilizing people to influence governments, business, and society. To ensure the supporters’ actions are effectively directed, they are partnering with over 75 organizations in dozens of different countries. They conduct millions of petitions, emails, letters, and social media messages to help in leading the change in local, national, and

international laws and policies towards ending modern slavery (Freedom United, n.d.).

E. Building and Wood Worker's International (BWI)

The BWI is a Global Union Federation with members in the Building, Building Materials, Wood, Forestry and Allied sectors. The BWI groups with around 334 other trade unions are currently representing around 12 million members in 130 countries. The headquarters of BWI is in Geneva, Switzerland, while regional offices and project offices are located in Panama, Malaysia, South Africa, India, Burkina Faso, Chile, Kenya, Russia, Peru, and Brazil.

Their main focus is to improve working and living conditions in the building and wood sectors and promote sustainable industrial development by conducting some strategies as listed below (BWI, n.d.):

- a. Promoting and defending human and trade union rights
- b. Increasing trade union strength
- c. Promoting a stable and high level of employment
- d. Influencing policy and strengthening the capacity of institutions and tripartite structures
- e. Bargaining to influence institutional participation

F. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

ITUC is the world's largest trade union established on 1 November 2006 in Brussels, with several regional organizations in Asia-Pacific (ITUC-Asia Pacific), Africa (ITUC-Africa), and America (TUCA). They cooperate with the European Trade Union Confederation, including through the Pan-European Regional Council. The primary mission is to promote and defend workers' rights in the areas of trade union and human rights, economy, society and the workplace, equality and non-discrimination, and international solidarity through international cooperation (ITUC, n.d.).

G. Anti-Slavery International

Anti-Slavery International is the oldest human right organization in the world. It was established in 1839 by Thomas Clarkson, Thomas Fowell Buxton, and other abolitionists to campaign against slavery worldwide.

They have developed a strong reputation in advancing the political agenda on slavery through research, advocacy, campaigns, and also work with local communities. Anti-Slavery International is closely working with 40 local partner organizations in more than 11 countries, directly supporting over 115,000 people affected by slavery to claim their rights and take control of their lives. In conducting their work, Anti-Slavery International uses the following approaches, such as:

- a. Enabling people to leave slavery – through exemplary projects with local partners, reaching out to people most vulnerable to slavery and exploitation
- b. Helping victims of slavery – with work ensuring they access the psychological and legal support they need to recover and obtain justice and compensation
- c. Supporting the empowerment of people to be better protected from slavery – again working at grassroots level, to help communities demand respect for their human rights and tackle the root causes of slavery through access to education and the elimination of caste and gender inequality

Beside working at the grassroots level, this organization also works to influence decision-makers and inspires change on a global level by lobbying and advocating within countries, international policy work and campaigning, and collecting information and publishing reports about the human rights abuses, bringing them to the attention of the public and promoting public action to end them through media work and supporter campaigns (Anti-Slavery International, n.d.).