Revaluing “Women’s Work”

For decades, nannies, caregivers, and housekeepers have been excluded from most U.S. labor protections – a legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, and the undervaluation of “women’s work.” The lack of regulation combined with the isolated nature of domestic work makes these women particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses, breeding the global phenomenon of human trafficking.

As the UN Commission on the Status of Women undertakes a 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, this public forum will call attention to the failure of the U.S. and other governments to live up to their obligations under international human rights law to protect this critical workforce.

The event will begin with a screening of a short documentary film about the exploitation and labor trafficking of South Asian women as domestic workers in the United States:

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, a film by Brown Girls Productions

Followed by a panel discussion with domestic workers and advocates engaged in local, national, and international movements to protect the human rights of domestic workers and re-value their labor:

NAHAR ALAM, Executive Director of Andolan: Organizing South Asian Workers

RAZIAH BEGUM, Domestic Worker and Member of Andolan

PRISCILLA GONZALEZ, Director of Domestic Workers United (DWU) Steering Committee

LINDA OALICAN, Domestic Worker, Community Organizer for DAMAYAN Migrant Workers Association and Representative for the National Domestic Workers Alliance

IVY SURIYOPAS, Staff Attorney at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund

Moderated by ARACELI MARTINEZ-OLGUIN, Staff Attorney at the ACLU Women’s Rights Project

The filmmakers, PRACHETA SHARMA and JESSICA HOPPER, will introduce the film and be available for questions.

Ending the Exploitation and Abuse of Domestic Workers

Thursday, March 11, 2010
6:00-7:30pm

United Nations Church Center, 10th Floor
777 United Nations Plaza
(44th St. and First Avenue)
New York, NY