

Statement, 16 May 2014

**Termination of Partnership with
Children's Organization of Southeast Asia (COSA)**

It is with regret that I announce the partnership between Hands Across the Water and Children's Organization of Southeast Asia (COSA) has been terminated.

As a result of a thorough audit and review of the financial management of operations in Chiang Mai managed by COSA, which was conducted by a highly respected team of independent auditors, we have identified a serious breach of trust by Mickey Choothesa, the founder of COSA. The breach is of such a significant level that maintaining this partnership is now untenable.

On Monday the 5th of May 2014, Mickey Choothesa evicted 17 girls from the COSA home without notice, reason or alternate accommodation. These actions confirmed for the Board of Hands Across the Water that this was a partner with whom we could no longer work.

As always, our priority of doing what is in the best interests of the children remains paramount. We are now supporting the girls who were evicted and helping them find alternate accommodation. Hands have committed to the girls that we will support them financially and through other means as required. This support will continue through the rest of their schooling and university.

The termination of the partnership between Hands Across the Water and COSA is effective immediately.



Peter Baines, OAM
Founder & Chair
Hands Across the Water