

**ASIA DEMOCRACY NETWORK (ADN)  
FOUNDING ASSEMBLY**



**PROCEEDINGS**

**21-22 OCTOBER 2013**

*Olympic Parktel  
Seoul, KOREA*

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Indonesia	Ms. Abdi (Yenni) SURYANINGATI	YAPPIKA -Indonesian Civil Society Alliance for Democracy
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, the Asia Democracy Network (ADN) would like to thank the numerous civil society organizations like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Korea (MoFA), Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF), the Asia Foundation (TAF), National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Community of Democracies (CoD), and the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) that gave financial support to make the launching possible. More importantly, we want to thank all the distinguished participants that took their time out of their busy schedules to attend the ADN founding assembly. Their contribution and presence made the launching that more meaningful and fruitful.

The Founding Assembly is an initiative by the Korea Democracy Network (KDN) comprised of four democracy related organizations, namely KDF, Center for Korean Women and Politics (CKWP), East Asia Institute (EAI) and the Korea Human Rights Foundation (KHRF) in partnership with like-minded civil society organizations and institutes to engage in the promotion of democracy in Asia. We would like to especially thank the Mr. Hyung-sik SHIN from KDF, Ms. Bong suk SOHN of CKWP, Ms. Eunju KIM of CKWP, Ms. Sookjong LEE and Mr. Jinseok BAE from EAI, and Mr. Anselmo LEE from KHRF in spearheading this initiative.

We would like to thank Ms. Yoon LEE International Program Coordinator at KDF for her continuous support and assistance in the preparations of the 2013 ADN Founding Assembly. We would like to also acknowledge the efforts of the ADN interim secretariat team, Team Manager Ms. Sujung NAM, Researcher Mr. Ilhyung LIM, and International Communications Coordinator Ms. Soo Yon SUH, in organizing and executing a smooth event.

Of course, this would also not be possible without the swift actions of the staff members of the ADN secretariat. We would like to take this time to thank our staff members Ms. Minji HAHM, Mr. Gwanghyun KIM, and Ms. Hyeyoung JUN for enduring countless late nights over three months working on ADN. We want to send thanks to all the interns that assisted with the operations during the event.

It is not an exaggeration to say that during the event there was much synergy and passion given off by the participants for the promotion of democracy across Asia. The Asia Democracy Network hopes to carry on this momentum and continue to actively work in the name of democracy.

Sincerely,  
Sung-heon CHUNG  
President, Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)  
On behalf of the Korea Democracy Network

# BRIEF BACKGROUND

The launching of the Asia Democracy Network (ADN) was possible through the consensus that was reached among participants from Asia to create a base network of democracy advocates and human rights defenders in Asia. This consensus came to the surface at the consultation meeting in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on 30 April 2013 during the 7th Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies (CoD) following a series of consultation meetings including the 7th World Movement for Democracy (WMD) in Lima, Peru in October 2012.

With the goals to strengthen democracy and human rights in Asia, especially on the issues related to defending civil society and democratic space, freedom of expression, association and assembly, democracy education, democratic and equitable development, the ADN came into fruition.

At the ADN Founding Assembly held on 21 and 22 October 2013 in conjunction to the 3rd Seoul Democracy Forum (SDF-III) hosted by the Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF) at the Olympic Parktel, Seoul Korea, approximately 75 participants from over 20 countries and 50 civil society organizations gathered in the name of democracy.

The founding assembly was welcomed with opening remarks by distinguished participants, along with an update on the background and Asia inter-governmental processes. To solidify the founding of the ADN, the draft of the ADN Charter of Principles, Governance Structure and action plans were also presented to the participants. Immediately following in the thematic sessions participants discussed the emerging challenges to participatory democracy in Asia - Civil Society Response and Strategies. Thereafter, during the country sessions participants presented and discussed the current state of democracy and brainstormed the future of their respective countries.

In the afternoon, during the networking sessions groups were divided by sub-regions. The participants mainly from civil society organizations (CSO) utilized this time to network with each other according to their sub regions.

The official launching of the ADN founding assembly was held on the 22nd. At the launching, the Seoul Democracy Declaration and the ADN Charter of Principles was adopted.

# OPENING SESSION

*(9:00 - 10:00, 21 October 2013)*

## Moderator

Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI, Executive Director, Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREI)

## Opening Remarks

Mr. Hyung-sik SHIN, Director of Planning and Coordination Department, Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF) / Korea Democracy Network (KDN)

## Welcoming Remarks

Ms. Bong-scuk SOHN, President, Center for Korean Women and Politics (CKWP) / KDN

## Congratulatory Remarks

Ms. Maria LEISSNER, Secretary General, Community Of Democracies (CoD)

Mr. Peter BECK, Country Representative Korea, The Asia Foundation (TAF)

Mr. Teh-fu HUANG, President, Taiwan Foundation For Democracy (TFD)

## Update on ADN Background and Asia Inter-Governmental Process

Ms. Melinda DE JESUS, Executive Director, Center For Media Freedom & Responsibility (CMFR) / Board Member, Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA) / Organizing Committee for the ADN

Mr. Suren BADRAL, Ambassador At Large, Ministry Of Foreign Affairs, Mongolia

## Presentation of Draft Proposal on Charter of Principles, Governance Structure, and Action Plans

Mr. Anselmo LEE, Executive Director, Korea Human Rights Foundation (KHRF) / Korea Democracy Network (KDN)

The Asia Democracy Network (ADN) founding assembly officially kicked off with an opening session in the presence of distinguished participants from all across Asia. The moderator, Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI, expressed much delight in the launching of the ADN indicating the fruitful future of the network. He thanked all those in attendance and introduced the following to make remarks to start the session. The opening remarks were given by Korea Democracy Network Member Mr. Hyung-sik SHIN followed by congratulatory remarks by renowned participants.

Mr. Hyung-sik SHIN, Director of Planning and Coordination at the Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF) and member of the Korea Democracy Network (KDN) opened the session by giving opening remarks to the participants of the ADN. On behalf of the Korea Democracy

## OPENING SESSION

Foundation, Mr. Hyung-sik SHIN thanked everybody who participated in this event. He mentioned there are approximately 80 participants from all over Asia. He feels honored to have the Asia Democracy Network launch in Seoul. He also added, in Korea so many people lost their lives for the pursuit of democracy, citing the bloody massacres of the Gwangju Uprising in 1980. He wanted to commemorate the predecessors who sacrificed their lives to achieve democracy in Korea. The Asia Democracy Network will continue to work to promote democracy and improve human rights in Korea and the rest of Asia. He wished all participants of this event an enjoyable stay in Seoul.

The next remarks were given by Ms. Bong-scuk SOHN, Chairwoman of the Center for Korean Women and Politics (CKWP) also member of the KDN. On behalf of KDN, Ms. Bong-scuk SOHN sincerely welcomed distinguished guests. She mentioned that autumn is the most beautiful time of year in Korea, and Asia today is like the Korean Autumn. She thanked those who shed their sweat and blood to harvest the fruit called democracy. She is please to observe democracy starting to blossom in Asia. Although the standards on democracy may differ between Asian countries, the passion for the pursuit of democracy is the same. She gave a brief description of ADN: ADN's goal is to promote and consolidate democracy and human rights through the improvement of international solidarity among human rights defenders in Asia. This will foster the development of a mature democracy in Asia. ADN is an international network of civil society organizations and networks as well as democracy advocates who are dedicated to strengthening democracy and human rights in Asia. ADN aims to be a watchdog for a mature democracy in Asia. KDN will continue to encourage more Koreans to get involved in ADN.

Ms. Maria LEISSNER, Secretary General of the Community of Democracies (CoD) gave the following opening remarks. Ms. Maria LEISSNER thanked the hosts and distinguished guests. She is glad to meet many strong and courageous democracy advocates in Asia. She gave a detailed description of Community of Democracies. She mentioned that CoD is the world's first and only intergovernmental platform to promote democracy. CoD initiated the Warsaw Declaration, which involves parliaments, civil society organizations, corporate sectors and many other organizations together. She urged all democracy activists get together and

*"...the Asia Democracy Network will continue to work to promote democracy and improve human rights in Korea and the rest of Asia..."*

*-Hyung-sik SHIN*

## OPENING SESSION

cooperate to promote democracy all over the world. She and her organization are putting efforts to combine principles of democracy and its practice. CoD is a truly global organization covering Ulaanbaatar to El Salvador. She believed today is an important day for democracy in Asia. She gave best wishes for the success of this event.

Mr. Teh-fu HUANG, President of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD) also gave opening remarks congratulating the launching of ADN. He indicated that he is glad to be a member of an event that promotes democracy and human rights in Asia. He said it always requires a great amount of devotion and sacrifice to promote human rights and democracy in Asia. He thanked all hosting organizations and he wished ADN success and fruitful results.

Mr. Peter BECK, Country Representative Korea of The Asia Foundation Korea (TAF) gave the following warm remarks. He indicated that on behalf of the Asia Foundation he is delighted to participate in this important event. He briefly talked about the coincidence of hosting this event at Olympic Parktel, as 1988 Seoul Olympics played a crucial role in establishing democracy in Korea. Among the dictatorial regimes precious resources have been used to build stadium instead of being used for economic development. The 1988 Seoul Olympics worked as a catalyst in the development of democracy and freedom. Mr. BECK introduced his organization, The Asia Foundation. He stated that TAF promotes governance and rule of law. Also, TAF is the only Western NGO in Korea that has been stationed in Korea since the Korean War. The Asia Foundation has been in Seoul continuously, observing the dynamic times of the Gwangju incidents and other dictatorial regime actions. Mr. BECK is please to be in one of the most vibrant democratic countries. He and his organization are putting efforts to promote economic development in Asia. They have sent 12,000 American textbooks every year to North Korea. Also, they are dedicated to give North Korean officials exposure to foreign cultures and ideas. As such, TAF tries to reinforce common values and understanding about governance and rule of law

After the congratulatory remarks, all participants in the room received a brief greeting and introduction by country. The opening session moved on to a brief presentation regarding the Asia inter-governmental process and the background of ADN.

Ms. Melinda DE JESUS, Executive Director of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility welcomed all interested organizations who participated in this event. She explained that the ADN is an initiative to further the reach of democracy in Asia. For democratic values, secure connection and intergovernmental efforts ADN opens an inclusive platform for the changing issues for democracy building in Asia. ADN provides opportunities to link up all organizations working for democracy and human rights. This network will interlink democracy activists, identify their priorities, and ensure a concrete line of communication.

Mr. Suren BADRAL, Ambassador at Large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, provided a background about the intergovernmental process of the Asia

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Democracy Network referring to the first ever informal consultative meeting of the foreign ministers of 15 Asia-Pacific countries participating in the 7<sup>th</sup> CoD Ministerial Conference that took place in April 2013 in Ulaanbaatar. The most important outcome of the AP Foreign Ministers meeting was to agree unanimously to hold such a consultative meeting every two years on the sideline of the CoD Ministerial. He indicated that Mongolia will continue to pursue to implement initiatives on democracy, including the Asian Partnership Initiative for Democracy (APID) and work effortlessly to establish and promote democracy among Asia-Pacific countries. He ensured that the Mongolian government will work together with the civil society to promote democracy in the region and appealed to the CSOs in the region, especially the ADN, to help in advocating and promoting the APID among their respective government circles.

Mr. Anselmo LEE, Executive Director of the Korea Human Rights Foundation and member of the Korea Democracy Network facilitated brief discussions on the goals and schedule of ADN. He also gave a presentation of the draft of the Seoul Democracy Declaration and the ADN Charter of Principles.

*“ADN opens an inclusive platform for the changing issues for democracy building in Asia. ADN provides opportunities to link up all organizations working for democracy and human rights. This network will interlink democracy activists, identify their priorities, and ensure a concrete line of communication”*

*– Melinda DE JESUS on ADN*

# THEMATIC SESSION

*Emerging Challenges to Participatory Democracy in Asia  
-Civil Society Response and Strategies  
(10:30 - 12:30, 21 October 2013)*

**Moderator:** Mr. Anselmo LEE, KHRF/KDN

**Presentations By:**

Human Rights Defenders

Mr. John LIU, Asia Forum for Human Rights And Development (FORUM-ASIA)

Freedom of Expression and Independence of Media

Ms. Melinda DE JESUS, Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA)

Free and Fair Elections

Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI, Asian Network For Free Elections (ANFREL)

Anti-Corruption and Anti-Transparency

Mr. Sung Soo KIM, Transparency International -Korea (TI)

Rule of Law

Mr. J.R. (Neric) Acosta, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD)

Gender and Democracy

Ms. Kumudini SAMUEL, Development Alternatives with Women for A New Era (Dawn)

Poverty, Development and Democracy

Mr. Netra Prasad TIMSINA, South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE)

Official Development Assistance and Democracy

Mr. Masaaki OHASHI, Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) / Asia Development Alliance (ADA)

The plenary session was devised to set the tone and directions of ADN by identifying key regional issues and trends facing the democracy movement in Asia as well as building shared perspectives and strategies on common challenges. Speakers of the plenary session were asked to address key thematic issues related to democracy in Asia with the following common guideline questions:

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1. What are some key emerging trends and issues which you think are challenges to democratization and democratic governance in Asia from your organizational perspectives and experiences?
2. What is your organization's assessment and response to the UN Human Rights Council's resolution on Civil Society Space and Enabling Environment (A/HRC/24/L.24)?

How can we improve international coordination and cooperation among CSOs and other like minded stakeholders engaged in democracy promotion in Asia?

## Thematic Issues:

- Human Rights Defenders
- Freedom of Expression and Independence of Media
- Free and Fair Elections
- Anti-Corruption and Transparency
- Rule of Law
- Gender and Democracy
- Poverty, Development and Democracy
- Development Cooperation and Democracy

Mr. Anselmo LEE opened the plenary session reviewing the guiding questions that were given to the presenters beforehand in preparations to the session. He introduced the panel indicating the speakers' affiliation and the thematic issue they will be discussing. Mr. LEE indicated the layout of the discussion panel. Each guiding question will be presented and each speaker will respond according to their area of expertise. The first question was then presented.

Question 1: What are some key emerging trends and issues which you think are challenges to democratization and democratic governance in Asia from your organizational perspectives and experiences?

Mr. John LIU, East Asia Program Officer at FORUM-ASIA noted that while democracy is on the rise in Asia, various new forms of control on fundamental freedoms (e.g. freedom of association, speech and criminalizing CSO) are a major source of concern. New laws and regulations on freedom of assembly and association, as well as restrictions on funding, pose major challenges to the work of human rights defenders.

Ms. Melinda DE JESUS indicated that one key challenge is that the press community in Southeast Asia (SEA) is facing attacks and threats. Largely there are overall three challenges in media.

1. Corruption (journalists are contaminated). Thus need to look for media ethics.
2. Growing inequality in Southeast Asia (SEA): The media is also biased towards the rich.
3. Cultural impunity: Killing and hate crimes towards journalists are not punished.

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On the thematic issue of free and fair elections Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI presented key challenges in that sector. Despite the convenience the integration of new technology in election processes has presented complexity. Powerful parties or governments can dominate the press to win elections in favor of their party. This issue is connected with the other issues such as freedom of association and speech. Another key challenge would be the lack of government support for free and fair elections. Governments don't necessarily ban NGOs or inspections working on free and fair elections, but they don't welcome or invite those initiatives. Mr. SUPRIADI advised that his general impression was that it appeared to be the case for Thailand and India. In the aspect of political party professionalism there is a growing concern that politicians many of the times comes from the same family. Lastly, at a time of fraud there is a lack of punishment for those actions placing no accountability.

Mr. Sung Soo KIM from Transparency International – Korea (TI) presented on anti-corruption and transparency. He indicated that formal mechanisms are becoming better. However, in terms of content, there are problems with checks and balances and watchdogs. In current society, money talks too much. Corruption is everywhere. When it comes to the spectrum of corruption in various countries Singapore ranks as the least corrupt while North Korea is the most corrupt country in Asia.

In presenting on the Rule of Law, Secretary General of Council of Asian Liberals and Democrat, Mr. J.R. (Neric) ACOSTA emphasized the impunity of the misdeeds. He indicated that there are varying degrees of party democratization. The increasing role of money and the use of money even in the formation of religion have presented obstacles. It has become more than capturing state power it has also become about the capturing of judiciary power. There is also a concern with the increase of multi-layering and complexity of media. It was found that SEA has the highest penetration of internet and social media. With the spread of Facebook a transformation started, with social media becoming a significant challenge for political parties that challenge being the party involvement of young democratic activists.

*“New laws and regulations on Freedom of Assembly and association, as well as restrictions on funding, pose major challenges to the work of human rights defenders.”*

*– John LIU*

## THEMATIC SESSION

Ms. Kumudini SAMUEL, Executive Committee Member of the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), presented on the challenges in regards to gender and democracy. She indicated that currently the multiple global crises, the war on terror and the global financial crisis added to the ongoing crises of climate, food and energy, all of which have a significant impact on women. Looking closely at the situation, the state of exception and authoritarianism (rule of law and other forms) continue to be used to curb democracy. These can be verified in Sri Lanka.



*“Inequality masked by the outward signs of democratic government is deeply rooted in inequitable social practices and institutions, such as unequal gender roles that discriminate and perpetuate violence against women.”*

– Kumudini SAMUEL



With the normalization of the national security state and arrested democratization in many Asian states, these trends have become a serious concern and have led to critical consequences for the enjoyment of women’s rights. The rise in authoritarianism also marks States in conflict. Conflict and the rise in militarization clash with juridical situations and can suspend rule of law with the introduction of emergency powers and repressive legislation. A state of exception is thus created and the citizens are reduced to ‘bare life,’ being stripped of their ordinary rights.

Militarization is linked to systemized violence and together with armed conflict and civil war, plays a major role in changing women’s lives. In many parts of the global south full social citizenship continues to be denied to women. Religion and personal laws, customs and practices

continue to enable discrimination against women.

Inequality masked by the outward signs of democratic government is deeply rooted in inequitable social practices and institutions, such as unequal gender roles that discriminate and perpetuate violence against women. Patriarchal structures of family, community, state, and religion deny women rights to the autonomy of their bodies and sexualities. Women who are thus poor, powerless, marginalized and in conflict affected communities are those in the most vulnerable situations.

Reporting on the issues of poverty, development, and democracy, Mr. Netra Prasad TIMSINA, South Asia Regional Coordinator of the South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE), gave the perspective of South Asia (SA). He indicated that 1/4 of the world population currently lives in SA. According to the United Nations (UN) 40% of the world poor also lives in SA. Looking further into the challenge, there is an ever growing concentration of wealth and the widening gap between the rich and poor. In terms of technological innovation it did not impact the poor. However, we were able to identify problems of militarization and conflict as well as religious fundamentalism in countries like Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh.

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With the growth of multinational companies, we have encountered challenges in their promotion of neo-liberalism which in many cases marginalize women and the poor. In which it all relates to the increase in income inequality.

Mr. Masaaki OHASHI, Executive Director of Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) presented on the Official Development Assistance (ODA) and democracy. He indicated that ODA is increasing, but in terms of Gross National Income there hasn't been much rise. We have also witnessed an increase in bilateral tools of diplomacy and economics but a decrease in multilateral tools working on human rights and democracy under the control of the UN. Although the international society is emphasizing ODA, this part is significantly neglected.

After the panelists' presentations the floor was open for questions and comments. Mr. Saroeun SOEUNG commented on the interpretation of different principle in democracy, ex. Rule of the law. It is used as a tool by government in preventing protests/reactions to government policies and practices. People need to understand better about the role of education. Education system becomes more problematic as its design seems not based on democracy and good governance principles.

Then Mr. Samson SALAMAT advised that now elective democracy is relatively established in some countries. An observed challenge is that translating democracy along with the principle of democracy. Although a country is accepting democracy in terms of elections, it does not accept the principles of democracy. In Pakistan, democracy is only about elections- however, talking about non-discrimination, there is fewer consensuses.

Also, additional comments were made in regards to the different Asian values that should be considered and be cognizant that the Western value of democracy is not suitable for Asian countries. Local democracy was emphasized to be important, and that currently in some countries elections are not taking place. The discussion of the panel then progressed to the second question of the guidelines.

Question 2: What is your organization's assessment and response to the un human rights council's resolution on civil society space and enabling environment (A/HRC/24/L.24)?

Mr. TIMSINA, in his response to the assessment and response to the UN Human Rights Council's Resolution on Civil Society Space and Enabling Environment resolution stated that it deals with broad issues. He questioned how governments will in actuality put the resolution into practice, noting that civil society needs to pick up and advocate.

Ms. SAMUEL stated that there is a need to think about the resolution on the national level, as well as understanding the national context. Civil society plays a key role and acknowledges that space is also important. We need to work to prevent the shrinking of civil society's space.

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In response to the resolution, Mr. ACOSTA stated that there is a need to see how civil society's space can be used for party building. He concluded that the resolution should realize that democracy is imperfect, calling for the need to engage with reality.

Mr. KIM stated that in the discussion of 'rule of law' we should be very careful since, referring to history, Adolf Hitler also used the term 'rule of law' when committing such horrendous atrocities. He concluded that there is a need for a distinction between the East and West in this approach.

Mr. SUPRIADI responded that the resolution reflects the recognition of the role of CSOs, giving space for election and democracy.

In terms of the resolution, Ms. DE JESUS stated that SEAPA is included in the caucus for the resolution. However, the key question now is, so what? It means, that everything has to begin with words. We need to use those words as the throwing stone to fight for civil society's real freedom and different rights. The utilization of this resolution to save the lives of journalists is important.

Mr. LIU pointed out that the resolution does not ascribe any new rights. Then, why is it important? He indicated that it is due to the wave of new forms of regulations. The resolution reaffirms and re-emphasizes previously recognized rights. There were objections towards the resolution by some States, purportedly questioning what civil society means. Such positioning of States against civil society space, coupled by the increasing restrictions, makes the resolution a very important and timely one, as it reaffirms of the legitimate work of civil society, including democracy activists.

Mr. OHASHI stated that in response to the resolution, overall there is a need to have freedom of association. Even when we look at the visa problems that many participants are encountering in regards to moving between countries they are unable to move freely. Also, countries are not happy about the money flow that supports solidarity of civil society.

After the completion of Mr. OHASHI's response the floor was opened and the moderator commented on the resolutions. Mr. LEE wanted to remind participants that there are two

*"...that the problem in the case of many countries is that there is a misconception that election is proof of democracy. However, the reality is that just because elections take place it does not necessarily mean that democracy is taking place."*

*– Muhammad IBRAHIM*

*"...education is closely linked to democracy. Many times citizens are very ignorant about democracy. Therefore, there should be more effort on the part of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) to work on educating citizens."*

*– Jawed KHAN*

## THEMATIC SESSION

resolutions (Civil Society Space - A/HRC/24/L.24 and Equal Political Participation - A/HRC/24/L.18/Rev.1) that they are reviewing. Interestingly, when looking closely the resolution on civil society space, Japan was the only Asian country that signed on to the resolution with a majority of Western countries. In comparison, when looking at the more or less similar Equal Political Participation Resolution, many of the South Asian countries signed the resolution. We can conclude, when looking at the two resolutions, the resolution on civil society space is a more Western understanding of democracy and the later an Asian government understanding of democracy. It is therefore crucial that we study the language of the resolutions to engage with Asian governments.

After the respective comments made by the panel the floor was then open for comments regarding the issue. Mr. Muhammad IBRAHIM, emphasized that the problem in the case of many countries is that there are a misconception that election is proof of democracy. However, the reality is that just because elections take place it does not necessarily mean that democracy is taking place.

Mr. Jawed KHAN stated that education is closely linked to democracy. Many times citizens are very ignorant about democracy. Therefore, there should be more effort on the part of Civil Society Organizations (CSO) to work on educating citizens.

Mr. Jose (Chito) GASCON vocalized the need to think about the meaning of democracy. Think globally and act locally. There is a need to deepen the space of CSOs in society to make sure they become a real force for change. For example when looking at the freedom of information, it is guaranteed by the law but not really in practice. Therefore, there is a need to deepen it. Active involvement of civil society in promoting governance is also needed. It is difficult to draw a clear line between protest, politics and policy. We need to deal with politics now.

Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL advised that governments accept any resolution because they need recognition and money. CSOs are happy that our voice is reflected in such a resolution- however, the real challenge is how to implement this voice.

Mr. SOEUNG stated that individual countries don't seem to listen to the institutions (e.g. special rapporteur). The UN needs to be strong with institutional capacity.

Ms. Abdi (Yenni) SURYANINGATI raised a concern in regards of putting in place proper mechanisms to giving adequate voice to the minorities (marginalized people) in a democracy that commonly using the rule of the majority. How can we build a democracy that gives sufficient space for the minority to get equal rights to participate, be respected and acknowledged?

Ms. Laura THORNTON advised that in retrospect that resolutions can be a tool, but it can also hurt the causes of CSOs.

Mr. Rayyan HASSAN stated that market oriented development can reduce the power of government. Does CSOs need to look back to the relationship with the government?

# THEMATIC SESSION

The session then carried on to address the third question in the guiding questions.

Question 3: How can we improve international coordination and cooperation among CSOs and other like-minded stakeholders engaged in democracy promotion in Asia?

Ms. DE JESUS, in response to the third presented question she indicated that if all ideas are to be included there is a need to engage the press. The organization needs to be open so that it will link with the media for greater understanding.

Mr. SUPRIADI responded by stating that there is a need to coordinate within CSOs before approaching the government. It would provide a chance to work horizontally to correct the situation. He emphasized that there is a growing tendency for intergovernmental connections.

Mr. OHASHI stated that there is a need to think about military expenses. Military plays a key role also in the environmental issue. When reviewing the current military expenses it can be found that they are not reducing and there is a call to reverse this trend.

Mr. TIMSINA stated that CSOs in SA are with diversity in terms of level of democracy. He proposed that ADN utilize that diversity and share it in order to create good practices for all when working towards democracy. We should speak about the situation and need to extend solidarity and mutual learning.

Ms. SAMUEL responded by stating that there are many networks on gender and women. However, there is a need to bring those networks to forums like the Asia Democracy Network. In the discussion and understanding of democracy caution must be taken so that it does not go to cultural relativism. Stakeholders must respect universal and inalienable principles of democracy. She also emphasized the importance of gender mainstreaming in democracy.

In answering the question on improving cooperation and collaboration among CSOs and stakeholders, Mr. ACOSTA responded by advising that there is currently efforts to expand networks from Asia and beyond. He wanted to add that he agrees with Mr. GASCON that there needs to be a focus on protesting policy while maintaining the independence of CSOs. He emphasized that in order to make the movement more effective political parties must be included.

Mr. KIM emphasized that democracy also means the protection of minorities. There is a strong need to address the visa issue that restricted those minorities in attending the networks like the ADN.

Mr. LIU noted that there is a need to reinforce the link between human rights and development. In addition, he stressed the importance of protecting the freedom of expression as a prerequisite right.

## THEMATIC SESSION

After complete comments by the panel, the floor was then open for comments and questions. Mr. Mohammad WASEEM indicated that some governments use rights to avoid other rights. Cultural sensitivity should be dealt with care. Stakeholders need to think about how to involve political parties. Mr. Augusto MICLAT then stated that the media is not only a tool, but it is a target of stakeholders' work. Links between different networks should be both horizontal and vertical. Mr. HASSAN stated that the issue of human rights should be dealt with in terms of sustainability. Mr. Peter BECK posed the question, whether in mentioning corruption perception index, is the constant series of scandals in corruption good or bad? Mr. IBRAHIM stated that the visibility and engagement with local society is important.

Upon the comments and questions from the floor, the plenary thematic session came to adjourn with results of a fruitful discussion in furthering democracy across Asia.

# COUNTRY SESSIONS

## *Defending Civil Society Space and Promoting Safe and Enabling Environment in Asia*

*(14:00 - 16:00, 21 October 2013)*

**Country Session A:** Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia

**Country Session B:** Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines

**Country Session C:** Nepal, Sri Lanka, India

**Country Session D:** China, Mongolia, Vietnam

The country session was organized to set an action agenda and develop strategies through sharing and identifying key issues and challenges facing the democracy movement in each country that require international support and solidarity. Participants chose relevant sessions depending on their priority needs and interests to learn. For each country session, a representative of a CSO from each country made a presentation according to the set guidelines.

The guideline questions are as follows:

1. What are some pressing challenges faced by civil society organizations engaged in democracy promotion in your respective country?
2. What kind of policies and actions are required from government to address those challenges?
3. What is the assessment and action plan regarding the UN Human Rights Council's resolution on Civil Society Space: creating and maintaining, in law and in practice, a safe and enabling environment (A/HRC/24/L.24) adopted on 27 September 2013?
4. How can the international community, in particular, international democracy networks and CSOs support your work more effectively?

# COUNTRY SESSION [A]

## *Country Session A: Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia*

### **Moderator :**

Mr. Hilman HANDONI, International NGO Forum on Indonesia Development (INFID)

Bangladesh Mr. Muhammad IBRAHIM, Federation of NGOs (FNB)

Pakistan Mr. Samson SALAMAT, Centre for Human Rights Education (CHRE)

Indonesia Ms. Abdi (Yenni) SURYANINGATI, YAPPIKA – Indonesian Civil Society Alliance for Democracy

Malaysia Mr. Arumugam KALIMUTHU, Suaram Malaysia

### **Presentation 1: Bangladesh, Mr. Muhammad IBRAHIM**

The first speaker, Mr. Muhammad IBRAHIM, started his presentation by introducing the general political situation in Bangladesh, which he described as colored by confrontational politics between two political parties in light of the upcoming elections. He also commented on the lack of democratic practices in the country despite a façade of democracy such as regularly held elections, a parliament, and others. As an example of this trend, Mr. IBRAHIM cited a persistent effort to disempower and limit the autonomy of local governing bodies and the government's intolerance of free press and civil society. Furthermore, democratic institutions have been weakened. Mr. IBRAHIM explained that public services and the anti-corruption commission, human rights commission, legislature and election commission are powerless to exercise their intended duties. The situation is much the same for the judicial system where a lack of an independent judiciary has caused many citizens to lose faith in the judiciary process.

Despite government hostility Bangladesh continues to have a strong and vibrant civil society with an active NGO sector, but according to Mr. IBRAHIM NGOs face a number of challenges in their work including hostile policies and a lack of respect for the law. The government has enacted several hostile policies such as reviewing existing civil society laws to make some laws more draconian and carried out political campaigns against NGOs. Because of a lack of respect for laws it is more difficult to get justice and for NGOs to carry out their functions. In addition, the government has the power to select which NGOs get funding, but the government also often refuses to recognize NGOs' negotiating powers.

In light of the current situation, Ms. ISMAIL offered several suggestions to consider going forward. She stressed the importance of building common perspectives and strategies in order to engage the government and negotiate. She felt that NGOs should self-regulate and rely upon strong local and international networking in order to build a united front. She said that NGOs should place a high priority for human rights and strengthening human rights institutions. In order to achieve this she suggested that NGOs focus on helping local governing bodies in becoming more effective, to engage in election monitoring, and to insist on democratic practices at all levels of government. She also reiterated the importance of international bodies and organizations in bringing about change in domestic policies. He mentioned several instances

where pressure from the international community has made governments change policies or cave to the demands of civil society, and that such pressure is instrumental in assisting NGOs in carrying out their mission.

## **Presentation 2: Pakistan, Mr. Samson SALAMAT**

Mr. SALAMAT first introduced the status of the human rights situation in Pakistan. He described Pakistan as a semi-theocratic, semi-democratic security state controlled by the military establishment. Despite having an elected government, politics are still heavily influenced by the military establishment.

There are several challenges in terms of establishing a strong democracy in Pakistan. First, democracy is not accepted fully as a system of governance within Pakistan. Democracy is often seen and treated as a Western and anti-religious idea, especially by religious fundamentalists within the country, who have been fueling an ongoing, organized effort to defame democracy as a valid system of governance. Second, democracy has been boiled down to

*“...NGOs should self-regulate and rely upon strong local and international networking in order to build a united front.”*

*– Saba ISMAIL*

the idea of holding elections, which means that other aspects of democracy not acknowledged. Third, there are many threats to establishing and maintaining a vibrant civil society stemming from religious extremist forces. Fourth, there needs to be a stronger focus on women and minority rights issues.

The challenges he described are twofold: External and internal. First, the state ideology, the state body and non-state actors such as religious extremists influences the state structure. As a result the state has become very theocratic. In addition, Pakistan remains a security state rather than democratic or a welfare state. As a result there are direct

threats for people participating in civil society in the country. Internal threats include heavy anti-democratic propaganda which has led to a dangerous situation for human rights and democracy activists. There are no policies in place to support activists and the NGO community also lacks a support network. Additionally, local financial resources are unreliable so NGOs must seek external funding. As a result, there has been less funding for movement building with heavy support for project based efforts. These factors raise questions about the validity and sustainability of civil society within the country.

Mr. SALAMAT also offered several suggestions for how to improve the democracy and human rights situation in Pakistan. First, he suggested pushing for government policies that emphasize a commitment to the protection of human rights defenders and activist. He also stressed the need for the government to shift from a security based, semi-theocratic state to a more democratic one that respects and honors international human rights mechanism and treaties, and one that engages in dialog with civil and human rights defenders. Second, the

## COUNTRY SESSION [A]

international community can also play an important role in promoting democracy and human rights in Pakistan. International advocacy campaigns can bring focus to human rights issues in Pakistan. International activists can also help develop support mechanism for activists under threat and can help civil society in Pakistan develop long term programs to address the prevalent anti-democratic and human rights propaganda circulating in Pakistan.

### **Presentation 3: Indonesia, Ms. Abdi (Yenni) SURYANINGATI**

Ms. Yenni SURYANINGATI, gave an overview of the current democracy and human rights situation in Indonesia. She reported that Indonesia is currently considered the leader in South East Asia in adhering to democratic principles. In recent years the press has become relatively free with high public access to information. Indonesia has also had relatively free elections, but some problems still remain with money playing a huge influence in political outcomes. The government has enacted many policies to facilitate the NGO and government interaction. It has recently adopted many new laws to finance, and aid the civil society. They are also being incorporated in the legislative process, including a law allowing civil society to monitor social service organizations. However, several problems still remain.

Indonesia continues to struggle with certain issues, which continue to affect the functioning of civil society. Indonesia still faces high levels of corruption, which make existing laws and policies difficult to implement and enforce. There is a lack of fiscal framework to maintain the civil society sector, which has led to a mostly project based approach to civil society building. Despite the passage of many NGO friendly laws, the legislature recently passed a law that attempts to control the civil society sector, enabling the government to control public activities which are considered to cause a threat to the country.

In addition, Indonesia continues to see violence in Papua, which has led to punishment for many independence activists in that region and has led to the government isolating Papua from international journalists. Ms. SURYANINGATI suggested several solutions for keeping Indonesia on its positive trajectory. She emphasized the importance of appropriate law enforcement, public education, budget allocation for civil society projects, revoking the restrictive civil society organization laws that was recently passed, to support sustainability of civil society organization through tax exemptions and funding, and to reduce restrictions on Papua. In closing, she mentioned that progress in democratization and human rights in Indonesia has occurred as long as it does not affect economic investment, but that Indonesia should continue to move forward.

### **Presentation 4: Malaysia, Mr. Arumugam KALIMUTHU**

During his presentation, Mr. Arumugam KALIMUTHU explained that the primary challenges to the progress of democratization and human rights in Malaysia have been that the government sees human rights NGOs as troublemakers, and that the government compromised human rights in order to pursue its development agenda. He also cited the issue of manipulating ethnic distribution for political control as a persistent human rights issue in Malaysia. Positive discriminative policies that favor the majority ethnic group, such as benefits under law, have allowed Malay politicians of United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), the ruling partner of the majority ethnic group to create divide and rule policies between ethnic groups as way of

## COUNTRY SESSION [A]

maintaining power. In addition, elections have not been reflective of actual voting because of the gerrymandering of constituencies and misappropriation practices of the ruling parties. Civil society groups continue to face challenges and have been suppressed. Furthermore, social issues such as corruption, religious freedom, contract labor affecting living wages, a recent increase in the crime rate, and other socioeconomic factors have been used as justification for more restrictive policies and legislation. Mr. KALIMUTHU urged increasing participation in civil society in order to increase peoples' ability to affect the law.

During the discussion section, audience members commented on the speakers' presentations. The first question was regarding Pakistan, emphasizing that despite the negative stance, a lot of progress has happened in Pakistan and the speaker gave examples of improvements in society. The following comment addressed the presentation on Bangladesh. The commentator mentioned that Bangladesh has a formal electoral democracy, but the speaker questions why civil society failed to make the state more democratic and asked how human rights violations should be addressed. He also asked how human rights violations committed by the Indian security forces along the border should be addressed. Mr. IBRAHIM answered by saying that civil society failed in some ways, but the core block of civil society tries to maintain international norms and have support from the media. He also said that regional organizations should address border killing issues.

The fourth comment was again about Pakistan. The questioner mentioned that an important issue for Pakistan is gender discrimination and women are underrepresented in democratic process and the primary challenge for gender equality comes from religious and extremist groups.

The fifth question was from a Bangladeshi participant. He asked Mr. SALAMAT how do to deal with threats toward human rights activists. Mr. SALAMAT replied by saying that civil society has become bigger and somewhat supported by the media and the international community. He mentioned that trade and labor organizations have also joined as activists. He said that activists are committed and no one is giving up despite extremists. An audience participant also supplied that strategies are evolving to take on extremism and that activists are creating networks and not working alone and that people are connecting through the use of social media.

The sixth question came from a representative from Mr. Atley CHOCK the Solidarity Center in Washington DC. He asked Ms. SURYANINGATI what steps are being taken to insure free and fair elections in Indonesia, will Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) be using the bill restricting organizations to push candidates, and what's the analysis on the reemergence of a candidate that was a former General under Suharto? Ms. SURYANINGATI answered by saying that Indonesian CSOs are trying to address the bill restricting NGOs in constitutional court. She also mentioned that people are disenchanted with democracy so more education is needed to advance understanding. An audience participant from the IPP commission for independent election monitoring mentioned election monitoring now has a space in Indonesia, but that it still need progress. However participation is decreasing in elections due to lack of information, democracy being seen as "un-Islamic," and that people think that democracy does not directly affect their welfare.

## COUNTRY SESSION [A]

Mr. KALIMUTHU supplied a closing comment by saying that for free and fair election in Malaysia a revamp of the electoral role and a complete overhaul of the delineation of constituencies to reflect fair distribution and representation are prerequisites. This is only possible if there is political will in the ruling government to do so. Alternatively we need a massive voter education so that people transcend beyond ethnic divide to see that a regime change can be a good thing to give life to democracy.

# COUNTRY SESSION [B]

## *Country Session B: Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines*

### **Moderator :**

Ms. Patricia SARENAS, Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO)

Cambodia Mr. Saroeun SOEUNG, Cooperation Committee For Cambodia (CCC)

Myanmar (Burma) Mr. Min Ko NAING, 88 Generation (Peace and Open Society)

Mr. Soe AUNG, Burma Partnership

Philippines Ms. Rebecca (Beckie) MALAY,

Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM)

### **Presentation 1: Cambodia, Mr. Saroeun SOEUNG**

Mr. SOEUNG opened country session B with a presentation on the status of Cambodia. In his presentation he indicated, based on national and international research studies reports, and media coverage, that some of the pressing challenges that Cambodia currently faces are increased land and resource concessions for economic growth, increase in civil rights violations, media censorship, corruption and distrust in civil society.

Currently, in Cambodia many laws are being put into place for economic land concessions. Farm laborers are being evicted from their homes and protected areas are being cut for economic land concessions. In the aspect of civil rights violations, human rights defenders are not being protected; rather they are being jailed and prosecuted. Along with the difficulties of activism, media is being heavily censored and controlled.

For CSOs and activists to address corruption in Cambodia, there have been efforts to mobilize and unite in devising recommendations and input to the government. However, the challenge that CSOs face is that the government neglects to comply with these suggestions. CSOs also face challenges of distrust in society. Some CSOs are sanctioned and many organizations are warned by the government to not further be involved in matters. CSOs have been increasingly labeled as “incitement” and associated with the political opposition, raising the public’s distrust.

To further address the challenges faced by CSOs, Mr. SOEUNG specified that currently CSOs are under increased control during public meetings and the political climate of fear and intimidation is imposed. Cambodia has yet to resolve the remains of the election crisis, causing challenges for CSOs. One of the lifelines of CSOs is funding. CSOs have come across negative impacts due to the global financial crisis; it has started to strain funding for organizations. With the a majority of CSOs in Cambodia being funded by outside sources they are now slowly coming across many international funders pulling out.

Despite the challenges that Cambodia may currently face there is a silver lining to the situation. Many CSOs may face obstacles in their operations however there are given much opportunities to participate in NGO participation papers, to largely advocate their cause. Also, CSO input is heard and considered in the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP). More

## COUNTRY SESSION [B]

importantly, the foundation of change is solid in Cambodia as the next generation of change makers is prevalent. Currently, approximately 2/3 of the population is youth, which provides more opportunities to cultivate leaders and change makers. Also, what is promising is that many of the at-risk populations have been exposed to years of rights-based training and assistance.

A request that CSOs at large have for the Cambodian Government, according to Mr. SOEUNG, is that they foster an environment to exercise their rights as development actors. Importantly, the government is encouraged to practice good governance, land and natural resource management, promote social human development and provide an enabling environment.

Lastly, Mr. SOEUNG concluded his presentation by presenting a call for international support. He indicated that from the international community Cambodia would like to see it support efforts in encouraging CSOs as an effective partner with the government. Also, with economic development and trade being common among the international community there is a need for the human rights situation of Cambodia to be taken into consideration when assessing international trade agreements, aid and positions in international bodies.

Importantly, Cambodia hopes to seek international support in the persuasion of both political parties, Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and the Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP), to reach a political solution on reforms such as election reform, access to information law, institutional reform on juridical systems and functions, fight corruption and maintain checks and balance of powers.

After the presentation on Cambodia, the floor was open for comments. Mr. Koul PANHA from COMFREL commented on the following:

- Election conflicts, a lot of controversy in election administration.
- Election complaints are not taken seriously or thoroughly resolved, which a currently ongoing conflict. Joint investigation by support of UN, vote list problem, disenfranchise of voters, identity document. Authority controlled by ruling party. CSO vote conflict. International support on Cambodia situation. Political solution to compromise. Strengthening network.

*"...government is encouraged to practice good governance, land and natural resource management, promote social human development and provide an enabling environment."*

*– Saroeun SOEUNG*

## COUNTRY SESSION [B]

### **Presentation 2: Myanmar (Burma), Mr. Min Ko NAING**

Mr. Min Ko NAING from 88 Generation (Peace and Society) presented on the status of Myanmar (Burma). He started his presentation advising that currently the challenges that Myanmar (Burma) is facing are as follows. First, there is still much inter-ethnic violence making it difficult for solidarity and mobilization for the betterment of the country. The explosions from the inter-ethnic violence is causing much stress and trauma on the people of Myanmar (Burma), placing the people in constant fear.

*“... to build a democratic country there must be full participation... elections are not free and fair currently and many are unable to express their will... lack of strong CSOs the people were not able to do anything... a solid local CSO is important...”*

*-Min Ko NAING*

Mr. NAING continued by highlighting the ideological struggles that Myanmar (Burma) faces. For example, there is support for federalism; however, the understanding or translation of federalism in Myanmar (Burma) is different. According to the government, federalism is decentralized when at the same time in the mind of ethnic nationalist they want self-determination and the ability to decide on their own. To traffic control these disparities there is a need to write a new constitution or at the least amend it. However, the executive branch in Myanmar (Burma) is not clear on who is going to do what. Also, in the case of human rights violations the judicial branch still follows the executive providing no independency and accountability in maintaining the integrity of human rights for people.

Many aspects of Myanmar (Burma) are still institutionalized. As the country was under a dictatorship for over 70 years there are still a lot of difficult obstacles to overcome.

Mr. NAING then went on to discuss the status of civil society groups in Myanmar (Burma). He indicated that there have been efforts to strengthen civil society and it is reality that there is still much to do. Traditionally, NGOs carry out services for advocacy. However, no matter what the government says or does in regards to reform the truth is that corruption and cooperation of basic levels and mechanisms are still very poor.

He further indicated that civil society in Myanmar (Burma) is still looking towards international NGOs and expecting them to interfere. However, the government still views them as institutions that will come into the country to cause trouble through their activities. There is a need for a change in mindset in various areas and levels. Restrictions and regulations should be alleviated, in order for CSOs to work freely with IGOs and allow them to operate on their own.

The presentation given by Mr. NAING was concluded with an overview of what is needed in Myanmar (Burma) to bring democracy. He pointed out that many of the times, people are propagandized. In order to build a democratic country there must be full participation. Elections are not free and fair currently and many are unable to express their will. For example, in 1990 the elections held were not recognized. With the lack of strong CSOs the people were not able to do anything. In democracy a strong political party may be important, but more-so having a solid local CSO is important as well. International efforts like the UN do not attract the interest of the people of Myanmar (Burma). UN resolutions do not have any effects, rather the people are more interested in who has the power to make decisions and make change.

There is a dire need to establish networks. There needs to be mobilization and organization to develop strong CSOs. More importantly, in order to achieve all this people need empathy. People need to be able to understand diverse ethnicities and religions and be able to understand from their point of view.

### **Presentation 3: Myanmar (Burma), Mr. Soe AUNG**

Mr. Soe AUNG supplemented the previous presentation on Burma by giving an overview of its challenges and what is needed to bring democracy into the country. He first listed the various challenges that Burma is faced with. First, oppressive laws that are rampant across the country make activism difficult, for example the unlawful association, and electronic act to name a few. To go into more depth about the obstacles that these acts impose we can look to Mr. Min Ko NAING's experience. Mr. NAING was imprisoned for seven years for sending an email. These laws are solely in place to oppress activists. New laws that are currently being adopted and/or proposed by parliament are also not friendly for activists, such as the draft association law and media law. The peaceful assembly law is being utilized to arrest and imprison activists. The law allows anyone to be arrested when protesting without a permit. Currently there are 123 activists charged by this law.

A second challenge, CSO's in Burma are required to register in the state system unless they fall under an exception. All registered organizations are eligible for benefits, legal assistance, funding, etc. No organization can function viably unless the organization is registered. When looking further into this, compulsory registration serves the same purpose as government control over CSOs.

The presentation continued on to what is needed to improve conditions in Burma. In order to improve democracy in Burma the draft association law and registration requirements must be voluntary. Space and the right to freely associate must be in line with international standards. Furthermore, legislations should be drafted fully and transparently in consultation with CSO.

## COUNTRY SESSION [B]

A characteristic to keep in mind is that people started losing faith of the UN. Despite having several resolutions adopted at both UNHRC and UNGA the HRs situation hasn't improved. Many times it is asked, what can they do to bring about change?

Currently, there is a threat facing Burma in regards to UNGA and UNHRC resolutions on Burma. There is a movement that trying to remove Burma from that mechanism. They also want

*"...there is a call for the international community to listen to the people, the actual voice of the country, not the government. It must pressure the government to develop people centered reforms and have Burma's best interest at heart."*

*- Soe AUNG*

to remove the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Situation in Burma (Myanmar) and argued that the situation in Burma has been improved a great deal and he is not necessary to serve in this role anymore.

Mr. AUNG finished his presentation by concluding that there is a call for the international community to listen to the people, the actual voice of the country, not the government. It must pressure the government to develop people centered reforms and have Burma's best interest at heart.

### **Presentation 4: Philippines, Ms. Rebecca (Beckie) MALAY**

Ms. Rebecca MALAY gave a presentation on the status of the Philippines. She started the presentation by giving a status update on civil society. Currently, the activities of Non-governmental Organizations, Non-profit organizations and Civil Society Organizations are vibrant in the Philippines. There are approximately 20,000 to 50,000 sector specific organizations.

The pressing challenges that the Philippines are being faced with is, first, the CSOs' legitimacy, transparency and accountability. There is a general negative public perception of NGO/NPO/CSO as, usually, they are used as conduits for pork barrel funds that have been diverted by corrupt government officials. This brings to question the issue of state regulations on internal responsible governance and audit standards. An example of this would be the current scandal that has become a hot topic, which is the 500 million dollars that have been funneled into fake NGOs. Corruption becoming an acceptable norm will weaken democratic institutions. A second challenge is the decrease in resources. Funding sources are on a decrease and factors like climate change also needs to be considered. Climate change has an effect on crops in the country. The deterioration of crops has an impact on the livelihood of the country.

What is needed from the government to improve democracy in the Philippines is as follows. First, there is a call for the passing of the freedom information act. To address the issues of corruption and increase transparency in the country it is dire that the act is passed. Furthering on transparency, the government's budget process must be extended to include the

## COUNTRY SESSION [B]

participation of the people. Eliminating all forms of pork and investigating fraudulent funds will strengthen democracy. Second, Philippines need to devise a development plan to address its economic, social and spacial inequalities, as well as make sustainable development the overarching goal beyond 2013 utilizing the main principles of the human rights based approach.

Ms. Rebecca MALAY concluded her presentation stating that there is a call for international support for an exchange of good practices on support and solidarity on the Freedom of Information act. Regionally there is needed support for human rights based approach on development. Lastly, there is a need for support upholding media freedom and fair trade practices.

After the presentations the floor was then open to participants for questions and comments. Comments and questions from the floor was opened by Ms. KhinThan MYINT relaying a comment that the situation with Myanmar (Burma) stating that CSOs that try to be better, oppose the first draft of the constitution. Advocate parliamentary session went through two revisions within one month, but it is awaiting parliament. Networks are not good in practice and CSOs need to implement a strong network. Ms. Melinda DE JESUS was in support for Ms. MYINT stating that lawmaking, when left to lawmakers, will not get what will work for the people. Philippines are still going through the process of constitution making. People will still be elected.

Ms. Laura THORNTON contributed by stating that in terms of a registration law, Cambodia had an identical problem. However, in the case of Cambodia CSO were heavily involved in making revisions. Civil society came together and killed the law. They were very well coordinated, lobbying, advocating and successfully saw that the law was killed. In reality there is a lack of understanding of what NGO/CSO is/are. For example, in Cambodia there is a myopic view on NGOs. The general understanding is that the role of an NGO is to give education and health. NGO cannot be political. However, NGOs should have the liberty to be political and associated with a political party if they want to. There is no concept of consultation with NGOs, but they are expected to carry out the sectors that the government cannot reach, like healthcare. NGOs are usually left to pick up the bill with no consultation. As a network we need to establish a more concrete definition and role for NGOs. This applies not only to Cambodia but many civil society organizations in Asia, this would be the CSOs lack of comfort in data and research. There is a need to build CSO capacity to handle data and research. Countries like Cambodia have too often many stories and antedates but no concrete data and research to back up their claims. Therefore, there is a need for international capacity building in data and research.

Ms. Huai-Hui HSIEH further added that Taiwan is also politically divided. NGOs have to be far away from political parties as it will be labeled a certain way. Ms. MYINT advised that NGOs should be bipartisan; however, it is good to be biased to develop a better political party. Capacity building projects are needed.

Mr. John LIU raised the question of government-linked NGOs as a threat that cannot be understated. Even in some countries where associational space may be relatively open, governments constantly seek to claim civil society space through government-linked NGOs.

## COUNTRY SESSION [B]

There is a need for attention on not only legal restrictions, but also on the spaces taken away by the government by such means, which must be reclaimed by independent CSOs.

Mr. Carl GERSHMAN noted the concern that when Burma has the chairmanship of ASEAN in 2014, the “people’s forum” that will be held there on that occasion forum may be controlled by GONGOs, which is the term commonly used for government-linked NGOs. He emphasized that the evolving situation in Burma calls for a genuine people’s forum, involving NGOs that truly represent civil society. He said that the ADN can work with friends in Burma to help organize a genuine people’s forum to demonstrate that international civil society supports grass roots and representative civil-society organizations in Burma that can monitor the government and hold it accountable to the people. This is one important way that the international community and the ADN can show solidarity with those in Burma who want to build a democratic society.

Mr. Min Ko NAING responded by indicating that much of the time dictators like civil society organizations to be for show and do not allow their development. What Mr. NAING had in mind as a civil society conference is not related to an ASEAN people forum. Rather, he was thinking about a people’s forum within the country to address the need to develop strong links between CSOs in Burma. Rather than an international forum, Burma needs a domestic conference first. However, an obstacle would be that the lack of strong financial support from other sectors. Many may suggest receiving assistance from an international organization.

Ms. MYINT added that if assistance is received from international organizations than they will be labeled as “dollar eaters” and be negatively portrayed as being influenced from outside sources. Foreign agents if you will. They will be accused that they will be put into the pockets for foreign organizations. Mr. Min Ko NAING continued to relay that they are determined to have a conference. They will seek to receive help from the people. Once a domestic conference is achieved then they will proceed to an international conference on Burma. At that point, they would then need help from various networks and IGOs.

*“ADN can work with friends in Burma to help organize a genuine people’s forum to demonstrate that international civil society supports grass roots and representative civil-society organizations in Burma that can monitor the government and hold it accountable to the people...[it’s an] important way that the international community and ADN can show solidarity with those in Burma who want to build a democratic society.”*

*-Carl Gershman*

## COUNTRY SESSION [B]

*“...there is a need for engagement of governments and GONGOs, a different type of engagement...[it's] not always black and white... recently at the ASEAN summit there were no CSO at all in Brunei except for GONGO women's groups that hosted the ACSC. Proposals were all accepted and it was evidence that there are GONGOs that can be engaged with.”*

*– Augusto MICLAT*

*...the added value of ADN is that CSOs in Asia will be able to bring in own resources and use Asian money to assist civil society organizations in need. When this happens it will be difficult for the government to criticize CSOs for being influenced by Western forces.*

*– Anselmo LEE*

Mr. Soe AUNG added that in regards to the second ASEAN Peoples Forum the consultation started. GONGO's are still a threat but there are also civil society organizations that have strong links to the government. There were situations where the government of Burma has urged certain CSO leaders not be present at the ASEAN meeting traditional event where ASEAN heads of states meet CSO reps from each country. So, there had to be unofficial meetings arranged.

Mr. Augusto MICLAT stated that there is a need for engagement of governments and GONGOs, a different type of engagement. Engagement is not always black and white. Recently at the ASEAN summit there were no CSO at all in Brunei except for GONGO women's groups that hosted the ACSC. Proposals were all accepted and it was evidence that there are GONGOs that can be engaged with. Also, he added that we should be politicians in a way. In Burma the 88 Generation is looked up to very highly by the masses, is there any consideration to turn into a political party? Is there a possibility to move into the policy realm without losing one's roots?

Mr. Jose GASCON stated the issue of peace process in the context of Burma, Philippines, etc. Cambodia is important. Mr. Anselmo LEE further added that many times GONGOs are criticized. However, the government criticizes CSOs by labeling them as DONGO's (donor organized nongovernmental organization). In retrospect, the added value of ADN is that CSOs in Asia will be able to bring in own resources and use Asian money to assist civil society organizations in need. When this happens it will be difficult for the government to criticize CSOs for being influenced by Western forces.

# COUNTRY SESSION [C]

## *Country Session C: Nepal, Sri Lanka, India*

**Moderator:**

Mr. George MATHEW, Institute of Social Sciences (ISS)

Nepal Mr. DayaSagar SHRESTHA, NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN)

Sri Lanka Mr. Sudashana GUNAWARDANA,  
Rights Now Collective for Democracy (RNCD)

India Mr. Harshvrat JAITLEI, Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)

During the opening remarks Mr. George MATHEW mentioned that some relevant countries are missing in this session, such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and others but that through the session, the group will see how countries in the region can learn from each other and share experiences in order to build an effective and sound ground for the alliance. The alliance needs conviction based on shared experiences and that those are the beginning of social change.

### **Presentation 1: Nepal. Mr. DayaSagar SHRESTHA**

Mr. DayaSagar SHRESTHA made a presentation on vertical institutions, civil society organization and challenges. Nepal is in a strategic position between China and India. Mr. SHRESTHA provided the historical background for Nepal. He recalled the restoration of multi-party democracy in 1990 that included a parliamentary system with a constitutional monarchy, the uprising of the Maoist insurgency in 1996, the coup by former king Gyanendra in 2005, the restoration of democracy in 2006, the comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2006, the promulgation of the Interim Constitution in 2007, the Election of the constituent assembly (CA) in 2008, and the dissolution of the CA without promulgating a new constitution in 2012. He also mentioned that the second election of the CA is going to be held in November of 2013.

The speaker also outlined the problems and challenges for CSOs in Nepal. On the legislative side, that the legal framework for CSOs does not respond to new trends and is still enacting old laws. Additionally, the regulations are poor due to ineffective mechanisms. Also, due to the political instability due to transition phase there is an absence of people's representatives in democratic institutions and there is also a high level of impunity. This has also caused a shrinking space for CSOs, and has further weakened democratic institutions. Internal challenges for CSOs include the ability to maintain neutrality and impartiality, inadequate capacities, institutional good governance, concentration in capital city and urban centers, dependence on outside sources for funding, attitudes of political parties affecting the work of CSOs, the questionable sustainability of different movements, and finally, the distinction between professionalism, volunteerism and activism.

Despite these challenges the speaker offered the following recommendation for addressing these problems. First, CSOs should demand new CSO friendly acts from the government. Also, CSOs should encourage attitudinal shifts from politicians and bureaucrats from negative to positive. CSOs should encourage the government to recognize CSOs as good

partners and to provide adequate space in the governance process at local and national levels. CSOs should also encourage the government to simplify the regulatory processes.

Following the presentation, participants asked for clarification from the speaker. Among these Mr. JAWED asked if there are any acts or laws for foreign funding, to which Mr. NETRA replied that the government has a foreign funding policy, where the Social Welfare Council monitors how much foreign funding NGOs receive. Mr. LOBSANG asked if there are specific laws that protect refugees, to which Mr. PYAKUREL replied that there is no law for general refugees despite the fact that Nepal has lot of refugees. However, a lot of refugees are sent back to their own countries or somewhere else.

### **Presentation 2: Sri Lanka, Mr. Sudahsana GUWARDANA**

Mr. Sudahsana GUWARDANA gave a brief explanation on the conditions and challenges facing Sri Lanka and the treatment that human rights defenders face. He cited a news report with some comments from Navi Pillay, visiting Sri Lanka. The writers of the report state that they are deeply concerned about the situation of Sri Lanka and that it is sad that Sri Lanka cannot utilize the opportunity created after the war. Since that time democracy and the rule of law have been undermined. The report urged the government to democratize and to protect critical voices from being attacked.

The speaker also stressed the importance of minority issues on Sri Lanka. Minorities are asking their political rights but that it is difficult to meet the aspiration of the minority due to Sri Lanka's majoritarian democracy.

The speaker gave a historic outline of the relationship between the government and NGOs, stressing that since the 2004 nationalist control the government, NGOs started facing difficulties due to nationalists. At the time the government imposed special taxes on CSOs with foreign funding along with other regulations to control CSOs, including registration laws. The situation has become more difficult due to the questionable legitimacy of parts of the current government. He mentioned that after the war, people had some hope that the situation in Sri Lanka would change, but things are getting worse. Apart from legal control, there is a tremendous media campaign to criminalize civil society defenders, saying that they are "provoking international resolution against our country." The government has utilized the army to oppress demonstrations demanding social economic rights. Furthermore, the government has failed to create space for civil society.

### **Presentation 3: India, Mr. Harshvrat JAITLI**

The third presentation focused on NGOs in India. The speaker, Mr. Harsh JAITLI, started the presentation by stating that despite being known as the largest democracy however in reality it does not work as such at its core. Bureaucrats in government offices do not want to cooperate with NGO. There are many restrictive laws, including almost century old registration law. This law being treated as state (provincial) subject is being either not changed since 1860, or is being manipulated to control the NGOs. Consequently, many entities are today clubbed in the category of NGOs, these include NGOs run and controlled by government, private corporate hospitals, private schools and even ornamental NGOs run by celebrities. This has led to very

## COUNTRY SESSION [C]

restrictive regulation and scrutiny of genuine organizations. As most of the countries, we also have law which controls the inflow of foreign funding to NGOs. There is a bill under consideration of Indian Parliament which proposes Income tax on Indian NGOs. Interestingly, funding is available to Indian NGOs from domestic sources like government and private sector to do the service delivery, but no support is available to work on entitlements, advocacy, etc.

The speaker presented a short historical background on the regulation of NGOs in India. In 1860, the registration law was established. First law to regulate foreign funding was made in 1977. It was quite liberal at the beginning, but more regulations have been added since. In 2010, the new Foreign Contribution Regulation Act was established, which made it difficult to do rights-based work or mobilize people. This law also authorizes any government department to inspect the funds and activities of NGOs. There has been reduction in the availability of foreign funding to Indian NGOs, especially if it for rights based work, whereas there is no shortage if NGOs are ready to work as the extended hand to the government and private sector. In order to face this challenge there is need of collectivization of NGOs along with capacity building in legal educations and input on best practices for good internal governance.

Audience participants asked the speakers several questions. Mr. ASHOK asked who needs the capacity and if there are any aspirations among socially excluded people to claim their own rights? The speaker answered by saying that the Caste affiliation within the judiciary is still strong. When low caste people are advocating for their rights, human rights are often violated and attempts at correcting these situations are largely prevented by institutional barriers. Economic resources are also delivered according to castes. For example, development funds are distributed more on the issues relevant to high caste individuals.

# COUNTRY SESSION [D]

## *Country Session D: China, Mongolia, Vietnam*

### **Moderator:**

Mr. Michael KAU, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)

China-Hong Kong Mr. Dongfang HAN, China Labour Bulletin

Mongolia Ms. Zanaa JURMED, Center for Citizens' Alliance

Vietnam Mr. Hoi TRINH,  
Vietnamese Overseas Initiative for Conscience  
Empowerment (VOICE)

The moderator, Mr. Michael KAU, opened up the session with the following statement. There are a lot of problems in present civil society. Governments are striving to achieve political stability. Most democratic governments tend to be more supportive for establishing civil society; however, some democratic governments are not too supportive for developing civil society.

To establish a better democratic society, private sectors and public sectors, corporations and enterprises must work together to improve civil society. Providing enough funding is very important to improve civil society and make civil society more influential. Today there are many dimensions of civil society to discuss.

First of all, the issue is the Asian values. Poorer countries like North Korea and China have a lot of restrictions on civil society and NGOs. Also, countries with high income, like Singapore, do not promote development of civil society. Taiwan, the country the moderator came from, is considered much democratized. The civil society in Taiwan is emerging strongly. However, there are some incidents where human rights were violated. There were some young soldiers who were tortured by their officers. It caused a tremendous outrage among Taiwanese people and civil society was able to mobilize 250,000 people demonstrate against the government. The protest finally made the government transfer the jurisdiction from military court to civilian court to punish the officers. Michael was surprised to observe so many people came out voluntarily for

*“To establish a better democratic society, private sectors and public sectors, corporations and enterprises must work together to improve civil society.”*

*– Michael KAU*

a rightful cause. He was amazed by the power of civil society and the Taiwanese people.

## **Presentation 1: China-Hong Kong. Mr. Dongfang HAN**

Mr. Dongfang HAN is currently a labor activist who is trying to promote the rights of workers in Shenzhen and Guangdong Area. Starting from last year, he decided to concentrate on one subject: Chinese workers' rights. He became an active advocate for workers' rights and protecting the victims of human rights violation. The recent trend in Chinese civic society, he observed, are the power of social networking websites, such as Weibo. Weibo is a convenient way to communicate among Chinese people.

He briefly mentioned about a case where Weibo helped mobilize people for a rightful protest. There is a hospital in Guangzhou and over 100 hospital workers protested for a better working environment and to have official contracts. According to the Chinese law, everyone deserves to have contracts, but the hospital workers didn't have official contracts or any kind of social benefits. What made the situation worse is that the Chinese government did not step in to guarantee the rights of the workers. The news came up on Weibo and people started to mobilize to show support for those hospital workers. For more than 90 days NGOs and many people from Guangdong and Shenzhen went over to the protesting site and showed support. Thanks to Weibo, the hospital workers initiated an official negotiation with the hospital.

He mentioned another case in Shenzhen. A factory owner wanted to move his factory to a different location. However, the boss denied the fact that he is moving his factory. The boss kept lying and workers eventually found out. The workers wanted some kind of compensation or retirement package, but they received none. So they blocked the factory and interrupted the moving of machines. The government was neglectful and they did not step in. Instead, the government arrested the leader of the protesting workers. Several hundred workers continued to ban any movement of machines, and they started collecting funds for the one who got arrested and his family. As the protest on Weibo became enormous, the government decided to step in. The power of the people was amazing. The boss is on trial now.

The Chinese government cannot shut down the internet. The central government realized that the local government is not reporting what the situations are. They want real information, and they are using Weibo to grasp the voice of its people.

Mr. HAN and his organization try to promote collective bargaining which will improve the rights of workers, and promote elections in unions. He believes that there are many hopes for democracy in China. Lawyers are gathering together to stand up against governments. Due to Social Networking Services (SNS), government cannot prohibit the flow of information.

Also in China, there are many corrupted officials. There are photos of government officials who are wearing fancy watches, expensive belts that cost their position. Even if government controls media, government feels the need to give freedom on the internet for its own benefit. There are some groundbreaking changes slightly and slowly. The Chinese government is turning to NGOs for help. They don't know how to deal with the new trend of using SNS.

## COUNTRY SESSION [D]

He does not want to collapse the communist government immediately. He wants to first improve the workers' condition through implementing collective bargaining process. He wants to improve democratic rights of workers.

### **Presentation 2: Mongolia, Ms. Zanaa JURMED**

Ms. Zanaa JURMED from the Center for Citizens' Alliance began her response to the question of what the pressing challenges for civil society is faced in promoting democracy by mentioning that Mongolia needs help from corporations and NGOs on the international level. She specified that there is a serious lack of development of local democracy. She stated that she wants to initiate local movements such as seminars and meetings to improve democracy in Mongolia.

Ms. JURMED pointed out several problems in Mongolia in terms of civil society.

- Lack of legal environment
- Lack of systematic, institutionalized funding
- Lack of enabling environment in politics and social spheres
- Lack of access to media, public and commercial TVs, Radio and FMs
- Lack of opportunity of membership to networks on Democracy

Currently, the civil society in Mongolia is very underdeveloped. Political context and democratic values such as democracy, transparency is far from average. When it comes to empowering citizens, meeting social needs, Mongolia is very weak. NGO laws are in the process of being reviewed. The state shall not discriminate CSOs based on their political and social views. However, politicians in the Democratic Party also discriminate against NGOs. It is very unfortunate that even democrats do not fully support the growth of civil society.

Ms. JURMED finished her presentation by noting that the international community can help support her work by providing tools to strengthen CSOs' knowledge and skills of monitoring and evaluation activities. She also stated that there is a need for more funding, especially raising funds at the national and international levels. Also, finally there is a need for more activities to improve Mongolian civil society at the international level.

### **Presentation 3: Vietnam, Mr. Hoi TRINH**

Mr. Hoi TRINH opened his presentation by giving a brief introduction to his organization, Vietnamese Overseas Initiative for Conscience Empowerment (VOICE). VOICE helps refugees from Vietnam and with them they work towards developing a civil society in Vietnam. He stated that it is unfortunate to observe that Vietnam is not on the list for discussion while Cambodia and Burma are because these two countries are much more advanced in a civil and political way. In his description of Vietnam, he stated that Vietnam is currently a one party state under a Communist Party. Vietnam has a population of 88million, a GDP per capital of 1,498 dollars according to UNDP 2012, an average growth rate 7.8%, inflation of 7%, press freedom is bad, and poverty is serious. Even though Vietnam's economic situation improved over the decades, the human rights situation kept deteriorating. There is practically no independent civil society in Vietnam. Vietnamese people do not have a way to voice their

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opinions. All judicial processes must be approved by the Communist Party. There is a lack of legal framework that protects the rights of civil society organizations. The government uses legal framework and regulations to silence people's voices. Some of the laws that protect human rights have not been passed over decades. There still lie challenges for civil society organizations and human rights defenders as can be seen in the following:

- No law for right of association.
- 100 members are needed to register for a NGO, also must have a government member who will sponsor the civil society organization
- Party members must approve civil society organization
- There is a lack of legal framework for CSOs to grow.
- Criminalization of certain activities: speaking against government's interest, journalists can be imprisoned. According to Article 88, anyone who speaks of public propaganda against the state can be imprisoned.
- Anyone who is advocating democracy and civil society organizations can be convicted under Article 88.
- Attempts to overthrow the government can be sentenced one to death.
- Journalists, civil society activists, political activists can be imprisoned under Article 258.

Mr. TRINH, discussed the current situation of civil society in Vietnam. He furthered that in 1992, the first law was passed on foreign investment, but the government still neglects human rights laws. Anyone who goes on Facebook and provides a link that describes opposition to the government can be punished. Approximately ten years ago the government started to allow NGOs to grow. This allowed for the growth of civil society inside Vietnam. However, the allowance of NGO growth has been limited to NGOs that are solely concentrating on poverty reduction and helping children.

The government creates fear of civil society to control its people, using both legal and non legal methods. Vietnam is in desperate need of international attention to improve civil society. Vietnam is going to have its United Nations Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in four years in Geneva. Mr. TRINH indicated that he wishes that there will be more improvements in human rights. Taiwan and South Korea are the two biggest investors in Vietnam and hopes for cooperation from these two countries to improve human rights and civil society. He hopes civil society will develop in the future in Vietnam.

*“The government creates fear of civil society to control its people, using both legal and non legal methods. Vietnam is in desperate need of international attention to improve civil society.”*

*– Hoi TRINH*

# NETWORKING SESSION: SUB REGIONAL AND SECTOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

*(16:30-17:30, 2013 October 21)*

NETWORK SESSION A: CSOS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

NETWORK SESSION B: CSOS IN SOUTH ASIA

NETWORK SESSION C: CSOS INTERNATIONAL (GLOBAL AND REGIONAL)

NETWORK SESSION D: POLITICAL PARTIES AND PARLIAMENTS

## **Session A: CSOs in Southeast Asia**

**Moderator: Mr. John LIU, FORUM-ASIA**

First, panelists addressed key concerns and trends affecting the Southeast Asian region. Panelists mentioned that Freedom of Expression is not better. There are new opportunities presented by social media, but also challenges. It has not only empowered individuals, but dictators are learning from each other, too. Additionally, many Asian democracies have not been keen to advocate for human rights, but CSOs are more experienced in this field. Participants also stated that a priority outreach country in this sub region should be Vietnam, where more exchange programs are needed. ADN also needs to work on strengthening civil society in Burma. Another important agenda item for ADN in the sub region should be to differentiate between real NGOs and GONGOs, particularly in Cambodia, Malaysia, Burma, but also to selectively work with GONGOs to achieve results. This may call for developing a code of conduct for CSOs. Panelists also commented that threats to civil society don't come only from government restrictions but also from non state actors. ADN should also look at issues relating to migration, peace and development and how they affect civil society in Southeast Asia.

Next panelists discussed key intergovernmental institutions in the region which ADN should engage. Panelists listed organizations such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), which need to increase public participation, Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA), which is working with ASEAN institutions, advocating for better access and needs to place pressure on governments, the Bali Democracy Forum, the Open Government Partnership (OGP), the and the SEA regional office of the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Lastly, panelists talked about which topics affecting the region need more in-depth research. Panelists listed religious freedom, ODA funding, how much and what impact it has on civil society, Bilateral agreements, Investment and loans from China and their effects, the link between economic development, defense spending and human rights, Migration and the 2015 One Community goal by ASEAN, and avenues of public participation and civil society development. Panelists also stressed the need for knowledge management and tools which can be shared such as budget sharing, how to develop network of human rights defenders, how to ask for support from private sector, etc.

# NETWORKING SESSION: SUB REGIONAL AND SECTOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

## **Session B: CSOs in South Asia**

**Moderator: Mr. Netra Prasad TIMSINA, People's SAARC**

*“Future advocacy should focus attention on the large number of socially excluded people, since the region is home to a very large percentage of the world's population but continues to see backlash and conflict among the social groups.”*

During this panel major attention was focused on the issues facing South Asia. Future advocacy should focus attention on the large number of socially excluded people, since the region is home to a very large percentage of the world's population but continues to see backlash and conflict among the social groups. So far, South Asian regional mechanisms have ignored social exclusion such as caste and religion and their role in the region, despite the fact that they are a direct challenge to democracy. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has created a structure that only addresses government mechanics and has not been effective to bring countries together to discuss and promote democracy and human rights. Regional CSOs should work to promote the people's agenda in the region. The People's SAARC could be one CSO platform that raises the voice of people and parallels official SAARC.

Other important regional problems include visa problems, which have caused a lack of mobility, as well as trafficking. Another problem is the killing of journalists in Pakistan. A grave problem in the region is that religion and politics are synonymous and religious fundamentalism and theocratic narratives continues to be a serious problem, so a human rights approach could be used to address that. Additionally women are underrepresented in politics in South Asia, especially in Pakistan because of internal pressure. Another force that greatly affects the region is the conflict between Pakistan and India. Similarly the military establishment continues to interfere in politics in the region. Panelists also emphasized that gender equality is the biggest problem in the region.

# NETWORKING SESSION: SUB REGIONAL AND SECTOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

The panel also proposed some solutions for these issues including organizing a parliamentary forum, strengthening national human rights institutions, and creating a media campaign with an interactive platform. Furthermore local governments and grassroots democracy needs to be recognized. In order to achieve this, CSOs should work on establishing democratic cultures and values within political parties and leaders, which would be a great challenge. Also, panelists suggested placing more focus on working with the UN human rights council.

## **Session C: CSOs International (global and regional)**

**Moderator: Mr. Anselmo LEE, KHRF/KDN/ADA**

Throughout the course of the discussion, participants went over the questions to be discussed in the session, as outlined in the program book, and discussed their concerns and suggests on each topic. First, panelists planned to discuss key concerns and trends affecting global and regional CSOs. Having discussed these issues during one of the thematic session in the morning, participants chose to move on to the next topic of discussion, but reiterated that an important challenge that ADN should focus on is democratization in Myanmar and Education for Democracy.

Participants also discussed what key inter-governmental organizations ADN should engage. They listed several organizations that require more systematic engagement, but also raised the question for how to engage existing networks to address issues such as democracy and human rights. One existing network that was brought up during the discussion was the Bali Democracy Forum, an intergovernmental organization which has 20 state leaders and 60 state reps attending this meeting annually and has been building confidence and trust.

Participants suggested other intergovernmental organizations such G20, the BRIC and MIKTA network of countries, as well as the United Nations Democracy Fund.

Participants also discussed who to include in the steering committee and working groups. Participants suggested bring in organizations such as GPPAC and the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA), and Transparency International's Asia Pacific branch to be part of the steering committee. Participants also stressed the importance of inviting ethnic minorities to be part of working group. Participants also noted that North East Asia is underrepresented in this selection due to a lack of established networks in the region, and that participants should think of ways to increase representation for that region.

Lastly, panelists discussed which issues require further research. They noted that democracy and human rights frequently stop at the border and there needs to be a regional, interstate or Asian democratic human rights framework in order to help cooperation and coordination among CSOs. Then participants listed important topics that require further research. Participants suggested researching issues such as:

# NETWORKING SESSION: SUB REGIONAL AND SECTOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

- The difference between local and government appointed level institutions in developing countries.
- What is the role of civil society in dealing with territorial disputes?
- What kind of forces, economic or climate, will force people to cross borders and how that will affect democracy and resource distributions.
- How does the rising influence of big businesses and multinational corporations on government's impact democracy and how does civil society counteract their interests?
- A call to assess the freeness and fairness of electoral indexes currently used to asses Asia.
- How does a parliamentary system actually enable democratic participation and what is the debt influence on elections and party politics?
- Assess how the UN and other Intergovernmental institutions respect and recognize CSO space in ADN member countries. How do individual governments respond to UN regulations?
- How CSOs should work with parliament and political parties and are political parties also a part of civil society?
- What is the best position for the research network in relation to CSOs?
- What influence has civil society had on government policies and were CSOs actually able to affect official policies in government - national, local, intergovernmental?
- What are the effects of the marketization/privatization (e.g. privatization of the security sector) of government? Also, how does the hierarchy of knowledge affect the politics of "consultants," including local and international dynamics?

*"...democracy and human rights frequently stop at the border and there needs to be a regional, interstate or Asian democratic human rights framework in order to help cooperation and coordination among CSOs."*

# NETWORKING SESSION: SUB REGIONAL AND SECTOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

## **Session D: Political Party and Parliaments**

**Moderator: Mr. Jose (Chito) GASCON, CALD**

Networking Session E focused on the role of parliament and political parties and how CSOs should engage with both. First, panelists looked at the capacity of parliament and political parties to legislate and the internal rules and regulations in the context of parliament being able to legislate independent of the executive. An important aspect of this is that parliament has the capacity, support, and infrastructure to research, craft laws and allow minority participation in legislation. Parliament should not be under “state capture,” where, despite having the robust infrastructure and capacity needed to legislate, parliament and political parties still take signals from the executive. Another important factor that was discussed was having an enabling environment for political parties.

Participants also noted some trends, areas of concern and lessons learned both cross-country and regionally. An important common area of concern was affirmative action for political gender representation. Participants discussed different ways to enact more equal representation, such as reserved seats, quotas, enacted percentages in parliament or in political party candidacy. Another important area of concern that was brought up was the gap between political parties and civil society. Issues of distrust and misconception of roles remain and should be addressed and communication channels between the two should be built. Participants also discussed the prevalence of legislation that restricts, constricts, or prevents the creation of space for civil society. A recent Freedom House Report showed that about 50 laws that restrict space, freedom of information and expression were passed in the past 2-3 years so this continues to be a pressing issue pressing issue.

Next panelists discussed ways to strengthen political parties to be more democratic parties in practice. Participants noted the need for parties to be more open, participatory, and incorporate more democratic practices within their own structures. Political parties should be the bridging institutions between citizens, civil society and the state in terms of providing better platforms that better articulate citizens’ agenda. Parties should also better understand the role of civil society, and similarly enable civil society to better understand the roles of political parties. Citizens and civil society should be connected to building the capacity of elected representatives in congress or parliament to legislate; political parties can create the enabling environment for this to happen.

Another point of discussion was that ADN should also begin to think internally about the participation of political parties within ADN. Members should also examine if ADN can play more politically astute roles to leverage strong Asian strategic and thematic networks and campaigns in a more political arena.

## NETWORKING SESSION: SUB REGIONAL AND SECTOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

In conclusion, panelists offered some research themes that they felt needed further exploration. Those included looking into the capacity of parliaments to do the technical and political work of legislation, as well as Information and education work on the roles of CSOs and the looking at competence of both political parties and civil society to engage each other as partners on common issues for democracy. Panelists suggested other areas for cooperative work, including social media for an ADN platform, like Facebook and twitter, and to engage in the laws on civil society and space project.

In addition to technical discussions, representatives of their respective countries provided anecdotes on the functioning of parliament and or congress in their own countries. In Cambodia the parliament does not legislate but rather only approves legislation done by the executive. In Indonesia there is a mandated threshold of 3.5% of votes for a party to be able to sit in national parliament. This will now cut down the 40 political parties to about 12, this would perhaps promote coalescing. In the Philippines there is a very robust parliament structure supported by impressive internal rules and regulations, but the parliament still takes signals from the executive. For example, there is currently a scandal in the Philippines about the misuse of public funds, which the executive gave to parliament to use at their discretion. In the USA there is the practice of “earmarking” funds for congress. The discontinuity of this practice continues to make passing any law more difficult by the executive. Finally, in Taiwan there is political parties face difficulty when civil society does not wish to be affiliated with them even on common issues. It was described as being caught in an awkward space, not being able to go back to the streets as the opposition but not having enough seats in parliamentary (40/113) to pass legislation along the lines of CSOs concerns.

*“Political parties should be the bridging institutions between citizens, civil society and the state in terms of providing better platforms that better articulate citizens’ agenda. Parties should also better understand the role of civil society, and similarly enable civil society to better understand the roles of political parties.”*

# CONCLUDING SESSION

*(17:30-18:30, 2013 October 21)*

**Moderator:**

Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL, Alliance for Social Dialogue (ASD)

Panel: Mr. John LIU, FORUM-ASIA

Ms. Melinda DE JESUS, CMFR / SEAPA

Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI, ANFREL

Mr. Anselmo LEE, KHRF / KDN

In the presence of the participants the moderator Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL opened the concluding session. Participants discussed on the fruitful exchange of experiences of challenges and lessons learned in the struggle for democracy. After a brief overview of the day's accomplishments the agenda of the closing session was put forth.

First the Seoul Democracy Declaration draft was put forth. Overall, the declaration collected the minds of the participant's making a pledge to the commitment of advocating human rights and democracy. This declaration indicated the welcoming of the launching of the Asia Democracy Network. In consensus of those present, the Seoul Democracy Declaration was adopted.

Next on the agenda was the review of the ADN Charter of Principles. As the guiding principles of the ADN the vision, mission and goals along with the values and principles were reviewed. The significant aspects that should be included to uphold diversity and inclusion were discussed. The key challenges and threats to an inclusive and participatory democracy in Asia were also a topic of discussion. The charter of principles was approved for adoption upon revision.

Upon approval of the Seoul Democracy Declaration and Charter of Principles, the concluding sessions then moved on to the election of the steering committee. Initially, the number of suggested members in the steering committee was determined to be nine members. The number of members is to be an odd number to maintain quorum. The initial nine steering committee members covering the respective themes were elected are as follows:

1. Elections: ANFREL
2. Human Rights: FORUM-ASIA
3. Anti-Corruption: TI – Asia
4. Press Freedom: SEAPA
5. International Development Cooperation: ADA
6. Research: Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN)
7. South East Asia: SEACA
8. South Asia: People's SAARC
9. ADN Secretariat

# CONCLUDING SESSION

Participants brought up the under representation of the Northeast Asian region. As the East Asia democracy forum is taking place in the near future, it was advised that it appropriate to open membership. It was counter argued that there is no representation as the forum is now taking into place and lacks a genuine commitment. With too many networks and members with no genuine commitment it will prevent decisions to be made. It was also suggested that GPPAC be represented to cover the theme of peace and security.

It was also advised that the steering committee is not ADN, rather all civil society actors and stakeholders in the advocacy of democracy are ADN.

Upon consensus of the participants of the founding assembly and the commitments of the representing organizations, it was determined to include Northeast Asia as a sub region to be represented on the Steering Committee along with GPPAC.

The ADN Founding Assembly founding assembly was adjourned with the following eleven steering committee members:

1. Elections: ANFREL
2. Human Rights: FORUM-ASIA
3. Anti-Corruption: TI – Asia
4. Press Freedom - SEAPA
5. International Development Cooperation: ADA
6. Research: Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN)
7. Peace and Security: GPPAC
8. South East Asia: SEACA
9. South Asia: People's SAARC
10. Northeast Asia: Northeast Asia Democracy Forum
11. ADN Secretariat

# LAUNCHING CEREMONY

*(17:00~18:30, 22 October 2013)*

## Master Of Ceremonies

Ms. Ismail SABA, Executive Director, Aware Girls  
Mr. Saroeun SOEUNG, Executive Director,  
Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)

## Opening Remarks

Representatives of the Steering Committee

## Adoption Of The Seoul Democracy Declaration And The Charter Of Principles

## Congratulatory Remarks

Mr. Sung-Heon CHUNG, President, Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)  
Ms. Maria LEISSNER, Secretary General, Community Of Democracies (COD)  
Mr. Carl GERSHMAN, President, National Endowment For Democracy (NED) / World Movement  
For Democracy (WMD)  
Mr. Teh-Fu HUANG, President, Taiwan Foundation For Democracy (TFD)

## Solidarity Remarks

Mr. Koul PANHA, Executive Director, Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia  
(COMFREL)  
Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL, Chairman, Alliance for Social Dialogue (ASD) Nepal  
Mr. Min Ko NAING, Leader, 88 Generation (Peace and Open Society)

The official launching ceremony of the Asia Democracy Network, an international network of civil society organizations, networks and democracy advocates in Asia who are dedicated to the strengthening of democracy and human rights, was held. Members of the Steering Committee gave short opening remarks, congratulating the members of ADN with the creation of this new organization.

Ms. Melinda DE JESUS stated that the creation of ADN is helping the region make a great leap forward in the work of democracy building in Asia.

Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI stated that ADN will help fill in the gaps missing in a lot of democracy building activities, including the advancement of human rights, election monitoring, and other important democracy building areas. He also stated that this will lead to fruitful cooperation and consolidation in the future.

Mr. John LIU stated that ADN shows how the region has come together for the same commitment and same aim to address common issues and common problems, and that members are bound together in their common commitment to democracy. He hopes that ADN will help members address these problems together.

# LAUNCHING CEREMONY

Mr. Harshvrat JAITLEI, commented that Asia is a very diverse region and the ADN initiative will help members learn and share experiences. He commented that democracy can't work automatically and that active citizenship is very necessary in both countries with established democratic traditions and those lacking those traditions.

Mr. Hyung-sik SHIN said that the founding of ADN contributes to mobilizing big support and assistance for protecting and promoting democracy throughout Asia.

Mr. Anselmo LEE commented that ADN will help foster understanding of different realities and respecting diversity. The founding of the network is only the start and a lot of challenges remain.

After the opening remarks, the designated steering committee members read the ADN Charter of Principles and the Seoul Democracy Declaration (**Annex 3**).

The reading of the Seoul Democracy Declaration was followed by congratulatory remarks from speakers such as Mr. Sung-heon CHUNG, President of the Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF), Mr. Carl GERSHMAN, President of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and the World Movement for Democracy (WMD), Mr. Teh-fu HUANG President of Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD), Mr. Koul PANHA Executive Director of the Cambodian Civil Society Organization Committee for Freedom, Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL, Alliance for Social Dialogue Nepal Chairman, and Mr. Min Ko NAING from 88 Generation (Peace and Open Society) Burma.

The first congratulatory remarks for the launching ceremony were given by the President of the Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF), Mr. Sung-heon CHUNG. Mr. CHUNG emphasized the importance of going beyond sustainable development and be concerned with sustainability. In the after effects of the global financial crisis placing a strain on all parts of the international community there is a need to find a solution through participation and debate among various actors at the national, regional and global levels. The world has learned from the crisis that without good governance and democracy that overcoming a crisis is impossible.



*"...common quest for human  
dignity...democracy delivers  
human dignity..."*

*– Maria LEISSNER*



Learning from the Korean democratic experience, we can see that solidarity is vital in achieving democracy. Despite the democratic progress of the last 10 years, when you consider the reality that democracy has stagnated and retreated in Asia, international solidarity becomes even more important. I think that the launching of the "Asia Democracy Network" today is a concrete effort to respond to this crisis and put into practice international solidarity.

The Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF), which will serve on the secretariat of ADN, promises to act as a lever and catalyst that allows ADN to extend democracy all over Asia.

## LAUNCHING CEREMONY

Through the results of full scale discussion over the past year, ADN can mobilize the help and support needed to defend and promote democracy, and it will be able to grow greatly.

Following Mr. CHUNG, Ms. Maria LEISSNER, Secretary General for the Community of Democracies (CoD) congratulated by pointing out that democracy comes at a very high cost for those risking themselves and their families. She told the story of Shin Dong Hyuk, a man that escaped a notorious political prison camp in North Korea, the story of a Guatemalan democracy activist who helped bring about democratic reform after her husband disappeared. She recalled the story of Lech Walesa, who founded Poland's first independent trade union, Solidarity, in Gdansk. For all three people's stories were tied together by their common quest for human dignity. Democracy delivers human dignity. The recent Arab Spring shows how activists and people fighting for their rights need support and knowing that they are not alone. For this reason ADN is an important step because it will help people in all countries established democracies by letting them know that there is a critical mass of people supporting the fight for human dignity along with them.

Mr. Carl GERSHMAN, President of the National Endowment for Democracy, stated that ADN is a great leap forward and that it will be a long journey. He mentioned that the network came about in a democratically consensual way because everyone has ownership of the network. It was a result of years of trying to build the bonds of solidarity among democracy activists in a diverse region. Asian activists have laid the foundation for what they hope will be a new mechanism to advance the cause of democracy throughout the region. The potential of ADN lies in being the convergence of many different initiatives for democracy over the years. It draws on a variety of existing networks. He mentioned that the objectives of network will be shaped by specific challenges facing different countries of the regions, but that it will aid civil society organizations to strengthen their work.

Mr. Teh-fu HUANG, President of Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD), congratulated forum participants on establishing ADN. Following the third wave of democratization and other recent developments, democracy and human rights have become universal values in the international community. In order to create a global environment beneficial for the development of those values, it is necessary to strengthen the practice of those values through collaboration.

*“ADN is a great leap forward and that it will be a long journey. He mentioned that the network came about in a democratically consensual way because everyone has ownership of the network. It was a result of years of trying to build the bonds of solidarity among democracy activists in a diverse region. Asian activists have laid the foundation for what they hope will be a new mechanism to advance the cause of democracy throughout the region.”*

*– Carl GERSHMAN*

# LAUNCHING CEREMONY

Mr. HUANG commented that in Asia there are many civil society networks, but that Asia continues to lack an Asia wide network for democracy activists. Per Mr. HUANG, ADN will bring together practitioners and try to create a forum for ideas to seek greater cooperation and assistance. The crucial point is how to realize the practices of democracies. Mr. HUANG outlined the work of TFD in this field. He mentioned that the biggest challenge facing democracy builders in Asia will be addressing authoritarian regimes while aiding grassroots organizations and protecting their best interests. In closing, Mr. HUANG stated that ADN will be an integrated and efficient mechanism to generate an even stronger momentum for development of democracy and human rights in Asia.

Mr. Koul PANHA, Executive Director of the Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL), stated that the official launch of ADN has been successfully implemented. Asia is a region of diverse political system, various cultures, but all participants agree on the common value that democracy is universal and recognize the idea as a goal. He stated that it won't be easy, but the group should strive for more strategic engagement with governments, stakeholders and political parties.

Mr. GERSHMAN continued by saying that the fundamental challenges for countries at all stages of democratic development is the need to protect the religious, cultural and linguistic rights of ethnic minorities; and to end poverty by achieving economic growth and inclusive social development. Mr. GERSHMAN said that he sees ADN adding to the existing inter-regional framework by performing seven basic functions:

1. Enabling advocates to speak with a common voice to governments about policies needed to advance democracies and to the general public about challenges facing democracy in the region.
2. Articulating the views of civil society to regional bodies like ASEAN and to global associations such as the Community of Democracies.
3. Promoting cooperation among regional networks operating in different fields.
4. Helping to integrate the policy research of think tanks into the work of NGOs, democracy practitioners, and government ministries; and also to encourage the sharing of lessons learned about democratic development.
5. Leveraging new communications technologies to share information more widely on human rights and innovations in democratic governance.
6. Responding in a timely and coordinated manner to important political developments, new democracy challenges and gross human rights violations by promoting democratic solidarity.
7. Contributing to the snowballing effect of democratic progress by providing a mechanism for the transfer of knowledge, skills and experience from more established democracies to activists in newly democratic countries.

He concluded his remarks by saying that the Seoul Democracy Forum is an example of how the flame of democracy continues to burn in the aspirations of the people of Asia, and that the forward movement of democracy in Asia promises to continue. Democracy is the future of Asia because it advances interest of people and respects their dignity as human beings.

# LAUNCHING CEREMONY

*“...ADN's official launching is a historical occasion... Asia is linked by struggles in the past, but the people are still struggling for democracy and human rights.”*

*– Sushil PYAKUREL*

Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL, Chairman of the Alliance for Social Dialogue (ASD) Nepal, called ADN's official launching is a historical occasion. He said that Asia is linked by struggles in the past, but that people are still struggling for democracy and human rights. He recalled how the Gwangju Protests inspired Nepal and that all democracies of the region must come together.

The final speaker, Mr. Min Ko NAING, of 88 Generation (Peace and Open Society) Burma, who was a political prisoner from 1989-2005, stated that civil society organizations need to go past elections. Democracy and human rights are a philosophy that people have to recognize, participate and practice. He said that participants need to increase people's knowledge, and that activists must strengthen, and to have the chance to do so in the right place. He also mentioned that there needs to be a change of mindset as well. Network building works for both capacity and practice and ADN gives Asian activists this opportunity. As people become more aware, participation will increase. A lack of public participation means that activists cannot bring about necessary change. He stated that he hopes the network will help make the meaning of “Asian values” the idea of human dignity and respect for democracy. That's why activists must come together and work in full force and solidarity with the people of Asia and beyond.

Annex 1: Acronyms

Annex 2: Asia Democracy Network (ADN) Founding Assembly Program Agenda

Annex 3: Seoul Democracy Declaration / ADN Charter Of Principles

Annex 4: ADN Terms Of Reference (ToR)

Annex 5: List of Participants

Annex 6: Full Text of Opening Ceremony Remarks

Annex 7: Full Text of Launching Ceremony Remarks

Annex 8 : Photos

## ANNEX [1]: ACRONYMS

<b>ADA</b>	Asia Development Alliance
<b>ADN</b>	Asia Democracy Network
<b>AEPF</b>	Asia-Europe People's Forum
<b>ANFREL</b>	Asian Network for Free Elections
<b>ASD</b>	Alliance for Social Dialogue, Nepal
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of South East Asian Nations
<b>ASEM</b>	Asia Europe Meeting
<b>BDF</b>	Bali Democracy Forum
<b>BP</b>	Burma Partnership
<b>CALD</b>	Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
<b>CBGA</b>	Centre for Budget & Governance Accountability, India
<b>CCC</b>	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia
<b>CHRE</b>	Centre for Human Rights Education, Pakistan
<b>CKWP</b>	Center for Korean Women and Politics, Korea
<b>CLB</b>	China Labour Bulletin
<b>CMFR</b>	Center for Media Freedom & Responsibility, Philippines
<b>CoD</b>	Community of Democracies
<b>CODE-NGO</b>	Caucus of Development NGO Networks , Philippines
<b>COMFREL</b>	Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>DAWN</b>	Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
<b>EAI</b>	East Asia Institute, Korea
<b>EAS</b>	East Asia Summit
<b>EEI</b>	Enabling Environment Index
<b>FNB</b>	Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh
<b>FORUM-ASIA</b>	Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development
<b>HRC</b>	Human Rights Council
<b>HRD</b>	Human Rights Defenders
<b>IID</b>	Initiatives for International Dialogue, Philippines
<b>INCITEGov</b>	International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance , Inc., Philippines
<b>INFID</b>	International NGO Forum on Indonesia Development
<b>IPU</b>	Inter-Parliamentary Union
<b>IRC</b>	Interactive Resource Center, Pakistan
<b>ISS</b>	Institute of Social Sciences , India
<b>JANIC</b>	JAPAN NGO Center for International Cooperation

## ANNEX [1]: ACRONYMS

<b>KCOC</b>	Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation
<b>KDF</b>	Korea Democracy Foundation
<b>KHIS</b>	Korean House for International Solidarity
<b>KHRF</b>	Korea Human Rights Foundation
<b>KoFID</b>	Korea Civil Society Forum on International Development Cooperation
<b>LST</b>	Law and Society Trust, Sri Lanka
<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MOFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>NACDOR</b>	National Confederation of Dalit Organisations, India
<b>NED</b>	National Endowment for Democracy, USA
<b>NFN</b>	NGO Federation of Nepal
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>PRRM</b>	Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement
<b>PSPD</b>	People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy, Korea
<b>SAAPE</b>	South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication
<b>SAARC</b>	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
<b>SEACA</b>	South East Asian Committee for Advocacy
<b>SUARAM</b>	SUARAM Malaysia
<b>TCHRD</b>	Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
<b>TFD</b>	Taiwan Foundation for Democracy
<b>TI</b>	Transparency International
<b>TWA</b>	Tibetan Women's Association
<b>UN GA</b>	United Nations General Assembly
<b>UNDeF</b>	United Nations Democracy Fund
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNSG</b>	United Nations Secretary General
<b>VANI</b>	Voluntary Action Network India
<b>VOICE</b>	Vietnamese Overseas Initiative for Conscience Empowerment
<b>VOICE</b>	Voices for Interactive Choice and Empowerment, Bangladesh
<b>WMD</b>	World Movement for Democracy
<b>YAPPIKA</b>	Indonesian Civil Society Alliance for Democracy

# ANNEX [2]: ADN PROGRAM AGENDA

<b>21 October (Monday) 2013</b>	
<b>08:00-09:00</b>	Registration
<b>09:00-10:00</b>	<p><b>Opening Session</b> Moderator Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI, Executive Director, ANFREL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Opening Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Hyung-sik SHIN, Director of Planning and Coordination Department, KDF / KDN and Organizing Committee for the ADN</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Welcoming Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms. Bong-scuk SOHN, President of CKWP / KDN</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Congratulatory Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms. Maria LEISSNER, Secretary General of the Community of Democracies (CoD)</li> <li>- Mr. Peter BECK, Representative of the Asia Foundation-Korea</li> <li>- Mr. Teh-Fu HUANG, President of Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Update on ADN Background and Asia inter-governmental process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms. Melinda DE JESUS, SEAPA / Organizing Committee for the ADN</li> <li>- Mr. Suren BADRAL, Ambassador-at-Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mongolia</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Presentation of the draft proposal on a Charter of Principles, Governance structure and Action Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. Anselmo LEE, Executive Director, KHRF / KDN and Organizing Committee for the ADN</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>10:00-10:30</b>	Break
<b>10:30-12:30</b>	<p><b>Thematic Session (plenary) :</b> <b>Emerging Challenges to Participatory Democracy in Asia</b> <b>- Civil Society Response and Strategies</b> Moderator Mr. Anselmo LEE, KHRF / KDN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights Defenders: Mr. John LIU, FORUM-ASIA</li> <li>• Freedom of Express and Independence of Media: Ms. Melinda DE JESUS, SEAPA</li> <li>• Free and Fair election: Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI, ANFREL</li> <li>• Anti-Corruption and Transparency: Mr. Sung Soo KIM, TI -KOREA</li> <li>• Governance and Rule of Law: Mr. J.R. (Neric) ACOSTA, CALD</li> <li>• Gender and Democracy: Ms. Kumudini SAMUEL, DAWN</li> <li>• Poverty, Development and Democracy: Mr. Netra Prasad TIMSINA, SAAPE</li> <li>• ODA and Democracy: Mr. Massaki OHASHI, JANIC / ADA</li> </ul>
<b>12:30-14:00</b>	Lunch
<b>14:00-16:00</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Country Session on Civil Society Space (breakout) :</b> Defending Civil Society Space and Promoting Safe and Enabling Environment in Asia</p> <p><b>&lt;Country Session A&gt;</b> Moderator Mr. Hilman HANDONI, INFID, Indonesia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bangladesh Mr. Muhammad IBRAHIM, FNB</li> <li>• Pakistan Mr. Samson Salamat, CHRE</li> <li>• Indonesia Ms. Abdi (Yenni) SURYANINGATI, YAPPIKA</li> <li>• Malaysia Mr. Arumugam KALIMUTHU, SUARAM</li> </ul> <p><b>&lt;Country Session B&gt;</b> Moderator Ms. Patricia SARENAS, Code-NGO, Philippines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cambodia Mr. Saroeun SOEUNG, CCC</li> <li>• Myanmar (Burma) Mr. Min Ko NAING, Peace and Open Society Mr. Soe AUNG, Burma Partnership</li> <li>• Philippines Ms. Rebecca (Beckie) MALAY, PRRM</li> </ul> <p><b>&lt;Country Session C&gt;</b> Moderator Mr. George MATHEW, ISS, India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nepal Mr. DayaSagar SHRESTHA, NFN</li> <li>• Sri Lanka Mr. Sudashana GUNAWARDANA, RNCN</li> <li>• India Mr. Harsh JAITLEI, VANI</li> </ul> <p><b>&lt;Country Session D&gt;</b> Moderator Mr. Michael KAU, TFD, Taiwan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China Mr. Dongfang HAN, China Labour Bulletin</li> <li>• Mongolia Ms. Zanaa JURMED, Center for Citizens' Alliance</li> <li>• Vietnam Mr. Hoi TRINH, VOICE</li> </ul>

# ANNEX [2]: ADN PROGRAM AGENDA

16:00-16:30	Break
16:30-17:30	<b>Networking Session (breakout) : 6 (sub)regional and sectoral groups</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Session A: CSOs in Southeast Asia</li> <li>• Session B: CSOs in South Asia</li> <li>• Session C: CSOs international (global and regional)</li> <li>• Session D : Political Party and Parliaments</li> </ul>
17:30-18:30	<b>Closing Session (Plenary):</b> Moderator MrSushilPYAKUREL, ASD, Nepal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Seoul Democracy Declaration</li> <li>• Review of a Charter of Principles</li> <li>• Review of Action Plans for 2013-2015</li> </ul> Election of Steering Committee
18:30-20:00	Working Dinner for Facilitating Group
20:00-10:00	<b>Special Session : Self-Organizing Session</b> Asia Development Alliance (ADA) Consultation III

## Seoul Democracy Forum (SDF) – III

22 October (Tuesday) 2013	
08:00-09:00	Registration
08:00-09:00	Working Breakfast for ADN Facilitating Group
09:00-10:30	<b>Opening session</b>
10:30-11:00	Break and Group Photo
11:00-12:30	Plenary Session : “Peace Building, Development and Democracy in Asia”
12:30-14:00	Lunch
14:00-17:00	<b>Thematic Session 1 :</b> Democratic Citizen Education
17:00-18:30	<b>ADN Official Launching Ceremony</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video Presentation about ADN</li> <li>• Introduction of the Facilitating Group for ADN</li> <li>• Opening Remarks               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Representative(s) of the Facilitating Group</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Adoption of the Seoul Democracy Declaration and the ADN Charter of Principles</li> <li>• Congratulatory Remarks               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. CHUNG Sung-heon, President of Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)</li> <li>- Ms. Maria LEISSNER, Secretary General of the Community of Democracies (CoD)</li> <li>- Mr. Carl GERSHMAN, President of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) / Secretariat for the World Movement for Democracy (WMD)</li> <li>- Mr. Teh-Fu HUANG, President of Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Official Photo Time</li> </ul>
18:45-21:00	Welcome Dinner

23 October (Wednesday) 2013		
09:00-12:30	<b>Thematic Session 2:</b> Empowerment of Asian Civil Society - Role of Civil Society for Democracy Promotion	<b>Thematic Session 3:</b> Democratic Governance in Asia - Anti-corruption, transparency and accountability
12:30-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-16:30	<b>Thematic Session 4:</b> Empowerment of Asian Civil Society - How to Strengthen Regional Solidarity among CSOs for Democracy Promotion	<b>Thematic Session 5 :</b> Democratic Governance in Asia - Role of Civil Society and ODA for Sustainable Democracy
16:30-17:00	Break	
17:00-18:00	Closing Session	
19:00-21:00	Farewell Dinner	
24 October (Thursday) 2013		
08:00-18:00	Tour to Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) (optional) – return to Seoul at 11 am on 25 Oct. 2013	
09:00-17:00	Democracy Tour in Seoul including a visit to KDF and PSPD	

# ANNEX [3]: SEOUL DEMOCRACY DECLARATION / ADN CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES

## *Seoul Democracy Declaration*

**22 Oct. 2013**

We participants, democracy advocates and human rights defenders from various Asian countries, in the Founding Assembly of the Asia Democracy Network on the occasion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Seoul Democracy Forum held in Seoul, Korea on 21 and 22 October 2013,

- 1) Paying tribute to those who preceded us in the fight for democracy and human rights and consolidating their legacy,
- 2) Recalling the sacrifices of democracy advocates who shed their blood for defending and promoting democratic values and principles in different countries in Asia,
- 3) Reaffirming our commitment to build a just, equitable and peaceful community of democratic societies in Asia,
- 4) Recognizing the urgent need to create a network of democracy advocates and human rights defenders in Asia,
- 5) Expressing our deep solidarity with all democracy advocates who struggle for the realization of democracy and human rights in Asia and beyond,
- 6) Emphasizing the essential role and contribution of citizens and civil society organizations to advance democracy in Asia,
- 7) Appreciating the efforts and work of all organizers including members of the Korea Democracy Network to host the Founding Assembly of the Asia Democracy Network,
- 8) Welcoming the launching of the Asia Democracy Network as a common platform for action and reflection among democracy advocates and human rights defenders in Asia,

Hereby adopt the Charter of Principles as guiding principles for the Asia Democracy Network.

# ANNEX [3]: SEOUL DEMOCRACY DECLARATION / ADN CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES

## *Charter of Principles*

### **Vision, Mission and Goal**

1. ADN is committed to building a just, equitable and sustainable community of democratic societies in Asia, where all human rights of all individuals, groups and peoples are fully respected and realized. (Vision)
2. ADN works to promote and advance democratization and democratic governance at all levels of society through effective solidarity and cooperation among civil society organizations and democracy advocates in Asia. (Mission)
3. ADN aims to build a stronger regional democracy network and movement engaged effectively in international advocacy and engagement with governments, inter-governmental organizations and other stakeholders in Asia and beyond. (Goal)

### **Values and Principles**

1. ADN embraces principles such as international solidarity and partnerships, plurality and diversity, shared responsibilities and leadership, human rights based approach.
2. ADN believes :
  - that democracy is a universally recognized ideal as well as a goal, which is based on common values shared by peoples throughout the world community.
  - that participatory and inclusive democracy plays a role in promoting social justice, reducing inequality, and preventing armed conflict.
  - that women's active participation and empowerment is crucial in advancing inclusive democracy.
  - that democracy should contribute to the protection of religious, ethnic and other minorities.
  - that free, fair and democratic elections are essential to good governance.
  - that education for democracy at all levels ensures that citizens are aware of their rights and civic duties.
3. ADN recognizes :
  - the role of the private sector in democracy building by promoting good and sustainable business practice according to international norms and standards.
  - the importance of international development cooperation as an effective tool for democracy promotion.
  - the importance of constructive engagement with governments and international organizations while maintaining independence and autonomy.
4. ADN upholds and reaffirms universal values such as human rights and democracy as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Universal Declaration on Democracy (1997), UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms [Human Rights Defenders] (1998).

# ANNEX [3]: SEOUL DEMOCRACY DECLARATION / ADN CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES

In accordance to the above principles, ADN shall identify and address key challenges and threats to inclusive and participatory democracy in Asia such as:

- Corruption and failure of accountability mechanisms.
- Culture of impunity.
- Poverty and social inequality.
- Negative impacts of globalization.
- Bad governance including fraudulent elections.
- Authoritarianism, militarization, and armed conflicts.
- Control and manipulation of media and information.
- Religious fundamentalism in all its forms.
- Gender Inequality.
- Exclusion of marginalized groups.

# ANNEX [4]: ADN TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

## **Identity**

1. The Asia Democracy Network (ADN) is an international network(umbrella) of civil society organizations, networks, and democracy advocates in Asia who are dedicated to the strengthening of democracy and human rights.
2. The ADN serves as a multi-stakeholders' platform which is an open and inclusive process led by independent civil society organizations and democracy advocates working in Asia.
3. The ADN is a space for policy dialogue for action and reflection at the regional level among CSOs and other stakeholders.
4. The ADN is a collaborative effort among CSOs engaged in democracy, human rights and development at the different levels – global, regional, national and local – to enhance synergetic effects of their joint advocacy.
5. The ADN serves as a multi-stakeholders' platform which is an open and inclusive process led by independent civil society organizations and democracy advoactes working in Asia.

## **ADN seeks to address the following themes and issues as priority;**

1. Civil society & enabling environment
2. Human rights defenders and democracy advocates;
3. Free, fair and democratic elections;
4. Anti-corruption and transparency
5. Freedom of expression and press freedom,
6. Civic education for democracy
7. Participatory governance and local democracy.
8. Justice and rule of law.
9. Poverty and development,
10. Gender inequality
11. Exclusion of religious and ethnic minorities
12. Peace building

## **ADN engages with the following key inter-governmental institutions and processes in Asia and global as priority;**

1. Community of Democracies (CoD)
2. UN Human Rights Council
3. UNESCAP
4. ASEAN
5. ASEAN+3
6. East Asia Summit
7. SAARC
8. Commonwealth
9. Bali Democracy Forum (BDF)
10. UNDeF
11. G20 and BRICS

# ANNEX [4]: ADN TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

## **ADN engages and cooperate with the following international multi-stakeholder and civil society networks and processes as priority;**

1. World Movement for Democracy (WMD)
2. CoD/Non-governmental Committee
3. World Forum on Democracy (WFD)
4. CIVICUS
5. Asia Europe People's Forum (AEPF)
6. ASEAN People's Forum (APF)
7. Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA)

## **ADN works with the following partner organizations and institutions as priority;**

1. National Endowment for Democracy (NED)
2. Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)
3. Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)
4. Asia Foundation (TAF)
5. Tifa Foundation in Indonesia

## **ADN engages in the following activities**

1. Campaign (country, thematic or sectoral)
2. Information-sharing through website, e-newsletter, etc.
3. Capacity-building and training including exchange program and mutual learning
4. Research on democracy-related issues
5. International advocacy and lobby

## **Governance Structure**

- Governance structure shall be composed of Steering Committee, Advisory Group, Working Group and Secretariat.
- Mandate of the Steering Committee is two years and renewable.
- General Forum of the ADN shall take place at least two years.
- Steering Committee shall meet at least once a year.

## **Criteria for Steering Committee Members**

- Regional civil society networks working on following areas (7) : Elections, Human Rights, Anti-corruption/Transparency, Press Freedom, International Development Cooperation, Peace and Security and Research
- Civil society advocacy networks at the sub-regional level (3): Southeast Asia, South Asia and Northeast Asia.
- Secretariat : National democracy network of hosting country (1) :

# ANNEX [4]: ADN TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)

## Members of the Steering Committee for 2014-2015

1. Elections – Asian Network for Free and Fair Elections (ANFREL)
2. Human Rights – Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
3. Anti-corruption – Transparency International (TI)-Asia
4. Press Freedom – Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA)
5. International Development Cooperation – Asia Development Alliance (ADA)
6. Peace and Security – Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)
7. Research – Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN)
8. South East Asia – Southeast Asian Committee for Advocacy (SEACA)
9. South Asia – People’s SAARC
10. North East Asia – North East Asia Democracy Forum
11. Secretariat – KDN

Component	Mandate, Role and Functions	Criteria, Composition and Number
Steering Committee	Provide leadership and coordinatorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent CSO and networks (regional or sub-regional)</li> <li>• Independent membership-based CSO networks</li> <li>• Operations at regional or sub-regional level</li> <li>• Having expertise on key thematic pillars of democracy</li> <li>• 11 members for 2013-2015</li> </ul>
Advisory Group	Provide moral and political support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationally recognized personalities in the global and Asian democracy movement and organizations including partner organizations</li> <li>• About 5-10 persons</li> </ul>
Working Group	Organize campaign and program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country priority : Myanmar (Burma),</li> <li>• Thematic priority : Education for democracy, local democracy</li> <li>• Sectoral priority :</li> </ul>
Secretariat	Provide administrative support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil society network of hosting organization</li> </ul>

# ANNEX [5]: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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# ANNEX [6]: FULL TEXT OF OPENING CEREMONY REMARKS

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- II. Mr. Hyung-Sik SHIN - Director of Planning and Coordination, Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)
- III. Mr. Tefu HUANG - President, Taiwan Foundation For Democracy (TFD)
- IV. Melinda DE JESUS - Executive Director, Center For Media Freedom & Responsibility (CMFR) / Board Member, Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA) / Organizing Committee for the ADN

## **I. Ms. Bong-scuk SOHN - Chairwoman, Center for Korean Women and Politics (CKWP)**

I sincerely welcome each and everyone of our distinguished guests, who joined us today for the launch of the Asia Democracy Network. My special thanks go out to the 80 or so civic leaders and democracy activists for traveling to Seoul from all corners of Asia.

Korea is a country with four distinct seasons, and we are at the height of autumn right now. This is a beautiful time of the year, when the skies are high and blue, and the fields and mountains are changing colors. Autumn is a season of harvest and abundance. Asia today is like the Korean autumn. The seeds of democracy were sowed in the cold and rainy season. Many people shed their sweat and blood to ripen the fruit. Now, against all odds, democracy has started to blossom in Asia.

In terms of its diversity of language, religion, culture and race, Asia is a treasure trove of human resources. The same can be said about the process of democracy in Asia. Asian countries may differ in their levels, standards and systems of democratization. But the wish and will of the civic societies to reap the fruit of democracy are probably the same. The reason why we are here today is to start a huge wave that will go beyond national borders and spread democracy throughout Asia.

ADN is an international network of civil society organizations and networks as well as democracy advocates who are dedicated to the strengthening of democracy and human rights in Asia. ADN's goal is to promote and consolidate democracy and democratic governance, and to advance human rights through international cooperation and solidarity among democracy advocates and human rights defenders in Asia.

ADN aims to be a watchdog for a mature democracy in Asia. To this end, ADN will actively engage in such activities as capacity-building for democracy education, campaign and advocacy, information-sharing through website, e-newsletter, research on democracy-related issues, and advocacy at international bodies, mechanisms and processes such as the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), Community of Democracies (CoD), Bali Democracy Forum (BDF).

ADN has been made possible through the efforts of KDN and other democracy-related organizations and networks, as well as international organizations. On behalf of the organizing

## ANNEX [6]: FULL TEXT OF OPENING CEREMONY REMARKS

committee, I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who has assisted us. For the launch and operation of ADN, KDN was formed with the help of four organizations; the Korea Democracy Foundation, Korea Human Rights Foundation, East Asia Institute, and Center for Korean Women and Politics. KDN will continue to encourage more like-minded Korean civic groups to participate in its activities, so as to better support the work of ADN.

Let me take a moment to say 'thank you' to Maria Leissner, Secretary General of Community of Democracies, Carl Gershman, President of the National Endowment for Democracy, Peter Beck, Representative of the Asia Foundation-Korea, and Teh-Fu Huang, President of Taiwan Foundation for Democracy for being with us today.

And once again, thank you, to the 80 plus civic society leaders and activists from other parts of Asia.

I hope the next 5 days of the ADN Inaugural Congress and Seoul Democracy Forum will send a beautiful message to the world about Asia's desire and dream for democracy. I ask for your active participation. Thank you very much!

# ANNEX [6]: FULL TEXT OF OPENING CEREMONY REMARKS

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On behalf of the Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF), the Korea Democracy Network (KDN) as well as the Organizing Committee of the ADN Founding Assembly, I would first like to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to be here and to contribute your knowledge and expertise in creating a piece of history in progressing democracy in Asia.

As you can see around in this room, there are about 80 participants from different countries in Asia and beyond who are dedicated to the promotion of democracy and human rights in various fields.

I am extremely happy to see so many democracy advocates and human rights defenders working hard through a series of consultations and preparatory meetings to bring fruition the launch of the ADN.

I still recall vividly the meeting in Lima last October among some of us when we first discussed the idea of the ADN. A follow-up meeting in Ulaanbaatar in April this year caused a domino effect of a series of preparatory meetings in Seoul, Gwangju and Bangkok among organizing committee members of the ADN founding assembly. Finally, here today in Seoul we are launching the ADN. It took exactly 12 months to make our dream come true since the inception of the idea in October last year.

As you know, Korean people have struggled for democracy and human rights for the last few decades and so many people shed their precious blood and lost their lives during democratic uprisings such as the Democratic Struggle in Gwangju in May 1980 and People's Uprising in June 1987. Korean democracy has indebted their pains and blood as well as international solidarity and support. Several former military dictators who were responsible for such bloody massacres and gross human rights violations were brought to justice and put into prison. We are proud of the achievements and milestones that have been made by our predecessors' in the fight for democracy. The May 18 Foundation and Korea Democracy Foundation which I am working as director, were concrete results of such sacrifice and victories.

Today we can see everywhere in Asia the peoples' cry for justice and peace and the Asian people's struggles for democracy which we can still see it continue especially in Burma. I believe it is timely that the Asian civil society organizations and democracy advocate building a solidarity network for mutual support and learning to make the ideal of democracy a reality on Asian soil. We hope that the KDN can be a catalyst in advancing democracy in Asia.

In this regard, my foundation has been organizing the Seoul Democracy Forum every two years since 2009. This year, we are honored in holding our 3<sup>rd</sup> forum in connection to the ADN founding assembly.

I would like to invite you all to stay and attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> Seoul Democracy Forum which will be held here in the same place starting tomorrow for two days. As you know, the official launching ceremony of the ADN will be held at 5 to 6:30 tomorrow during the SDF. Once again welcome to Seoul and hope the rest of your stay is enjoyable. Thank you.

# ANNEX [6]: FULL TEXT OF OPENING CEREMONY REMARKS

## **III. Mr. Tefu HUANG - President, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)**

Dr. SHIN, Dr. SOHN, Minister Yun, Ms. LEISSNER, Mr. GERSHMAN, Mr. BECK, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, I am honored to be invited to participate in the official launching of Asia Democracy Network, the ADN. Firstly I would like to thank you for your warm welcome from Korea Human Rights Foundation and also for putting this event together.

Asia is a region where challenges against democracy and opportunities for democracy coexist. Unlike Western democracies, some Asian countries continue to encounter with political authoritarianism, some have suffered from economic downturns, and some have problems of quality democracy; fortunately, the push for the realization of democracy and human rights has never stopped. Thank to the assistance from international organizations such as National Endowment for Democracy and Community of Democracies, Asian countries have found our way to improve our democracy and human rights step by step. Today, we gather here not only to share the founding of ADN but also to celebrate democracy and human rights achievements for the past decades in Asia. It is true that the establishment of ADN represents an important endeavor for the next stage of the development and democracy and human rights in Asia.

Of course, the mission of ADN is never an easy one. Not only are we able to share the burdens of promoting democracy and human rights in the region within the structure of ADN, but our relationships with one another can also be further enhanced and fortified. It is a never-ending effort that requires devotions and sacrifices from our ADN members. Together, we will make it big and great.

I would like to once again express my utmost gratitude for Korea Human Rights Foundation for making this conference happen. We wish both the conference and the Asia Democracy Network will be successful and produce fruitful results. Thank you all for your attention.

# ANNEX [6]: FULL TEXT OF OPENING CEREMONY REMARKS

**IV. Melinda DE JESUS - Executive Director, Center for Media Freedom & Responsibility (CMFR) / Board Member, Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA) / Organizing Committee for the ADN**

## **Democracy and Media in Southeast Asia**

### Background

This presentation draws from not one but several perspectives.

I think it may help to say a few words about the region where the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA) locates its work and the focal interest of the network, the media and press.

Southeast Asia is a region of great diversity. The regional entity, ASEAN, includes the countries on the southern continent of Asia, known better in the past as Indo-China and the island nations that spread out to the Pacific Rim. There are now ten nations belonging to the ASEAN, with their differences of race, religion, ethnicity as well as a range their political systems, one or the any of which could occasion serious internal and external disputes. But the region has enjoyed relative peace and stability. It has seen economic growth as it looks forward to its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in three years. The imagined community “of nations has become a reality.

SEAPA hopes for the same fulfillment, projecting the aspiration for free expression and free media, weaving this as another thematic thread in the fabric that enfolds the region’s democracies.

ASEAN gained its stability and its expanded membership slowly. We in SEAPA do not see the way for a press freedom network to grow any faster. Indeed, perhaps, it may be more difficult; as ASEAN is not made up only of democracies. And even those that do call themselves democracies do not always fulfill the promise of freedom of expression and press freedom.

In fact, challenges to democratic growth loom large in the trends that one can see across the countries, now represented in SEAPA.

The five organizations that founded SEAPA came from three countries which in 1998 had free press communities. These were Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. The Philippines toppled its dictatorship in 1986. Thailand forced out the ruling military junta in 1992 and Indonesia’s Reform movement triumphed in 1998. Only two years ago, SEAPA accepted an organization from Malaysia which is still struggling even with just the principles of fair elections and a free press.

So SEAPA is young and the emerging trends that it has to contend with are challenges that are embedded in every national struggle to build up a truly working democracy.

All four countries with SEAPA organizations hold free and fair elections by process and procedure. But in all four, the choices of the electorate are limited by the culture of dynastic and patronage politics. The quality of elections may be the root of all the problems. But in all these countries, people still look to elections as a way of bringing about much needed change.

# ANNEX [6]: FULL TEXT OF OPENING CEREMONY REMARKS

I will leave the analysis of this dilemma to the academics and experts in our midst. I think the identification of challenges to democracy is a way for us, the members of this network, to find some common ground so we can work together to address our shared concerns.

The free press communities of Southeast Asia are constantly besieged by attacks and threats. But I will not focus on this problem except as it reflects larger issues. For this presentation, I will take up these problems only in the context of larger failures.

## Corruption and Governance

Elections do not necessarily create good governments. The deficit in governance reflects many other deficiencies, fragile institutions, incompetent bureaucracies, undemocratic leaders. But the staple of political news in Southeast Asia's oldest democracies has been the endemic corruption of government, and the perpetration of a political class that has been defined by self-interest and their application of governance for the benefit of those already in power.

We have an honest president in the Philippines, as Indonesians will say as well of their president. But in the two countries corruption remains rampant. The most recent scandal in the Philippines that has forced Filipinos to mass on the streets in protest has shown the billions of pesos diverted into private pockets through a pork barrel system that has been protected vigorously by elected members of Congress.

Sadly, the free press has not been free of this contamination and some members of the press are part of the cycle of corruption. Money can mobilize the news to favour this or that interpretation or point of view. I think journalism is challenged by the complexity of the issues confronting government, and often, good public officials who struggle to work through stagnating bureaucracies, have to be engaged in helping journalists do their work, often failing to do so.

## Growing Inequality

The economic growth in Asia is creating huge inequalities, with many in the population experiencing little of the benefits of the boon. It is the same inequality that afflicts even the more developed democracies around the world. The huge gaps between rich and poor cannot but hobble democratic practice, as the poor are without access to opportunities and to their share of resources. As I am not an economist, I will not try to say much about how this happens. But in many countries in Southeast Asia, the inequality combines with weak and fragile institutions, which end up serving the needs of the rich and powerful, to the deeper disadvantage of the poor.

Again, this inequality needs to be the subject of journalistic reporting and inquiry. Public awareness raises the possibilities for correction. But journalistic conventions tend to exclude such stories until it is too late.

## Culture of Impunity

Corruption flourishes where it goes un-punished. Impunity builds up on the criminality and corruption of the past regime with more criminality and corruption. Corruption in our politics

## ANNEX [6]: FULL TEXT OF OPENING CEREMONY REMARKS

has grown to a level that others have described as surpassing the excesses of the Marcos dictatorship. Indeed, one can say, it has been democratized, spread out to the greater number of politicians that we have now with the gerry-mandering of congressional districts. I have always believed that where there is rampant corruption there will be gross violation of human rights.

A judicial system that operates for the benefit of lawyers cannot serve democracy, as corrupt politicians and powerful criminals can hire lawyers who master the manipulation of a judicial system to delay trials in court.

In 2009, a provincial official and members of his clan allied with then incumbent president Gloria Arroyo ambushed a convoy led by the wife of a political rival. She was travelling to the area to file her husband's certificate of candidacy. She and her party and some passersby were killed, 58 individuals, including 32 members of the media, working in the provincial press. The trial has been going on for more than three years, and the bail hearing of the primary accused has not yet been concluded at this time.

This is typical of the cases of media killings analysed in the CMFR data base. CMFR tracks the legal cases that it has supported in the courts, as part of the Freedom Fund for Filipino Journalists, which also extends assistance and media defense to journalists facing criminal libel charges and other forms of harassment.

It is no wonder that the Committee to Protect Journalists based in New York which releases an impunity index, ranks the Philippines third to Iraq and Somalia.

Corruption and Bad Government, Gross Inequality in Opportunities and Resources, and the Culture of Impunity – all three are major deterrents to the growth of democracy in Asia.

I think that all three also grow from a significant shortage in the understanding of what democracy means and what it requires for the system to be meaningful not just for some, but for all.

The shortage of understanding also afflicts the media and the press, an institution that is described as a pillar of democracy. Its competence is tested by the reporting complex stories, accounts that must track processes not isolated events. This, among other things, call for a revision of journalism's conventions.

It is also evident that many journalists are not aware of their responsibilities to society and the public. Given the new media, the traditional outlets for analysis and in-depth reporting have found their space shrinking, wondering what lies ahead for journalism in a new world. Media development, the continuing education of journalists and the strengthening of media ethics, must be part of the Asian effort to sustain its democracies. While media can be part of the problem, these instruments are here to stay. Indeed, forecasts see the growth of even more change wrought by media technology. Democracy building must make the media part of the solution.

## ANNEX [6]: FULL TEXT OF OPENING CEREMONY REMARKS

The network members should welcome the media advocates in their midst. Network meetings should involve sharing for the purpose of identifying how each member can contribute or cooperate and share in the tasks of sustaining genuine democratic gains in Asia.

The creation of a working network will not be without its challenges. It will require communication, dialogue, the give-and-take that makes a community to remain united despite differences, the recognition of the common ground and the greater good.

# ANNEX [7]: FULL TEXT OF LAUNCHING CEREMONY REMARKS

## <Congratulatory Remarks>

- I. Mr. Sung-Heon CHUNG - President, Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)
- II. Ms. Maria LEISSNER - Secretary General, Communities Of Democracy (COD)
- III. Mr. Carl GERSHMAN - President, National Endowment for Democracy (Ned)
- IV. Mr. Tefu HUANG - President, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)

## <Solidarity Remarks>

- V. Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL - Chairman, Alliance for Social Dialogue (ASD) Nepal
- VI. Mr. Min Ko NAING - Leader, 88 Generations (Peace & Open Society)
- VII. Mr. Panha KOUL - Executive Director, Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL)

### **I. Mr. Sung-heon CHUNG - President, Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)**

The world now must look beyond sustainable development and must fundamentally concern itself with sustainability.

After the global financial crisis, the continuing spread of the crisis has affected almost all functions of the international community. In order to find a solution, there is a need for participation and debate among various actors at the national, regional and global levels.

Through those experiences the world has learned that it is impossible to overcome the crisis without good governance and democracy, and Asia is no exception. Although there have been significant achievements in realizing democracy in many Asian countries, democracy has not yet been sufficiently established.

On the first International Democracy Day, UN Secretary Ban Ki Moon announced that democracy “is a long struggle that must be waged by individual citizens, myriad communities, and entire nations.” For Asia this means that by sharing experiences with each other, we share a common need to address the issues of democratic governance systems at the regional and global levels, as well as facilitating the strengthening of civil society.

This year, 2013 is a very significant year for the Korean nation because it has been 60 years since July 27, 1953, when, three years after the start of the Korean War, an armistice agreement led to the present day cease-fire. The Korean War not only had an effect on the Korean peninsula, but greatly influenced global events such as the Cold War and the spread of anti-

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communism, and served as a momentum for the rise of authoritarian regimes; it was an event where Asia had a great global influence. South Korea and East Asia are overcoming the 60 year legacy of the Korean War by ushering in a new civilization based on appropriate criteria for human rights, democracy, equality and welfare and a universal agenda for world peace.

Reflecting on the crisis that we are all faced with, we need to find a new vision and new approach in order to figure out where we are and where we need to go. More than anything we will need an open mind and a strong will.

Korea's historical experience demonstrates how democracy, human rights and peace, as well as security and development positively and negatively influence each other. It is well known that South Korea received a lot of help from the international community during the process of democratization. You can see how important international solidarity was to Korea's democratization by looking at Korea's historical experience.

Despite the democratic progress of the last 10 years, when you consider the reality that democracy has stagnated and retreated in Asia, international solidarity becomes even more important. I think that the launching of the "Asia Democracy Network" today is a concrete effort to respond to this crisis and put into practice international solidarity.

The Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF), which will serve on the secretariat of ADN, promises to act as a lever and catalyst that allows ADN to extend democracy all over Asia.

Through the results of full scale discussion over the past year, ADN can mobilize the help and support needed to defend and promote democracy, and it will be able to grow greatly.

I would like to give my congratulations once again on the launching of ADN and wish good health to all participants.

Thank you.

# ANNEX [7]: FULL TEXT OF LAUNCHING CEREMONY REMARKS

## **II. Ms. Maria LEISSNER - Secretary General, Communities of Democracy (CoD)**

Democracy often comes at a very high cost for individual persons, who made way for democracy while risking themselves and their families. Why would they? Why do people go to such extremes, take such risks, endanger themselves, give up a safe life, when it would be so much easier to just shut up and try to carve out a life for yourself within the existing boundaries?

I come from a country where democracy engagement today does not come with any risk at all. It is not controversial. It does not endanger the system. It does normally not challenge the position of people whose economic interests are at stake.

SHIN Dong-Huyk, who fled from camp 14 in North Korea, told us at a dinner with ministers at the 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies that he fled the camp in order to have the freedom to eat chicken, having starved all his life under unimaginable circumstances in the horror camp.

On the other side of the globe, Ninth Montenegro from Guatemala started looking for her husband who had disappeared in a military secret prison, and never stopped fighting for democracy since. She is now an MP in a democratically elected Guatemalan parliament. Lech Walesa, electrician at the shipyard in Gdansk, Poland, fired because of trying to organize a trade union and ignited among other things by the high meat prices in poor communist Poland, risked his future while engaging in the freedom fight in Poland but ended up as his country's first democratically elected president.

Demand for human dignity ties them all together. Democracy may not promise to deliver chickens or lower meat prices. But it allows for the pursuit of development, and it increases the possibilities of having it. What democracy does deliver is human dignity. A life where also persons of power have to bow for the same law as ordinary citizens and where there are no secret prison camps.

Knowing that you are not alone is very important. If you know that others agree in demanding freedom, you will be morally strengthened. The Arab spring came about because people who were upset about the situation understood that they were not alone.

The Asia Democracy Network is a very important step to knit a democracy harness for Asia, both for democracy leaders in old democracies, emerging democracies, flawed democracies and non-free societies.

I congratulate all of you on the successful preparation and launch of the ADN, and assure you that the rest of the global community of democrats and democracies stand ready to support you in your important endeavor.

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## III. Mr. Carl GERSHMAN – President, National Endowment for Democracy (NED)

### Asia's Democratic Future

Our gathering today in Seoul to launch the Asia Democracy Network (ADN) is the culmination of years of hard work and patient effort to build bonds of solidarity among democracy activists across a region so vast that it contains well over half of the world's total population. From the founding of the World Movement for Democracy in New Delhi in 1999 to the meeting of the Community of Democracies in Ulaanbaatar last April when the decision to create this network was formally taken, Asian activists have steadily laid the foundation for what we all hope will be an influential new mechanism to advance the cause of democracy throughout the region.

The great potential of the Asia Democracy Network lies in its being the convergence of many different Asian initiatives for democracy. It builds upon earlier efforts to create an Asia network such as the Alliance for Reform and Democracy in Asia that Sam Rainsy and Chee Soon Juan created more than a decade ago, and the World Forum for Democratization in Asia that was established by the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy in 2005. It links existing networks in different functional areas of work, among them Forum Asia in the field of human rights, the Southeast Asia Press Alliance (SEAPA), the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), and the Coalition of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD) in the political-party sector. It leverages the work of democracy-support institutions in the region such as the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, the Bali Democracy Forum and the Institute for Peace and Democracy in Indonesia, and the Center for Democratic Institutions in Australia. It draws upon the research capacity of the Asian think tanks that are part of the World Movement for Democracy's Network of Democracy Research Institutes. And it connects with inter-governmental initiatives for democracy, in particular the Asia Partnership Initiative for Democracy (APID) created by Mongolia during its chairmanship of the Community of Democracies, and the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) that India helped establish in 2005.

It is especially promising that the coordinating center for the new network is being provided by four Korean groups -- the Korea Democracy Foundation, which is our host today, the Center for Korean Women in Politics, the East Asia Institute, and the Korean Human Rights Foundation. The involvement of the flourishing young democracy of South Korea at the core of this new region-wide effort is immensely promising.

The objectives of the Network will inevitably be shaped by the specific challenges facing the different countries of the region. In the emerging democracies of Asia, it will need to aid efforts by civil-society organizations and research institutes to strengthen democratic institutions, political accountability, and the rule of law. In countries like Burma that are just embarking on what we hope will be a transition from authoritarianism to an open and democratic society, it will need to support the process of transition and the development of a

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genuinely independent civil society and free media. In closed societies like that of North Korea, the need will be to encourage a new opening toward human rights and democratic development.

There are also over-arching challenges that face countries at all stages of democratic development, in particular the need to defend the rights of religious and ethnic minorities and to end poverty by achieving economic growth and inclusive social development.

What can a new Asia Democracy Network add to local and international efforts already underway to support democracy in the region? Let me suggest seven functions that the Network can perform:

- 1) It can enable democracy activists and advocates to speak with a common voice to governments about policies needed to advance democracy, and to the general public about the challenges facing democracy in the region;
- 2) It can articulate the views of civil society to regional bodies like ASEAN and to international democracy associations such as the Community of Democracies, the World Movement for Democracy, and the Asia Partnership Initiative for Democracy;
- 3) It can promote cooperation among regional networks operating in different fields, for example by connecting groups supporting free media to those trying to raise public awareness of issues during elections, or by linking human-rights defenders in authoritarian countries with civil-society practitioners in developing democracies. (Let me add in this regard that I fully endorse the point made yesterday by ChitoGascon that it's important to link civil society to political parties, and to include the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats in the ADN. The great gap between civil society and political parties in Egypt – and the failure of the liberals to organize politically – have had much to do with the problems of the transition in that country.) ;
- 4) It can help integrate the policy research of think tanks into the work of NGOs, democracy practitioners, and appropriate government ministries; and also encourage the sharing of lessons learned about democratic development;
- 5) It can leverage the use of new communications technologies to share more widely information on human rights and innovations in democratic governance;
- 6) It can respond in a timely and coordinated manner to important political developments, new democracy challenges, and gross human rights violations, thereby promoting democratic solidarity throughout Asia; and finally
- 7) It can contribute to the “snow-balling” of democratic progress by providing a mechanism for the transfer of knowledge, skills, and experience from civil-society participants in the more established democracies in the region to activists in newly democratic countries.

As we well know, some voices in Asia have maintained that so called “Asian values” are inconsistent with democracy, which is said to be a Western idea with no indigenous roots in Asia. Since we are meeting in South Korea, it is important to note that, when this view was first propounded nearly two decades ago by Singapore’s Lee Kuan Yew, its leading opponent was Kim Dae-jung.

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Kim advanced three fundamental arguments against the thesis that “Asian values” were incompatible with democracy. First, he argued that democratic ideals were rooted in Asian culture, and that two millennia before John Locke, the Chinese philosopher Meng-tzu had preached a “people-based politics” based on the idea that “the will of the people is the will of heaven” and that the ruler had an obligation to provide good and accountable governance.

Second, Kim argued that Asia had many democratic traditions, among them the requirement that public officials had to pass civil-service examinations, thus encouraging equal opportunity and social mobility; as well as the Confucian teaching that opposition to an erring monarch was a paramount duty, an idea that anticipated both the American Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the “people power” movement in the Philippines more than two centuries later.

Finally, he argued that democracy would succeed and spread in Asia because its flame “continues to burn in...the aspirations of its people.” Authoritarian rulers, he said, might claim to provide effective governance and economic development, but policies “that try to protect people from the bad elements of economic and social change will never be effective if imposed without consent; the same policies, arrived at through public debate,” he said, “will have the strength of Asia’s proud and self-reliant people.”

This idea that governments will have legitimacy only if they enjoy the people’s consent, and that without legitimacy, they will always be insecure and inherently unstable, no matter how much force they can muster, has profound meaning in Asia. It is the reason why democracy has steadily progressed in Asia since the aftermath of World War II, when India and Japan became democracies, and then picked up fresh momentum with the “third-wave” transitions in the Philippines, South Korea, Mongolia and Taiwan and the subsequent transitions in Indonesia and East Timor. With a transition, however uncertain, now underway in Burma, and with an elected government in Pakistan for the first time completing its term and being succeeded by another elected government, the forward movement of democracy in Asia promises to continue. Political scientist Larry Diamond, writing about the growing pressures for democratic change in China and other autocracies in the region, wrote recently that “If there is going to be a big new lift to global democratic prospects in this decade, the region from which it will emanate is most likely to be East Asia.”

I believe that democracy is the future of Asia. It is the system of government that best advances the interests of people and also respects their dignity as human beings. But democracy never comes easily. Its progress requires commitment and sacrifice, hard work and a great deal of solidarity – solidarity with such people as Liu Xiaobo, who is the only Nobel Peace Laureate in prison today; the North Korean Shin Dong-hyuk, whom Maria Leissner mentioned in her remarks; and Min Ko Naing, whose participation in the launching of this Network has been a source of great inspiration. May these values -- and these people -- define our common effort, and may the progress of democracy in Asia give new hope to people around the world who are striving for dignity and fundamental rights.

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## **IV. Mr. Tefu HUANG - President, Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)**

Ms. LEISSNER, Mr. CHUNG, Mr. BADRAL, Mr. GERSHMAN, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, the TFD, I am delighted to be invited to deliver remarks for the Official Launching Ceremony. Firstly I would like to congratulate the organizers on the success of the sessions yesterday and am glad to see them having sparked many helpful and constructive discussions.

Following the third wave of democratization and recently occurred jasmine revolutions in the Arab region, democracy and human rights have become universal values in the international community. In order to create a global environment beneficial for the development of democracy and human rights, it is necessary to strengthen the values and practices of democracy and human rights through collaboration between diversified worldwide networks and non-governmental organizations.

In Asia today, there are many civil society networks dedicated to the enhancement of democracy and human rights. However, Asia continues to lack a region-wide network specifically for democracy activists. While the landscape of Asia projects a rich diversity of culture, religion, history and politics, it has also manifested an urgent need for cross-regional platforms serve as the basis of meaningful networks. On June 17<sup>th</sup> of 2003, which is 10 years ago, the establishment of Taiwan Foundation for Democracy is our first endeavor to provide a cross-regional platform for Asian democratic NGOs. Today, we are sincerely happy and honor to witness the establishment of an Asia-wide ADN coming into being. The Asia Democracy Network, ADN, would bring together democracy activists and practitioners; it should also seek to engage representatives of democratic governments in the region. The ADN would thus create a forum where the ideas and recommendations of democratic activists can stimulate greater cooperation and assistance by the region's democracies in strengthening human rights and democracy in Asia.

It is widely recognized that the idea of democracy can be a common goal for all societies. The crucial point is how to realize the practices of democracy. As the Asia's first national institution for democracy assistance, the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, has cooperated with related organizations at home and abroad to promote the value of democracy. Taiwan Foundation for Democracy's macro and foresighted vision is to consolidate Taiwan's democratization achievements, to endeavor effectively as a member of the international community, and to create an international democratic system network. For example, the TFD has provided the Asia Democracy and Human Right Award and 100,000 US dollars to encourage Asian democracy and human right practitioners every year since 2006. Likewise, the TFD has regularly published both English and Chinese journals to disseminate the ideas of democracy and human rights. In addition to these efforts, the TFD is now engaging in laboring the Asian Young Leader for Democracy program of 2014 aiming at the education and networking of young Asian leaders.

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All of these efforts are made piece and piece, step by step, and contributing to the development of democracy and human rights in Asian region.

There are plenty of opportunities and challenges ahead us. On the one hand, we have to fight against non-democratic measures implemented by authoritarian regimes against citizens. On the other hand, we have to encourage and collaborate with various grass-root organizations safeguarding their basic rights. It is by no means an easy task. We believe the establishment of Asia Democracy Network is a watershed for the development of democracy and human rights in Asia. Upon this new page of development of democracy and human rights in Asia, we are looking forward to seeing the ADN to play a significant locus for all Asian democracy and human right organizations and activists. Meanwhile, we are optimistic for the operation of ADN that, under the cooperation of all representatives from different countries and areas today, would provide an integrated and efficient mechanism generating an even stronger momentum for the development of democracy and human rights in Asia.

Lastly, we at the TFD wish the conference all the best and believe it will mark the beginning of many such gatherings to come. We hope that through the establishment of the ADN that democracy in Asia will flourish both in the present and into the future. Thank you.

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## **V. Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL - Chairman, Alliance for Social Dialogue (ASD)**

Today, we have created a network of Democrats of Asia. It is also a network of already existing networks in Asia. After a long journey, we have now the Asia Democracy Network (ADN). Today, a child has born and now we need to take care of this child to grow. It means more we work for Democracy and Human Rights more a child will grow strongly.

Friends,

This is an era of globalization. We cannot survive in isolation. In today's context, the capitals are globalized and the governments are co-operating among themselves. Now the time has come that we all Asian people need to support and co-operate each other's struggle for democracy and human rights.

As we know that the Democracy and Human Rights Movement itself is an international movement and no ruler can rule without the cover of Democracy. Unfortunately, we have seen some ruler even with military uniform going for election in order to legitimize their rule.

We people always get an inspiration from different movements and struggles. Let me cite two examples: one is when former prime minister of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was executed in late 70's. After that incident, we had a protest rally in Nepal, which was suppressed by then regime of King. As a consequence of king's suppression, later that protests turned out to a mass movement-compelling king to declare a referendum. This sort of people's movement gave a small space to political parties and civil society for their movement against King's autocratic rule. Similarly, the second was in late 80's, when we were preparing a joint movement for democracy in Nepal. At that time, I myself had to go underground defying massive repression of the King's Rule. But when we came to know about the Gwangju Uprising in Korea and the roles played by youths and students during that movement, we were immensely inspired and it boosted us to come to street and organize a mass movement against King's Regime. Later on this movement was proliferated as a movement for Democracy. Eventually, we were able to replace the King's autocratic rule by a Democratic System.

Those were only inspirations, but now, we need to institutionalize our efforts and cooperation. And for this, we have given birth to ADN. Let us uphold our initiations together. And, I am very much sure that ADN will certainly become a common platform for all Human Rights Activists and Democrats of Asia.

Sushil Pyakurel (Nepal)

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## **VI. Mr. Min Ko NAING - Leader, 88 Generations (Peace & Open Society)**

I would mainly like to discuss the Asian culture and philosophy. We, Asia, do have Asian Values. We have grown up being taught to respect elders and to completely listen to the elders' speech. It is true of our society that our human lives have been restricted as we can just obey the orders we are given. In fact, it is similar to a monarchical system. The influence of this behavior can be seen in schools, companies and in society. This system of obedience does not work to encourage new thoughts and views, and to point out the elders' wrong behavior.

I believe that civil society organizations are the foundation of democracy. It does not work by just focusing on the elections. We can review the Burmese 1990 election. We cannot accurately say that winning in the election can guarantee democracy and human rights. Look at the Zimbabwe's opposition party's election winning result, which was denied by the ruling power. Truthfully, democracy and human rights are the philosophies that people have to recognize and practice. We, civil society organizations need to encourage people's knowledge of democracy and human rights. For this reason, there will always be advocacy NGOs. Civil society organizations must work toward strengthening the implementation of the advocate activities.

I intentionally used the word "Strengthening". It is not enough that the organizations are just allowed to exist. The government allows small organizations to establish themselves because they want to make a good show for the international community. It is like showing Bonsai plants to the guests in the sitting room. Civil society organizations must have the chance to strengthen in the right places. Civil society organizations may face the problems of lacking institutionalization during the transitional period.

Since the government departments are used to obeying orders, the government junior authorities' view taking of responsibility as risky. In addition, civil society organizations have not practiced how to implement systematic working activities. We need to change our mindset as well, as a lack of capacity or a weakness in implementation capacity will be damaging to our future activities. It is obvious that networking practically works for both capacity and practice. We should function by networking both locally and internationally. Asia Democracy Network (ADN) is the good example of this opportunity. This representation is very important when we exchange our experiences and cooperate by networking. It is improper that someone remains committed to a barrier even though they do actually represent a specific region or specific class. The public will accept the trustworthy people's speeches when we are convincing people to show more awareness. When people are more aware, their participation will eventually follow. If there is lack of public participation, there will not be any change. I view that consequently, our activities will be ended with a "so called meeting" and we can just submit on paper our project and proposal. I believe that it is important to choose the right representative, to build capacity and to be able to network our work effectively. Therefore, I hope the efforts of Asia Democracy Network (ADN) can fulfill my aforementioned three points. Thank you.

# ANNEX [7]: FULL TEXT OF LAUNCHING CEREMONY REMARKS

## **VII. Mr. Panha KOUL - Executive Director, Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL)**

### **A Solidarity Remark**

Thank you, the organizing committee, for give me the honor to share this solidarity message.

On behalf of the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), the CSOs from Cambodia (who participated in this event)and my own organization, the Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia (COMFREL), I am proud to be part of this historic event; that sees the establishment and official launch of the Asia Democracy Network.

This event has produced a framework for the direction the ADN will take, along with a charter of principles and a governance structure. I believe that the framework will be successfully implemented by ADN's steering committee and its secretariat with the support of its member organizations and partners.

This event confirmed for me that while we members of the ADN work across the political and cultural spectrum that we all agree on a common value as a universal recognized ideal as a goal. The building of democracies, founded on political culture of trust and tolerance is a necessity.

We are aware that in order to create the political commitment needed by ASIAN states to promote and consolidate democracy in Asia, our task will be not easy. We will have to travel a difficult road to reach the ADN vision. But we can achieve this through a strategic engagement with ASIAN member states and key stakeholders, including both governing and opposition political parties.

I am optimistic that through solidarity, effective collective groups and movements and a steadfast belief in democracy, that we at the ADN will demand, persuade and support ASIAN states to build their own democratic societies within a wider community of South East Asian democracies.

I, ANFREL, the CSOs from Cambodia, and COMFREL, look forward to future joint efforts with our fellow members of ADN that work towards the implementation of the ADN mission and the principles and Seoul Democracy Declaration.

Finally, I would like to thank you the organizing committee, and all of the participants who have endorsed this message, I would also like to thank you for the confidence you have placed in the part ANFREL will play in the ADN's steering committee and for your support you have shown in declaring Cambodia a priority country within the ADN working group.

Thank you

ASIA DEMOCRACY NETWORK  
FOUNDING ASSEMBLY PHOTOS

## Opening Ceremony, 21 Oct. 2013



Mr. Hyung-sik SHIN  
Director of Planning and Coordination Department  
Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)



Ms. Maria LEISSNER  
Secretary General  
Community of Democracies (CoD)

# Opening Ceremony, 21 Oct. 2013



Ms. Bong-scuk SOHN  
President  
Center for Korean Women and Politics  
(CWKP)



Mr. Teh-fu HUANG,  
President  
Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)



Mr. Peter BECK  
Country Representative—Korea  
The Asia Foundation (AF)



Ms. Melinda DE JESUS  
Executive Director / Board Member  
Center for Media Freedom & Responsibility / South-  
east Asia Press Alliance (SEAPA)



Mr. Suren BADRAL  
Ambassador at Large  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Mongolia

# Opening Ceremony, 21 Oct. 2013



# Thematic Session, 21 Oct. 2013



Mr. Anselmo LEE (Moderator), Mr. John LIU, Ms. Melinda DE JESUS, Mr. Ichal Supriadi, Mr. Sung-soo KIM, Mr. Juan ACOSTA, Ms. Kumudini SAMUEL, Mr. Netra TIMSINA, Mr. Masaaki OHASHI [Order of Appearance]



# Country Sessions, 21 Oct. 2013



Country Session A:  
Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia



Country Session B:  
Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines



Country Session B:  
Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), Philippines

# Country Sessions, 21 Oct. 2013



Country Session C: Nepal, Sri Lanka, India



Country Session D: China, Mongolia, Vietnam

## Networking Sessions, 21 Oct. 2013



Networking Session: Political Party and Parliaments



Networking Session: CSOs in Southeast Asia

## Networking Sessions, 21 Oct. 2013



Networking Session: CSOs in South Asia



Networking Session: CSOs International (Global and Regional)

## Concluding Session, 21 Oct. 2013



Ms. Melinda DE JESUS, Mr. Anselmo LEE, Mr. Sushil PYAKUREL, Mr. Ichal SUPRIADI, Mr. John LIU



## Launching Ceremony, 22 Oct. 2013



Mr. Sung-heon CHUNG  
President  
Korea Democracy Foundation (KDF)



Mr. Carl Gershman  
President /  
National Endowment for Democracy (NED)  
World Movement for Democracy (WMD)

# Launching Ceremony, 22 Oct. 2013



Ms. Maria LEISSNER  
Secretary General  
Community of Democracies (CoD)



Mr. Teh-fu HUANG,  
President  
Taiwan Foundation for Democracy (TFD)



Mr. Sushil Pyakurel  
Executive Director  
Alliance for Social Dialogue (ASD), Nepal



Mr. Koul PANHA  
Executive Director  
Committee for Free and Fair Elections in  
Cambodia (COMFREL)



Mr. Min Ko NAING  
Leader  
88 Generations (Peace and Open Society)

## Launching Ceremony, 22 Oct. 2013



# Launching Ceremony, 22 Oct. 2013



Interim Secretariat and Staff: Ms. Minji HAHM, Ms. Sujung NAM, Ms. Gangi KIM, Ms. Soo Yon SUH, Ms. Hye-young CHUN, Mr. Gwanghyun KIM, Mr. Ilhyung LIM



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