



Dear Friends,

Sixty five years ago today, after the atrocities against mankind during World War II, the international community came together to create a consensus and define the insufficient definition of basic fundamental rights human beings are entitled to and adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Thereafter, 20 years ago the Vienna Declaration was adopted reaffirming the rights established in the UDHR. This marked the turning point in human right prioritizing the observance of human rights and the strengthening of human rights mechanisms.

Since, the establishments of the set forth human rights machinery the international community has made much improvement. It allowed for a system to be developed to maintain accountability.

Despite the fruits that were harvested from the historical event of 65 years ago, we still are living in a reality where human rights standards are being violated.

Many are still being threatened by violence and persecuted based on their ethnicity, race, and religion. This does not exclude migrants, women and sexual minorities. Growing and shifting populations changing the dynamics of economy are creating a sense of “fear of the other.” The protection of human rights defenders is still enduring hardship.

Authoritarian governments are still at large committing human rights abuses. Through these governments, the essential elements of democracy such as respect for human rights and the principle of free and fair elections are not implemented.

The Asia Democracy Network (ADN) was founded on October 21~22, 2013, as an international network providing a platform for civil society organizations, networks, and democracy advocates in Asia dedicated to the strengthening of democracy and human rights. ADN’s very reason for establishment is to work towards the promotion of a natural environment for human rights so a genuine democracy can thrive.

ADN commemorates Human Rights Day and celebrates the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the UDHR. In addition to the celebration of the human rights achievements we have made thus far, Human Rights Day shall be celebrated as a reminder of our tasks ahead to progress human rights for all. Lastly, we will make this day one of empowerment to all those fighting for human rights and democracy.

In Solidarity,

Asia Democracy Network (ADN)