



ADN Celebrates International Day of Democracy

“Space for Civil Society” (15/09/2015)

September 15, 2015

Asia Democracy Network welcomes the theme of this year’s International Day of Democracy, “Space for Civil Society.” This year’s International Day of Democracy comes at a point where space for civil society, a core part of sustaining democratic societies, is being threatened and shrunken. While democracy is widely recognized as a universal value and ideal, its practices and systems seem to have become more fragile than ever all around the world.

The situation for civil society in many Asian countries has worsened as governments have passed restrictive legislation, muzzled people’s freedom of expression and its tools of communication, in addition to manipulating the judiciary and parliamentary bodies in favor of state agenda.

We wholeheartedly believe that civil society can bring a social transformation at many levels in society. We therefore strive to provide an open and inclusive platform for dialogue where democracy advocates and civil society actors share their best practices and lessons learnt in order to amplify our common advocacy: defending space for civil society. This means to promote democracy that ultimately enables people to freely express their opinions and exercise their rights.

As the new post 2015 development agenda will be launched at the UN Summit in September 2015, it is timely to put our efforts into reclaiming our vibrant and independent space for civil society. The role civil society plays cannot be underestimated through the 17 goals that will define the landscape of humanity for the coming decades. Furthermore, it is imperative for us to make sure governments in Asia join this journey by keeping them accountable.

ADN will continue to cooperate with our partners like the Community of Democracies, as well as look forward to working inclusively with a range of stakeholders from grassroots organizations to inter-governmental organizations in building a real democracy for people, by the people and of people.