



Nov 4-6, 2020

Online Kathmandu Democracy Forum

November 4-6, 2020

Summary Proceedings



NGO Federation of Nepal





Summary

Civil society organizations from 13 countries across the Asia region presented findings of their SDG 16 Monitoring Reports focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants presented 13 national reports and 6 thematic reports over the 3-day Forum. After the presentation, there was an open discussion regarding main findings, pandemic and solutions aimed at promoting democracy and human rights in Asia. Participants in Asia were provided a platform to assess the current situation and challenges to civic space in Asia, and work with regional and national partners to strategize a push back for 2020. The Forum also provided a great opportunity for Asia Democracy Network to assess the impact of its own commitments to the declarations of the previous meetings such as the Busan Democracy Forum. (BuDF) 2018, Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum (UBDF) and Tokyo Democracy Forum (TDF) in 2019.

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I. Introduction

Civil society organizations from 13 countries across the Asia region presented findings of their SDG 16 Monitoring Reports focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants presented 13 national reports and 6 thematic reports at the online Kathmandu Democracy Forum (KMDF) which was held over three days from November 4-6, 2020.

After respective presentations made by the researchers open discussions were held regarding the situation during the pandemic and potential solutions to promote democracy and human rights in Asia. The KMDF was a multi-stakeholder forum in nature, open to diverse stakeholders including representatives of government and international organizations working on issues related to the SDGs, especially Goal 16. All sessions were held online via Zoom with a live broadcast on the Asia Democracy Network's Youtube Channel.

The Kathmandu Democracy Forum (KMDF) 2020 was a joint initiative by the Permanent Secretariat of the Community of Democracies (PSCD), Asia Democracy Network (ADN), in partnership with the Asia Development Alliance (ADA), Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), Asia Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF), Migrants Forum in Asia (MFA), with the NGO Federation of Nepal (NFN) acting as the local host and the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

The Forum aimed to promote democracy and human rights in Asia and beyond, through Sustainable Development Goal 16 of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. It was the third forum of a series of Democracy Forums, the first held in Busan, Republic of Korea – Busan Democracy Forum (BuDF) and the second in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, the Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum (UBDF).

KMDF 2020 was a three-day Forum, and through this event ADN aimed (1) to assess the state of the implementation of the SDGs, especially Goal 16 in terms of democracy and human rights review; (2) to strengthen collaboration and partnerships among CSOs and other Goal 16 stakeholders; and (3) to develop a long term action plan among CSOs in cooperation with international CSO networks regarding their participation and advocacy at the UN Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (Bangkok, March), UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) (July 2020) and other meetings.

II. Opening Statements

A. Opening Remarks

1. Program Manager of Asia Democracy Network Secretariat **Soo Suh** moderated the opening session of the KMDF 2020. She explained that the organization annually implemented a Democracy Forum in Asia promoting Goal 16 of the UN SDGs since 2018. The first and second Democracy Forums in Busan and Mongolia highlighted SDG 16 as an enabler of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and as an integral cross-cutting component with other Goals. She added they were aiming to hold this tradition of a face-to-face forum in Kathmandu, Nepal, however, with the global spread of COVID-19 virus, they were forced to shift it online and redesigned it as a forum with a research component inviting CSOs to monitor and research the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic within the SDGs framework.
2. Secretary General of the Community of Democracies, **Thomas E. Garrett** opened the opening session via video. He stated that the last two democracy forums in Busan and Ulaanbaatar gave the platform for knowledge sharing among countries in Asia and the Pacific, which brought together participants from civil society, policy makers, and other stakeholders including regional and global organizations. He added that they discussed the progress made and ensured the monitoring, reporting and implementation of SDG 16+. He indicated that the current global context with a number of democratic challenges including the pandemic made the achievement of SDG 16 more relevant than ever.

He also noted that CSOs had actively developed the monitoring reports at the country level regarding SDG 16 looking at the impact of COVID-19 during the past few months. He added that the Kathmandu Democracy Forum would provide a platform for knowledge sharing among multistakeholders and CSOs across Asia this year and in the next 3 days they would have the opportunity to hear from civil society and discuss challenges and progress made. He finalized his speech saying strengthening and accelerating the implementation of Goal 16 would be critical to our shared goal which is "Leaving No One Behind."

3. Secretary General of ADN **Ichal Supriadi** delivered a speech at the opening session noting the social and economic vulnerability presented by COVID-19 and negative effect to the respect of democracy and human rights. He mentioned that the Freedom of Assembly is restricted, that leaders exhibited regression in their pandemic responses, and many have taken advantage of the vulnerability of the CSOs, media and opposition leaders in advocating for checks and balances efficiently.

He added that the Forum is evidence of the ongoing commitment to adaptation, innovation and resilience of the CSOs in the wake of COVID-19, saying that CSOs are able to overcome challenges and begin to reconsolidate their work from the online space to produce research and organize this event. He also introduced the contents of the Forum, where participants would be informed on the situation of the Democracy and Human rights in relation to SDG-16 during this pandemic, through 13 national reports and 6 thematic reports which should provide awareness and serve as an evidence base to pursue future advocacy and strategic planning to build resilience in reclaiming the loss of civic space due to the pandemic.

4. President of NGO Federation of Nepal **Jitram Lama** indicated that the Forum is a continuity of similar democracy forums following the Busan Democracy Forum, Ulaanbaatar

Democracy Forum, and Tokyo Democracy Forum, and that the forums have provided multi-stakeholder platforms gathering civil society, governments and international organizations and individuals to exchange information, discuss challenges, share findings and good practices, highlighting SDG 16 as the enabler of the 2030 Agenda along with other cross-cutting goals, expand civic space, and promoting democracy in Asia and beyond. On the same trend, the Forum where civil society organizations from 13 nations across Asia will present their thoughts, observations and findings by keeping SDG 16, human rights, democracy, and civic space at the center and thematic presentations from viewpoints of Dalit rights, disinformation, inequality, migration, and refugees would also be helpful to focus on the major issues in the Asia region today.

He also highlighted the Nepalese CSOs role in the transformation over the last decade including protecting human rights and democracy, supporting social cohesion, promoting accountability, and facilitating effective service delivery. It has been tremendously contributing to achieve the 2030 Agenda by establishing a common platform called Nepal SDGs Forum which is only a recognized multi-stakeholder platform including UN agencies, INGOs, private sector and all major groups and stakeholders. Also, the NGO Federation of Nepal with its members joined in emergency responses during disaster and all types of humanitarian support during this COVID-19 pandemic. He called for everyone to take part in the Forum, listen to civil society voices and build common understanding on our agenda.

B. Opening Chief Guest

5. Minister of Communication and Information Technology **Parbat Gurung** delivered a speech as a spokesperson of the Nepal government. He mentioned that Covid-19 has brought a lot of additional challenges to the world today and Nepal Government has been actively working to manage the situation, with support from UN agencies, development partners, private sector, CSOs, cooperatives and all the people. He highlighted the importance of coordination and collaboration between governments and CSOs to promote peaceful, inclusive and prosperous societies focusing on the SDGs.

He also gave an example of Nepal. When they were fighting Covid-19 in Nepal, NGO Federation of Nepal has been coordinating all the social organizations or CSOs which have been playing a very important role in collaborating and coordinating with Government of Nepal. In managing the quarantine centers and holding centers, and management of Covid-19, there has been a close coordination and collaboration between the CSOs and Nepal Government. He also emphasized on the importance of working to recover from COVID-19, for social entrepreneurship, economic prosperity, and social transformation. He closed his remarks with a commitment that the Nepal government would well-consider the Declaration and Action Plan of the KMDF-2020 and actions and recommendations.

C. Congratulatory Remarks

6. Member and spokesperson of the National Planning Commission **Min Bahadur Shahi** introduced the commitments of the Nepal government for democracy and human rights. The constitution of Nepal was written and adopted in 2015 by the world's one of the rare democratic practices of the Constitutional Assembly elected by the people and constitutional provisions include new economic, social, and cultural rights. It also has a periodic voting system, affirmative actions for marginalized groups and has ensured a fair and well-functioning judiciary system with separation of powers adopted in the constitution and an inclusive society with the social justice principle is promoted with the provision and practice of social security and social protection schemes.

He added that the government has been implementing its 15th periodic plan with specific visions, goals, and targets in line with the SDGs and has made a significant structural transformation by adopting a federal governance system. The Nepal government is also committed to ensuring peace and social justice that can help establish a culture of peace and no exception to suffer from the ongoing COVID-19 crisis that has affected every aspect of human life across the globe. Lastly, he also urged international communities, civil society organizations, and activists meaningful engagement to advocate and lobby for least developed countries for equal access, availability, and distribution of the Covid vaccine.

7. Ambassador of the Republic of Korea in Nepal, **H.E. Park Chong-suk** emphasized that SDGs are vital to achieve progress that is sustainable and to make sure that no one is left behind and progress in a country does not only mean the increase of 'per capita income' but accessibility of an average person in a country to justice and security, equality in terms of job opportunities, and the freedom to speak or write. He also added that SDG 16 is necessary for all countries, either developed or developing.

He added that when people face unexpected difficulties, most of the burdens are imposed on the vulnerable groups. As COVID-19 epitomizes these incidents and disasters, it is very timely for us to take stock of the unprecedented risks for peaceful, just and inclusive societies at this particular moment. He also briefly mentioned the progress of the SDGs in Nepal. He believed that all quarters of Nepal were working to achieve SDG 16 and civil society and non-profit organizations such as the NGO Federation of Nepal have tirelessly worked with the government, private sector, and all other parties concerned. With these tenacious efforts, He confirmed that Nepal would achieve SDG 16 Goal successfully.

III. Overview

A. History of democracy forums in Asia

8. Senior Advisor to Asia Democracy Network **Anselmo Lee** introduced the Kathmandu monitoring project about COVID-19, Democracy, human rights, and SDGs. He presented the overview of what the participants from the 13 countries in Asia had worked on.

Since it was the Fourth Forum, he briefly introduced the history of the Democracy forums. The first Forum was the Busan Democracy Forum in January 2018 about the SDGs and Democracy and the second was the Ulaanbaatar Democracy Forum held in 2019. Also, the Tokyo Democracy Forum as a part of the C20 Summit and the Busan Democracy Forum was held last year again on SDG16 and global civic education. Busan will once again hold the forum this year in November.

B. Monitoring report project

9. Mr. Anselmo Lee presented the objectives of the monitoring project: to protect and expand civic space in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in Asia both nationally and internationally; to build CSO capacity in monitoring, research and advocacy on COVID-19 making use of the mechanisms on the SDGs and human rights; to strengthen collaboration and partnerships among CSOs and other stakeholders in Asia engaged in democracy and civic space, as well as the Goal 16+ in the context of the COVID-19.

C. Data and trends of COVID-19

C.1. Global / inter-regional

10. Mr. Lee provided a general overview of where the countries were in terms of COVID-19. As of Nov. 1, world average of the total number of deaths was 1,200,000 and the average of the total number of confirmed cases were 47,000,000. In terms of the number of deaths and confirmed cases, that of India was the highest among many countries because India has a large of population, but when it comes to data per million, it showed a different picture. He indicated that most of countries in the column of top 20 countries in terms of the number of death per million, were European countries or Central American countries and he couldn't find any Asian countries there.

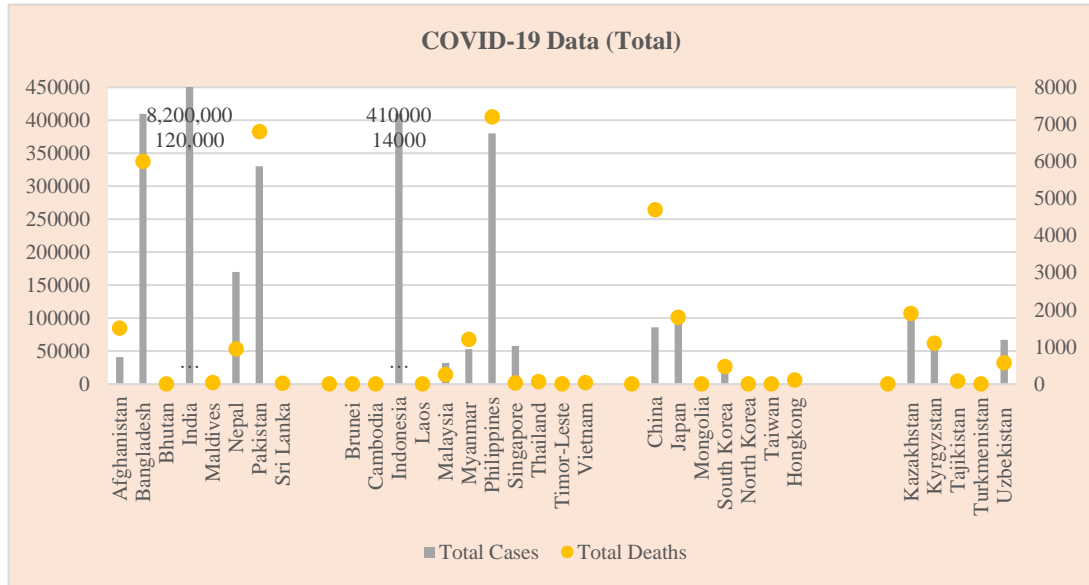
Sub-region / Country (Pop. Mil)	Rank (No of Deaths per million / Total No)	Rank (Confirmed Cases per mil / Total No)	Rank (No of Tests per mil / Total)	No of Total Population	Order of Ranks (Death per million / Total No of Deaths)
World Average and Total	153.9 / 1,200,000	6,967/47,000,000	???	7.8 Billion	
SA	1. Afghanistan 114(39/1,500)	141 (1,056/41,000)	190(3,121/120,000)	39 Million	TOP 20 countries 1. San Marino 1,237 / 42 2. Peru 1,041 / 34,000 3. Belgium 987 / 11,000 4. Andorra 970 / 75 5. Spain 770 / 36,000 6. Brazil 750 / 160,000 7. Bolivia 743 / 8,700 8. Chile 741 / 14,000 9. Ecuador 715 / 13,000 10. USA 712 / 240,000 11. Mexico 706 / 91,000 12. UK 685 / 47,000 13. Argentina 684 / 31,000 14. Italy 639 / 39,000 15. Panama 622 / 2,800 16. Colombia 613 / 31,000 17. Sweden 587 / 6,000 18. France 563 / 37,000 19. Sint Maarten 511 / 22 20. Montenegro 479 / 301
	2. Bangladesh 117(36/6,000)	127(2,467/410,000)	161(14,139/2,300,000)	165 Million	
	3. Bhutan 192(0/0)	169(449/350)	49(220,242/170,000)	773,000	
	4. India 87(88/120,000)	92(5,910/8,200,000)	106(78,578/109,000,000)	1.3 Billion	
	5. Maldives 96(70/38)	25(21,443/12,000)	34(27,247/150,000)	543,000	
	6. Nepal 121(32/940)	94(5,825/170,000)	130(49,242/1,400,000)	29 Million	
	7. Pakistan 123(31/6,800)	134(1,498/330,000)	154(19,932/4,400,000)	222 Million	
	8. Sri Lanka 185(0.9/20)	168(497/10,700)	151(23,351/500,000)	21 Million	
	1. Brunei 163(7/3)	176(337/150)	73(152,647/67,000)	439,000	
	2. Cambodia 192(0/0)	211(17/300)	172(10,739/180,000)	16 Million	
	3. Indonesia 108(51/14,000)	135(1,494/410,000)	159(16,458/4,500,000)	274 Million	
	4. Laos 192(0/0)	216(3/24)	174(8,933/65,305)	7 Million	
	5. Malaysia 161(8/250)	145(971/32,000)	114(65,189/2,100,000)	32 Million	
	6. Myanmar 128(23/1,200)	146(966/53,000)	168(12,619/690,000)	54 Million	
	7. Philippines 98(66/7,200)	118(3,459/380,000)	134(43,472/4,800,000)	109 Million	
	8. Singapore 173(5/28)	65(9,890/58,000)	15(627,360/3,700,000)	6 Million	
	9. Thailand 187(0.8/59)	204(54/3,800)	163(13,997/980,000)	69 Million	
	10. Timor-Leste 192(0/0)	210(23/30)	176(8,493/11,000)	1 Million	
	11. Vietnam 188(0.4/35)	214(12/1,200)	167(12,767/1,200,000)	98 Million	
	1. China 177(3/4,700)	203(60/86,000)	86(111,163/160,000,000)	1.4 Billion	
	2. Japan 148(14/1,800)	157(795/100,000)	153(21,419/2,700,000)	126 Million	
	3. Mongolia 192(0/0)	196(105/350)	147(27,102/90,000)	3 Million	
	4. South Korea 157(9/470)	167(517/27,000)	127(51,175/2,600,000)	51 Million	
	5. North Korea ?	?	?	?	
	6. Kazakhstan 83(97/1,900)	90(5,939/112,000)	61(175,558/3,300,000)	18 Million	
	7. Kyrgyzstan 58(174/1,100)	72(8,975/59,000)	115(63,687/420,000)	7 Million	
	8. Tajikistan 159(9/82)	139(1,147/11,000)	?	10 Million	
	9. Turkmenistan ?	?	?	?	
	10. Uzbekistan 141(17/570)	129(1,990/67,000)	137(40,971/1,377,915)	34 Million	

11. He also showed another view about where the countries were. The world average of the number of deaths per million was 154 and all Asian countries except Kyrgyzstan were below the world average, which meant their performance was not that bad compared to other continents especially Europe and Central America. The table showed that all the figures of powerful G7 and G20 countries were very much higher than that of the world average. He added that the results didn't mean that Asian people were safe as many people in Asia were also suffering from COVID-19, and they had to find a way to reduce the number and how to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

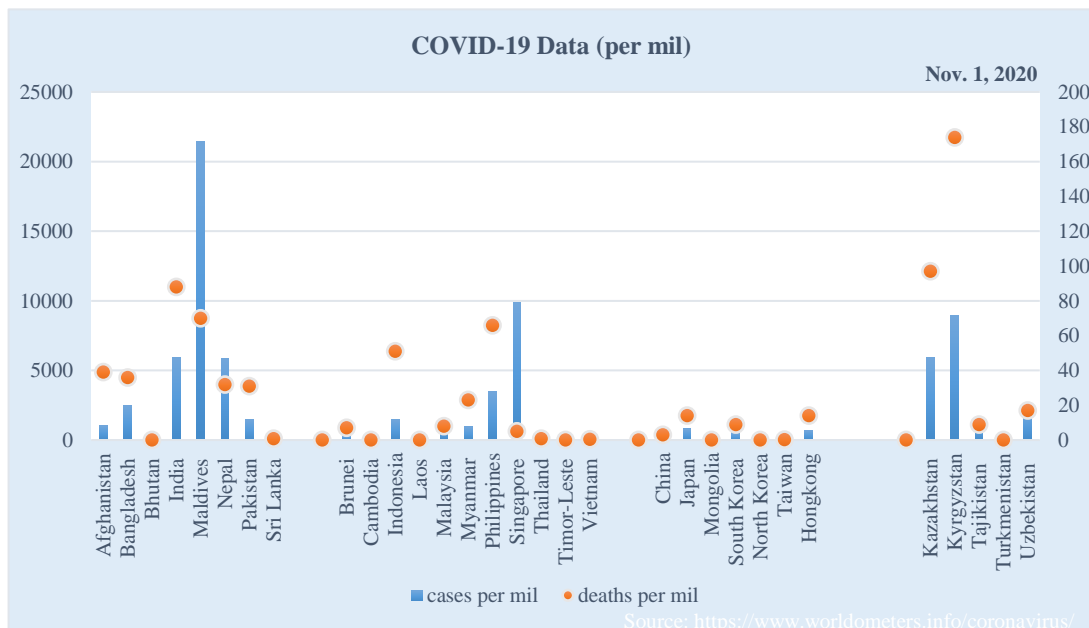
No of Deaths (per mil)	World Average – 153.9 deaths per mil. / 1.2 mil deaths / 36 mil cases				
	South Asia (8)	Southeast Asia (11)	Northeast Asia	Central Asia (5)	Other Regions
501-1,000					Peru 2(1,041 / 34,000) Belgium 3(987 / 11,000) USA 10(712 / 240,000) Spain 5(770 / 36,000) UK 12(685 / 47,000) Italy 14(639 / 39,000) France 18(563/37,000)
251-500					
201-250					
154-200				Kyrgyzstan 58(174/1,100)	Russia 51(192/28,000)
153.9	World Average (1 Nov. 2020)				
51-153	Maldives 96(70/38) India (88/120,000)	Philippines 98(66/7,200) Indonesia 108(51/14,000)		Kazakhstan 83(97/1,900)	Germany 72(126/10,600)
31-50	Afghanistan 114(39/1,500) Bangladesh 117(36/6,000) Nepal 121(32/940) Pakistan 123(31/6,800)				Australia 118(35/907)
21-30		Myanmar 128(23/1,200)			
11-20				Uzbekistan 141(17/570)	
6-10		Brunei 163(7/3) Malaysia 161(8/250)	Japan 148(14/1,800) South Korea 157(9/470)	Tajikistan 159(9/82)	
1-5		Singapore 173(5/28)	China 177(3/4,700)		New Zealand 172(5/25)
0-1	Sri Lanka 185(0.9/20) Bhutan 192(0/0)	Thailand 187(0.8/59) Vietnam 188(0.4/35) Timor-Leste 192(0/0) Cambodia 192(0/0) Laos 192(0/0)	Mongolia 192(0/0)		
No Data			North Korea ?(??)	Turkmenistan ?(??)	

C.2. Asia

12. He also showed the table about the total number of confirmed cases and deaths of Asian countries. In the table, India was the highest in the number of confirmed cases and deaths among all in Asia, because India has a large population. Northeast Asia and Central Asia showed much lower numbers than average, but within Southwest Asia and Southeast Asia there were significant differences between countries. Bangladesh, India and Pakistan had the highest numbers in Southwest Asia, while Indonesia and the Philippines had the highest numbers among Southeast Asian countries.

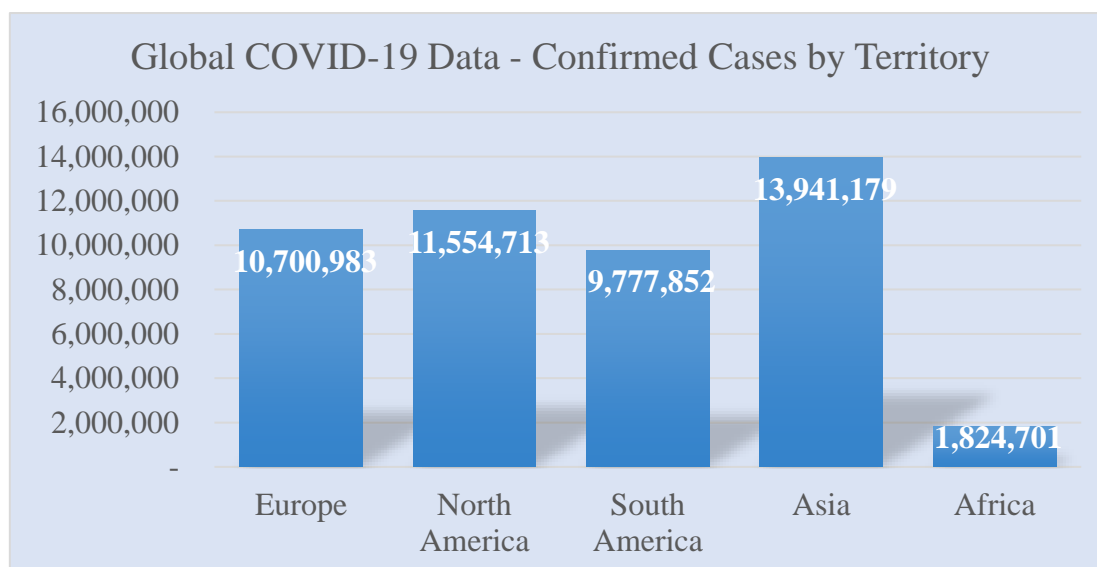


13. He added that, in terms of the data table for the number of confirmed cases and deaths per million, a completely different pattern appeared. The figures in India had been lowered, and in the Maldives and Singapore were higher.



C.3. 4 Sub-regions in Asia

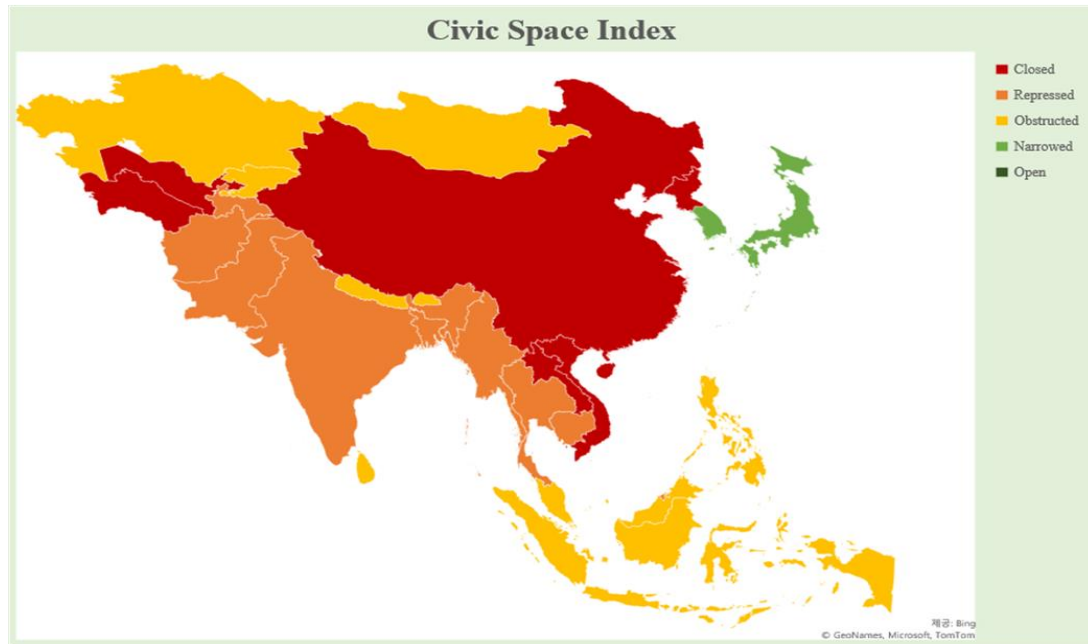
14. He showed a data table by region in Asia and the trend of increasing number of deaths by country. Also, looking at data by continent, he noted that the number of confirmed cases in Asia was the highest and this was probably due to the very high figures in India. He added that looking at data per million, Asia seemed to be low.



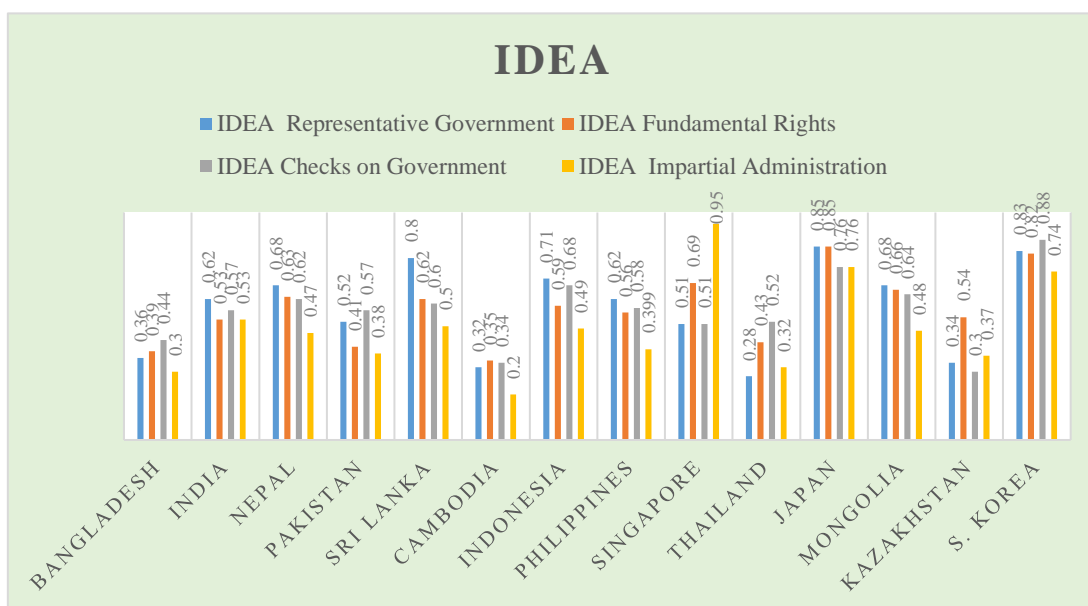
15. He showed the status of each region in Asia. In South Asia, India had the highest total number of confirmed cases and deaths, followed by Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal. In the meantime, Maldives was the highest in terms of that per million.
16. In Northeast Asia, the total number of confirmed cases was highest in Japan and China, and the total number of deaths were highest in China. When looking at that per million, Japan, Hong Kong, and Korea were the highest in that order.
17. In the case of Southeast Asia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Myanmar, and Malaysia appeared in that order, while the rest of the countries had few confirmed cases. In terms of the number per million, the number of confirmed cases was much higher in Singapore, while the number of deaths was higher in the Philippines and Indonesia.
18. In Central Asia, Kazakhstan had the highest figure and Kyrgyzstan had the highest figure per million.

C.4. Democracy and Civic Space in Asia

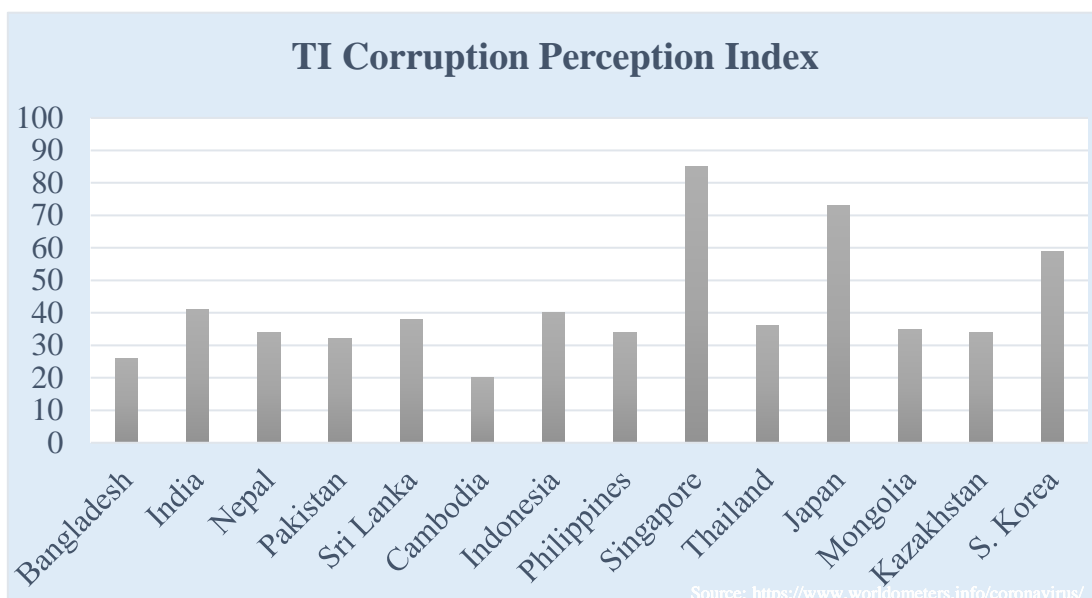
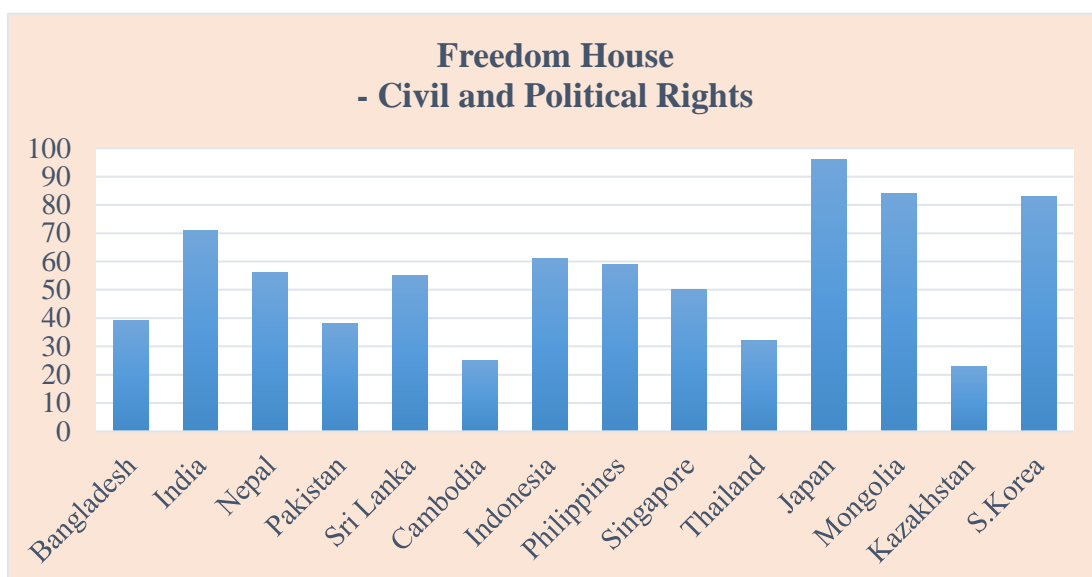
19. Mr. Lee introduced the Civic Space Index based on monitoring results on civic space of the last several years. There were 5 categories: open, narrowed, obstructed, repressed, and closed. There was no country under “open” category and only two countries, Japan and South Korea were in the “narrowed” category. Many of the Southeast Asian countries and almost all South Asian countries except Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka were under “repressed”



20. He also showed International IDEA data in terms of representative government, fundamental rights, checks on government, impartial administration, which showed which country was more advanced in terms of democracy. Generally, Japan and South Korea were much better than other countries. Singapore, Sri Lanka and Nepal were also relatively good.



21. He presented other tables including the Democracy Index from EIU, Human Rights Index, Freedom House Index, World Freedom Index, Human Freedom Index, RSF Press Freedom Index, HR Defenders Protection Index, TI Corruption Perception Index, and Rule of Law Index of 13 Countries and South Korea. According to the Freedom House Index, Bangladesh and Pakistan were facing a lot of challenges in terms of civil and political rights. Interestingly, Singapore was at the top in terms of TI corruption perception, while Human Rights Index of Singapore was not very high. And the other index had very similar patterns with others.



IV. National reports

A. Kazakhstan

Section	Main points
Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kazakhstan's public health system has also proven to be ineffective in addressing unknown threats. • The pandemic has significant consequences for the rights of the child and the right to education. Not all educational establishments or students have the equipment necessary for effective distance learning. • The COVID pandemic has led to massive changes in labor markets. • The restrictions introduced by the Kazakhstani authorities, were arbitrary and discriminatory. • Domestic violence has increased by more than 40% since the start of the first lockdown in Kazakhstan, compared to the same period last year.
Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Government put restrictions on journalists, health care providers, and others attempting to inform the public. • Respect to Freedom of Expression: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Kazakhstan, the authorities have used existing laws to suppress freedom of expression among activists and journalists. • Freedom of Assembly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new law regulating public assemblies was moved through parliament while the country was under lockdown, impeding public debate and blocking potential protests of the bill. • Measures and States of Emergency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The restrictions resorted to by the Kazakhstani authorities, were of arbitrary and discriminatory nature.
Government Response to the COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of coordination • Censorship and threats to independent media • Continued political oppression in the country • Excessive violence by security forces
Civil Society Response to the COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-initiatives and humanitarian support to vulnerable groups • Feeling the gaps and complementing state capacities in response to the pandemic • Strengthening networks and collaboration with CSOs

<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1)limit emergency restrictions affecting basic rights in duration; (2)involve National Human Rights Institutions, civil society activists and human rights defenders in every stage of this epidemic efforts; (3)develop and introduce a formal mechanism of engagement between the government and CSOs; (4)provide emergency funding that will allow democracy and human rights organizations to continue their work; and (5)ensure that all policies and measures respect and uphold human rights, the rule of law, protect the civic space and prevent democratic backsliding. • International organizations should (1)increase commitments to defending democracy globally; (2)integrate key activities on COVID-19 preparedness and response into existing plans; (3)revise approaches aimed at ensuring democratic governance and human rights protection; (4)support civic advocacy and monitor efforts that promote transparent decision-making on crisis response activities; and (5)develop funding mechanisms dedicated to support civic initiatives emerged due to Covid-19 provide democracy support. • CSOs should (1)work together and across sectors, to support and complement as much as possible the efforts of multiple stakeholders; (2)make document existing solutions and initiatives launched by CSOs; (3)coordinate joint programming activities and share lessons showing democracy’s advantages in crises; (4)create innovative initiatives to promote democracy efforts.
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B. Bangladesh

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns are growing over the country's limited coronavirus testing capacity. • Patients with serious complications are being returned as there are no free ICUs. • Since the lockdown, there has been a sharp decrease in the number of people accessing basic primary health services through community health structures. • The humanitarian impact is likely to be among vulnerable groups. • Due to the school closure, a higher number of children are staying at home. • Food Security directly or indirectly challenged due to the COVID-19. • A significant portion of the non-government job holders lost their job. • Many migrant workers have been sent back to Bangladesh. • Older people are more vulnerable to infections due to COVID-19.
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government is less interested to involve other political parties and civil societies to overcome the COVID-19. • The crisis management has become increasingly bureaucratized. • The over exercise of the Digital Security Act raised the question of right to information. • The right to peaceful assembly has been restricted. • There is a lack of coordination between different government agencies. • The role of opposition political parties and private sectors is less impressive.

<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several policy measures including social safety net and other support programs and cash assistance for the low-income and marginalized groups. • Right and effective preventive measure in the Rohingya refugees' camp • To set up well-functioning SDG affairs Office. • The VNRs in 2020 were prepared and reviewed jointly by the government and the representatives of NGOs, CSOs, DPs, and private sector. • The health workforce in Bangladesh is overstretched. • Enhancing the access of citizens to essential quality medicines has been one of the priorities of the government. • Bangladesh Election Commission conducted a good number of parliamentary by-elections and local government elections. • The government acted about the scandal around mask supplies and corruption in relief operations.
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of single coordinating and networking alliance. • A big gap observed in communication, coordination, and common plan of actions between the NGOs. • Need to scale up and widen partnership with government. • Proper participants selection process must be ensured by NGOs without the interference of groups with vested interests. • Need easy, understandable and local language-based communication tools. • A pool of resources organization at national and regional level should be capacitated. • All response plans must include ensuring standards. • Participatory, inclusive and people's centered process must be ensured by CSOs. • Regular follow-up, monitoring and evaluation must be ensured by the CSOs.
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1) recognize CSOs as partners of SDGs implementation; (2) finance CSOs; (3) draw up a program to take mobile banking literacy; (4) scale up the anti-COVID intervention through partnership with CSOs; (5) integrate CSOs in the government's anti-COVID plan of action. • International organizations should (1) finance NGOs; (2) should give a technical and knowledge based support for CSOs; (3) prioritize sectors/interventions such as food security to support disadvantaged communities; (4) expand financial support on most poverty stricken areas and marginalized communities; (5) coordinate with the clusters, government agencies and local CSOs to get information, needs identification & assessment and for response to the crisis; (6) document experience, set up a mapping mechanism and develop a social audit system; (7) strengthen social service work force for addressing the problem.

C. India

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lockdown (1)disrupted all forms of economic activity; (2)affected livelihoods of 360 million; (3)pushed unemployment among salaried and labor classes; (4)affected employment and livelihood of women; (5)affected supply chain to the poor, marginalized, dependents and weaker sections of society. • Concerns raised on the quality of test kits, isolated cases of patient rights violation/discrimination. • Initially health infrastructure was minimally utilized during the start of the pandemic, however normal services were critically affected owing to the increasing patients. • Mid-pandemic in June and July 2020 there was a virtual collapse of health services which was responsible for increase in death rates due to inordinate delay periods in giving first line treatment to patients.
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-transparency in information of monies collected in PM-Cares fund. • Non-progressive parliamentary legislations passed during the COVID crisis. • Extraordinary powers conferred to police. • The courts were closed during the lockdown; however, they were resumed albeit via virtual video conferencing. • Access to justice for Dalit communities has been difficult with a recent rape and murder of a minor girl in India. • Many tribal groups have faced hindrances in getting access to justice. • Increased crime and domestic violence during lockdown periods have had a devastating effect on women. • There has been an appreciable response by local democratic institutions in guiding mitigation and relief activities and their contribution and collaboration with civil society has been adequately recorded.
<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued directives of all government offices to remain closed until further notice. This impacted and hindered several important deliveries of public goods. • Press Information Bureau (PIB) highlighted the Supreme Court's directive to the media to maintain a strong sense of responsibility while reporting on issues pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that unverified news capable of causing panic is not disseminated. • Strict social distancing measures were enforced, with omnipresence of police officers cordoning and sealing public places or operating them with restrictions.

<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSO sector praised for its contribution in mitigating the pandemic. • Indian Civil Society Organizations reached out to economic migrants with food and shelter services. • Provisioned masks/ sanitizers to people during lockdown. • Raised working capital for small businesses to cope with the deteriorating economic situation. • Provided linkages for livelihood generation for small artisans, manufacturers, women groups. • Enabled vulnerable, disabled, marginalized communities to become empowered. • Used limited resources to ensure outreach of services.
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1)increase space for public participation on health policy; (2)acknowledge and support the role of civil society in combating the pandemic; (3)ensure financial assistance to vulnerable sections of society through cash transfers; (4)create special policies of protection for disabled, marginalized children, girls and elderly; (5)promote local livelihoods via partnership with civil society organizations; (6)create a conducive regulatory regime for CSOs in India • International organizations: (1) UN should collaborate with civil society in India on SDGs via integrated mechanism that allow multi-stakeholder partnerships. • (2) G20 should give more weight to financing development initiatives. • KMDF should call on the government of India to be more sensitive to the concerns of civil society.

D. Nepal

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People’s lives: poverty and deprivation, fear and uncertainty, insecurity and hopelessness. • Health: accessibility and availability issues in terms of test and treated of Covid-19—people with chronic diseases and requiring regular health check-ups and observation are deprived, regular health services affected; deprivation of sexual and reproductive health services, psychosocial problems, increased suicide cases • Livelihood: loss of jobs/unemployment, serious effect to wage laborers. • Human rights: right to food, right to health, right to life, right to education. • Deprivation of education needs, and accessibility to water, sanitation and hygiene.

<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing between lockdowns/restrictions /social distancing measures and right to peaceful assembly and association. • Press and media freedom: dissemination of right and authentic information is required but arrests of media persons, forceful removal of online content, shutdown of online media outlets, threats and attacks on media persons, misuse of cyber law are not acceptable. • Civil society voices and public participation are undermined during the pandemic. • Policies governing CSOs are still in transition: outdated laws still governing NGOs and CSOs, multiple regulatory requirements from local governments, province and federal governments, social welfare Council, tax authorities. • Crunch of funds and resources.
<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rescue/evacuation of Nepalese from aboard and the closure of international borders and flights; and early lockdowns; but unprepared for management of the influx of thousands of Nepali migrant workers. • Management of isolation and quarantine centers with crowded, poor hygiene and sanitation—little consideration of the special needs and sensitivities of the women, children, older people and the sick at the quarantine centers were not managed well. • High-level Committee for Covid-19 Control and Response and Establishment of Covid-19 response fund; Response plan, guidelines and procedures adopted. • low civic cooperation and sense of self-responsibility. • the delivery of the relief policy and packages delayed or hard to receive. • Government would no longer provide free test and treatment to Covid-19 patients. • Hospital beds are already full and even the normal hospital beds are hard to get. • Health condition of people at the home quarantine are not adequately monitored. • Weak Transparency, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness.
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in management of isolation and quarantine places together with local government. Participation in data collection, contact tracing and support. • Awareness advocacy and campaign; Distribution of relief materials. • Human Rights Situation Monitoring Network Regarding the COVID-19. • Continuous monitoring of Covid-19 management, response and human rights situation, leading to reflections and reports. • Strategic plan formulation about the CSOs' role.

<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1) make an impact and needs assessment of Covid-19; reform and restructure the health infrastructure and systems; (2) prepare effective plan and adopt effective measures to accelerate the prevention, response, building back better and early recovery; (3) introduce policies and measures with special packages to support the neediest; (4) take into account the fundamental rights and the court ruling; (5) take overall responsibility of prevention, testing, tracing and treatment of Covid-19; (6) Encourage and make space for civil society organizations. • International organizations should (1) enhance accountability mechanisms (2) make effective the regional cooperation forums; (3) ensure civil society participation and voices; (4) create enabling environment to increase funding and cancel debts to the poor nations; (5) scale up the international cooperation during the pandemic; (6) Support CSOs as partners in localization, advocacy and monitoring of the SDGs.
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E. Pakistan

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During lockdown, services like OPD, immunization, preventive health care and SRH service delivery had been severely impacted. • On March 13, The Government of Pakistan closed the educational institutions and on April 14th, tele school in Pakistan was initiated to help public school students and minimize their learning loss. • Women and children from the disadvantaged households, homebased workers, domestic workers, daily wage earners and especially pregnant women, are among the most impacted during this pandemic. • There are growing numbers of extremely vulnerable refugee families whose livelihoods have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly daily-wage earners that require urgent support.
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interior ministry has relaxed the rules for select INGOs willing to engage in relief work after the coronavirus emergency for six months. In contrast, Punjab's Provincial Disaster Management Authority requires that ration distribution by the NGOs be under its control. The two actions are inconsistent with one another.

<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health First: protecting health services and systems during the crisis. • Protecting people: social protection and basic services. • Economic Recovery: protecting jobs, small and medium-sized enterprises, and the most vulnerable productive actors. • Macroeconomic response and multilateral collaboration. • Social cohesion and community resilience. • Smart lockdown, kept economy open, stimulus program, protected the rural areas, tireless doctors, and civil society initiative.
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charitable disposition and efforts to mutual aid where state resources limited. • CSOs/NGOs received exemption letter for signing of MOUs with Economic Affairs Division for six months.
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1)implement multi-stakeholder’s consultative processes to understand impact of COVID-19 on human development policies and structures at national and regional level to suggest appropriate and doable way forward; (2)initiate multi-stakeholder dialogue among parliamentarians, media, political parties, CSOs, academics, labour unions and private sector at national and regional levels to achieve demands under Civic Charters. • CSOs should (1)launch a robust sensitization campaign for public awareness based on the past learning & experience; (2)initiate multi-stakeholder dialogues at national and regional levels and suggest appropriate measures on how to achieve the SDGs in the current scenario; (3)develop Civil Society Priority Frameworks on the SDGs at national and regional levels; (4)identify government commitments related to democratic values & culture including civic space and human rights to develop Civic Charter of demand.

F. Sri Lanka

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public health consequences were limited owing to a free healthcare system and an efficient public health network. • A serious contradiction and misuse of international instruments such as the ICCPR originally meant to combat violence and discrimination based on race, religion and ethnicity was explained in the report. ICCPR had been misused to curb freedom of expression as well as to intimidate and threaten dissenting voices. • 20th Amendment, passed in October 2020, significantly diluted these progressive advancements in terms of governance. The most relevant institution regarding transparency and accountability, the Audit Commission, was abolished by the 20th Amendment. • The government also abolished the National Procurement Services Commission, which was established to “formulate fair, equitable, transparent, competitive and cost-effective procedures and guidelines” for government procurements, and ensure integrity, transparency, and accountability.
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The curfew provided an opportunity for a president who came from a military background and favored the military over existing administrative structures to establish a near-authoritarian style of governance. • The health of democracy, the rule of law, and constitutional freedoms of citizens remain at risk from an equally dangerous virus as COVID-19, one that has been contracted by the body politic of Sri Lanka during curfew. • Fake news: a private television channel that is considered pro-president aired a graph that showed a downward trend in the numbers of infections. However, the graph was misleading in 19 April. • The COVID-19 pandemic has been exploited by the Sri Lankan government to impose restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, resulting in the arrest and detention of social media commentators.
<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bulk of the workload involved in handling the COVID-19 pandemic was and is done by the tributaries of Sri Lankan Ministry of Health (MoH). • Cluster control and total quarantine in designated centers at the 1st wave • Clustering and imposing curfew target locations, cities, and villages at the 2nd wave. • A Constitutional change towards concentration of powers with the Executive at the cost of Legislative and Judicial branches. • A new political regime settling in. • Expedience to hold an election to consolidate power • Military playing a key role in Covid-19 combatting.

<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thirty-two trade unions, press freedom organizations, and civil society groups banded together to issue a joint statement which noted that “it appears, under the guise of the suppression of COVID-19 epidemic, the government is suppressing the right of people to express their views and their right to protest. • The space for Sri Lankan civil society is rapidly shrinking and for several months, civil society organisations have been subject to intensified military surveillance and questioning by different government authorities. • International CSOs issued a joint statement and concluded that “Considering growing concerns over shrinking space for dissent domestically, the Council remains effectively the only forum where Sri Lankan civil society has the possibility to engage openly in dialogue with the Government and other States on human rights concerns in Sri Lanka, and even this space is increasingly under threat due to deepening risks of reprisals against Sri Lankan civil society actors who speak at the Council.”
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G. Cambodia

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambodia did not have a complete lockdown or compulsory stay-home orders. • Widespread community transmission of the Covid-19 did not happen in Cambodia. • Cambodia’s land borders have been shut, and the foreigners who travel to Cambodia required medical certificate and insurance. • Cambodia government has cut the national expenses to save roughly \$400 million of national budget for coping with COVID-19.
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious concern over the restriction environment and curtailment of freedom of expression for Cambodian citizens. • The Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations (LANGO) cause challenges on civic space and democratic development in Cambodia. • The recently promulgated Law paves way for the government to curtail press freedom and freedom of expression. • The Law can potentially be used to infringe on the fundamental rights.

<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cambodia has imposed strict measures in three different fronts: 1) preventing imported cases into Cambodia, 2) preventing local transmission within Cambodia, and 3) treating Covid-19 infected patients. • insufficient approach to engage all key stakeholders, like private sector, CSOs and the government itself, in consultation, decision making, and resilience preparedness. • Concerns on public procurement and budget expenditure. Need of transparency and to be informed to the public. • Need of zero tolerant on discrimination in providing fund relief. • Gap of information.
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society is a crucial actor in monitoring and implementation of SDGs 16, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic on democracy and civic space. • CSOs are active in holding policymakers to account for the commitments they have made to meaningful participation, accountability, non-discrimination, empowerment, and to link SDGs 16 to human rights standards/mechanism. • CSOs are trying to consider right to health, right to Education, right to food, right to work, inequality, gender equality, and environment.
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1)strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development with CSOs; (2)mobilize a CSOs Working Group on Cambodia SDGs; (3)lobby the United Nations Resident Coordinator/UNDP in Cambodia and UNESCAP to support developing a “Cambodia CSO Road Map to SDGs 2021-2030.”; (4)mobilize CSOs to advocate the government to establish an independent national human rights institution by 2023, and monitor the implementation of SDGs recommendations by the government and relevant bodies; (5)the government should ensure that the CSDGs 16 align with the Global SDGs 16; (6)develop communication strategy and raise public awareness on SDGs and Human Rights; (7) establish a monitoring and reviewing mechanism of CSDGs to hold government more accountable to SDGs. • CSOs should (1)build solidarity through multi—stakeholder dialogues and international monitoring to exchange good practices and effective response to Covid-19 by using international frameworks such as VNS, UPR or human rights treaties; (2)involve the principle of leaving no one behind to youth to use their potential for transforming our world to sustainable development • The KMDF should (1)consider youth as the driving force to realize the global agenda; (2)provide a crucial platform to allow CSOs in Asia to monitor target countries’ situations on Covid-19; (3)follow up monitoring and evaluation of SDGs implementation in their perspective; (4)strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development; (5)Systemically change through transformational policies

H. Indonesia

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to limited tracing and among the least prepared in ASEAN in public health capacities, Indonesia is one of the hardest-hit countries in the number of reported cases and deaths from the coronavirus in Southeast Asia • Limited tests number • COVID-19 disrupted 83.9% immunization and hindered TB and other chronic illnesses treatments, & access to sexual and reproductive health facilities • COVID-19 quarantine increases risks of domestic violence against women • Increasing number of child marriage and women’s time doing unpaid care and domestic work • Affects the fulfillment of rights and access to sexual and reproductive services for women • The HoR excluded Draft Bill on Sexual Violence Eradication from HoR’s 2020 National Legislation Priority Program • By early September 2020, 3.5 million people lost their job • Substantial decline in income of informal workers (the majority of Indonesian workers) • The number of poor people increased, and the likelihood of Indonesians falling from poor to very poor has increased.
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policing and criminalization based on vague concepts, such as ‘hoax’, ‘fake news,etc • Robust cyber patrol by the authority by the authority after the issuance of National Police Telegram instructing monitoring of citics, opinions, and insults to President and/or other public officials. • Cyber-attacks against activists and media, hacking, doxing. Tempo and Tirto.id’s websites were hacked after reporting State Intelligence involvement in COVID-19 vaccine production • Using excessive force and forced criminalization to impose Large Scale Social Restriction and other restrictive measure, criminalizing for ‘mere’crowding • Police monitoring civil society’s work, such as Jogja Food Solidarity’s community kitchen and distribution of food • Meetings of CSOs is forcefully disband by police due to ‘public concern’ • Using COVID-19 to hinder human rights defenders’ works, such as claiming three activists from WALI2 East Kalimantan to be tested positive of COVID-19 with no evidence and resulted in their eviction from their secretariat

<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of focus on essential sectors and still focusing on economic sectors • The main framework of pandemic handling, Law No, 2/2020 addressed mostly the economic sector and overthrows accountability principle because Government cannot be prosecuted under criminal and civil law, decisions and actions cannot be brought to State Administrative Court, and any costs incurred cannot be assessed and considered as 'state loss' • Undermining rule of law in implementing COVID-19 measures, e.g. Large-Scale Social Restriction • Use of excessive force, forced interpretation of law to arrest and detain citizens, denial of access to legal aid for protesters • Involvement of National Police and State Intelligence • Lack of transparency and questionable quality on COVID-19 data, with President admitted to deliberately holding back data (March 2020) • Pass controversial laws that are otherwise facing huge protests and social unrest in normal times. • Lack of coordination between the central and local governments to respond to COVID-19 crisis
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the onset of the pandemic, CSOs were overwhelmed with adapting the programs to the new restrictions, e.g. moving online. • CSOs attempt to make recommendation to the Government at the early stage of the pandemic, e.g. lockdown measures, zonation, gender mainstreaming etc. • Initiatives to help citizens, e.g. community kitchen, crowdfunding to help the front liners • Adapting and find new ways of advocacy and the like, with the existing trajectory human rights violation will continue, thus actively defending and not taking for granted the existing, and continually shrinking civic space • Campaign to promote citizen participation, transparency, and accountability in handling COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. • Urge for better COVID-19 data management
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1)prioritize COVID-19 recovery by rigorous Test, Track, Trace and Isolate measures to reduce the number of new cases and increase transparency in doing so; (2)prioritize assistance to essential public sectors such as education; (3)prioritize social assistance for vulnerable groups; (4)implement regulation concerning Gender Mainstreaming in the Disaster Management; (5) refrain and stop using emergency situation or COVID-19 pandemic as an excuse to free the Government from accountability and transparency (6) Mainstreaming the principle of SDGs and Human rights in COVID-19 responses to build back better • CSOs should (1) make a joint pressure on Governments regionally; (2)build digital capacity (3)implement joint campaign on the importance of gender mainstreaming in COVID-19 handling; (4)increase substantial collaboration on human rights; (5)make joint solidarity statement for States participating in KMDF2020 that are experiencing severe restriction of fundamental freedoms during COVID-19 pandemic; (6) make joint urgent calls for Governments to protect civil society and human rights defenders' work

I. Philippines

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern for mental health of elder people, women, and children. Access to health services made difficult. • Schools closure • Unemployment rate ballooned • Poverty rate increased • Violence against women and cases of rape increased. • Philippines generated much infectious healthcare waste. • Many overseas Filipinos repatriated. • Food relief did not reach their communities • High mortality rate from COVID-19 disproportionately affects the older Filipinos
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further shrinking of the civic space or limitations to actions by CSOs and human rights defenders in the time of Covid-19 began • Reports to PAHRA of human rights violations • The order: “shoot to kill” those violating the enhanced community quarantine (ECQ). Then, police shot a mentally challenged man. • As Congress is deliberating on the reinstatement of the death penalty posthaste
<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are several reports of physical torture during arrest and numerous cases of cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment. • Marginalization & non-participation of peoples in combatting COVID-19 pandemic. • During the Pandemic, the Anti-Terror Law was passed and signed into law • Killings, Continuous Red Tagging and Harassment of Human Rights Defenders
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAHRA adopted to lockdown and working from home, by maximizing the internet platform they broadcasted more than 50 sessions of different relevant issues. • Continued human rights defense and protection despite quarantines; HR education and information, online protests, and monitoring human rights. • NGOs continued to clamor for transparency mainly through social media or Facebook and twitter. • Policy advocacy was continued on policies for zero hunger and against the death penalty and lowering of MACR • CSOs forwarded through various channels recommendations for women, children, social minorities, education, and health of Covid-19 throughout the quarantines • Opposition to the Anti-Terrorism Act approved during the time of this Covid-19 Pandemic.

<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1) improve the capacity to care and fulfill the highest attainable state of health; (2)ensure that there is sufficient funds for a Covid-19 vaccine for the poor; (3)involve and continue participation of CSOs in working towards the achievement of the SDGs; (4)comply and effectively implement recent Human Rights Council Resolution on Technical Cooperation • Local governments should adopt the human rights-based approach to governance and democracy • Commission on Human Rights should work with human rights organizations and networks on rolling out adaptive education initiatives on SDGs and Human rights • United Nations organizations should continue to work with Philippine CSOs and government and other stakeholders on achieving the SDGs by 2030; (2)develop the HRC Technical Cooperation Resolution program; (3)extend assistance and technical support to CSOs; (4)support the European Union stand on media freedom and the resolution withdrawing preferential treatment under the GSP+; (5)continue with nurturing close relations between the OHCHR; (6)continue support to the implementation of the ASEAN Covid-19 Recovery Plan; (7)support adaptive education initiatives on SDGs • ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights should develop mechanism for monitoring and responding to massive human rights violations in Member States.
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J. Singapore

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thousands in low wage jobs, precarious employment applied for relief prog. • Increase in number of family violence calls or calls from distressed migrant domestic workers. • COVID outbreak in dormitories caused 300K migrant workers quarantined. • Persons with Disabilities have difficulty coping with CB measures or accessing information, decent work. • Government relief assistance on economic recovery lacked representation

<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing legal framework is already restrictive on rights to freedom of expression and assembly particularly for political expression • No Special Emergency Proclaimed • New laws/regulations: Infectious Diseases (COVID-19 Stay Orders) Regulations 2020, COVID (Temporary Measures) Act, COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Control Order) Regulations 2020, Parliamentary Elections (COVID-19 Special Arrangements) Act 2020, COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) (Foreign Employee Dormitories - Control Order) Regulations 2020, Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA)
<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election was implemented during pandemic • 35 POFMA orders made against online statements, postings or articles related to COVID-19 or the govt.'s handling. 16 POFMA orders issued during election. 5 made against online media/platform reporting a politician's remarks at a forum, based on his expertise as a medical doctor and professor of infectious diseases, critical of govt's handling of COVID-19 in migrant worker dormitories • Human rights organizations view POFMA as a tool that is easily abused for censorship purpose and fundamentally against the freedom of expression
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society were very active in responding to issues arising during the pandemic. • Adapted to movement social/gathering restrictions • Strong community response beyond NGOs and charities • Ground-up initiatives started by people not formally associated with CSOs have sprung up to address immediate needs of migrant workers • COVID Migrant Support Coalition • Existing groups like Sex workers, migrant workers, Women, and LGBTQ+ women, step up on monitoring and advocating for the rights of the groups • Monitored the state of democracy and human rights • Many CSOs continue to prepare reports for the Universal Periodic Review

<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1)adopt a people-centred approach to address socio-economic inequality including expanding current institutional arrangements to strengthen social protection to adequately cover more people who are affected by the pandemic’s economic fallout; (2)draw lessons from pandemic, implement measures to enhance migrant workers’ autonomy, including domestic workers, in addressing their issues and concerns related to income and job security, conditions at work, and easy access to physical and mental health care; (3)expand financing for CSOs to more effectively sustain their work; (4)continue cooperation with civil society and view them as equal partners on the road to equitable development of the country. • Regional/international organizations should (1)form a collective network to engage in a people-responsive way to the continued challenge of COVID-19 impact and other similar future events; (2)encourage Singapore to take into account international human rights standards when developing its measures; (3)encourage Singapore to develop a national SDG framework and indicators, with civil society inputs and perspectives, to measure the progress on impact of the inequalities exposed during the pandemic.
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K. Thailand

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social discrimination and stigmatization • Hoarding foods and medical tools • Massive unemployment which leads to hunger, more intensified inequality, upsurged homeless • Businesses shutdown and school closures • Increased suicide rate and psychological effects • Curfew at night time and closed border • Homeless people were arrested, people were shot dead by state officer during curfew.

<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of people participation in decision making • It was announced to only arrest political activists in front of government house. • Assembly is not allowed under State of Emergency • People have turned to online channels to express their voice, however, government banned the Facebook page for young people to criticize the King • Government has used many laws to restrict political movement • Mask Hoarding and Illicit Masks Import-Export: There were some cases of hoarding masks for import - export purpose by some groups who have connection with politicians. • Drug seller sold narcotic drugs thru online channels and sent it by post office governmental services. • The Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) the separatist group in Southern Thailand declared ceasefire for humanitarian reasons to halting “all activities of armed conflict • Local elections has been postponed.
<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Capacity and strong institutions • Local volunteers • Strong supply chain of food productions and strong technologies • Lack of human rights-based approach and clear SDG indicators • High inequality gap • “Semi” democracy / 2017 constitution • No effective data to identify people
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand needs • Closely linked with vulnerable people • Human rights-based approach • Lack of capacity

<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1) Provide support to all vulnerable regardless of race, nationality, gender / urgently solving economy and unemployment (2) Reforming Thailand to be a democratic system as reforming the 2017 Constitution (3) Developing data base to identify people on vulnerability (4) Reduce pattern of social inequality in all dimensions (long-term / social welfare) • International organizations: • International funding should focus more on local needs. • Establishing mechanism for “new normal” between government, CSOs and international organizations regarding SDGs (HLPF) • All of international platforms should enhance more inclusive mechanisms with all stakeholders • ASEAN should create a platform for more inclusiveness of CSOs and people participation and develop regional cooperation to help vulnerable people in the short and long-term • CSOs should (1) Educate and advocate human rights and SDGs to Thai people, continue working closely among CSOs and vulnerable, and promote social welfare ensuring long-term people protection (2) Engage with ASEAN, strengthen CSOs in ASEAN, promote democracy and social welfare system (3) Call “New Normal” practice for international cooperation policy and strongly engage with international human rights and SDGs mechanisms globally
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L. Japan

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only a limited number of the people with COVID-19 suspected symptoms were able to have access to testing. • The right of people to access necessary health and medical services was disregarded. • PCR testing equipment in local public health institutes was not updated, and the processing of data related to surveillance for infection was not digitalized.
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government declared a state of emergency and requested people to refrain from going out and to restrict the holding of events. • People in cities with many confirmed cases are not able to go back to their hometown to see their families. • Access to information: (1) lack of publicity about how to undergo PCR testing, appropriate initial response. No multilingual support and consultation services for foreigners (2) Restriction of the number of journalists to attend the government’s press briefings

<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rule of Law: The Government established the Headquarters for the Control of Novel Coronavirus Disease • Accountability and Transparency: Then-Prime Minister Abe recommended that all schools be temporarily closed and masks would be distributed to every household in Japan. The procurement of the masks and the flow of funds for subsidy was conducted in an opaque and unaccountable manner.
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs tried to secure right to health, education, food, work, and freedom of movement and they also provided international cooperation. They also conducted activities about inequality, gender equality, freedom of speech, environment, and freedom of assembly.
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to the Government and International Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1)engage and fund the process of international collaborative frameworks such as COVAX, (2)safeguard to eliminate discrimination, prejudice, and misinformation related to COVID-19, (3)establish economic policies putting the farthest people first and leaving no one behind, (4)establish independent human rights institutions. • The UN HLPF and regional bodies should standardize the modality of VNRs and country presentation in a more effective manner to follow up member states efforts to implement SDGs in the context of COVID-19. • The UN should encourage member states to present their next VNRs with reflections on their responses to COVID-19. • The participants of KMDF should follow up monitoring activities in coming months and years and KMDF should support CSOs to implement their advocacy and campaign proposals at national and international levels. • CSOs should (1) play the role of empowering those on the periphery of society and reflect their voices in policy decisions; (2)exchange situations and advocacy strategies in different countries and regions to identify common advocacy points and organize international mobilizations.

M. Mongolia

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Human Rights and SDGs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on access to health service facilities and equipment • Food consumption of households has decreased • Family income reduced especially low-income families hit by economic slowdown • Increase of domestic violence and domestic accidents involving children • Digital divide for children’s learning • Business sales have declined, supply chains disrupted due to border closures • Self-employed and agriculture households have been significantly impacted • Even though farmers were able to continue working, their income has declined due to logistics disruptions and falling livestock product prices
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on Democracy and Civic Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local, grassroots CSOs and CBOs had to stop activities • Reduced activities of CSOs working at the national level • Decline in funding opportunities • Increased voluntary work on urgent emerging issues • Only humanitarian activities could continue • Police arrests 100 young demonstrators for expressing their protest against the government silently on May 12, 2020 despite following the quarantine rules. • The restrictive measures divided public in social media. Social media was full of news on violence, hate speech, statements blaming victims, strengthening negative gender stereotypes,
<p>Government Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing schools and banning public gatherings, since January 27th • Halted all international commercial flights • Phased economic stimulus package and the Law on Preventing, Combatting COVID-19 passed by the Parliament • The government “whole-of-government” approach – succeeded to prevent from local transmission of coronavirus • It was without civic participation • It was not open and transparent fully: especially in bringing Mongolians from abroad through chartered flights, funds from development aid, private sector donations were spent without proper transparency
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs continued urgent advocacy work despite of a lot of challenges. • Human Rights NGO Forum were able to participate in discussions of the draft law on prevention and combatting COVID-19 and CSOs recommendations were reflected well in the law and in relevant amendments in the law on Emergency. • Advocated for mainstreaming SDGs and targets in June 2020 election agendas of political parties and coalitions and in the new government action program • Consulted extensively on the draft law to replace the current NGO law • Advocated for submission and approval of the draft law on HRDs legal status • Revised and advocated for submission and approval of the draft state policy concept on civil society to the parliament

**Proposals and
Recommendations
to the
Government and
International
Organizations**

- Government should (1)use “whole-of-government” approach in parallel with “whole-of-society” and “whole of SDGs” approach; (2)follow the principles of transparency and accountability and to enable CSOs regular monitoring in use of public funds; (3)improve knowledge and skills of public servants to work in framework of human rights based and gender sensitive approaches; (4)implement decentralization policy and enable local govt to play their essential roles in localizations of SDGs.
- International organizations: (1)country partnership strategies of UN organizations and development partners should be in line with the national development priorities and discuss strategies and performance evaluations at multi-stakeholder forums annually; (2)support the government capacity building in policy and institutional coherence for sustainable development and localization of SDGs, mainstreaming SDGs targets in development planning, budgeting and SDGs indicators in results evaluation; (3)encourage the governments to use human rights based, gender sensitive approaches in planning, designing, and monitoring results of program activities.

V. Thematic reports

A. Dalit

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on the Theme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The economic pain caused by the lockdown has hit socially and historically marginalized communities like ex-untouchables • The COVID-19 exposed them to immediate risk of hunger and starvation and loss of dignity and powerlessness. • It is estimated that children from socially disadvantaged groups are most likely to be forced into stunting and extreme levels of malnourishment. • Caste continues to be one of the determining factors in public provisioning of services even during difficult times like COVID-19 lockdown. • Psychological security is a big concern for people from all strata, let alone the DWD communities. • The COVID-19 and lockdown has resulted in similar trends where women are hit hard and confronted with the existential question to earn their livelihood • Out of total 44 million workers engaged in vulnerable sectors, one third are women • The frontline health workers (ASHA) in India and cleaning workers or manual scavengers are exclusively Dalit in most of the South Asian countries. • Increase in economic distress during this lockdown has also resulted in scaling up of domestic issues within Dalit families with more than 1000 cases registered in 3 months of lockdown
<p>States Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governments responses in respect to the Dalit communities has been reactionary rather than preventive • The Bangladesh government started providing financial support to the DWD community under the social safety net program, however the reach has been limited within the grassroots. • In Nepal, The federal government has defined the relief package, however, the reception of the packages is limited to urban areas, while rural areas have seen less reception. • In India, while the policies have been executed by the state towards ensuring the communities dont get affected because of the COVID19 Mitigation measures, being the most vulnerable communities, these communities have not able to access the services.
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating awareness and fact finding • Relief and rehabilitation measures • Networking systems and remedial mechanisms for liaison with state mechanisms • Research, documentation and advocacy plans • Engaging in governmental, judiciary & media advocacy efforts

<p>Proposals and Recommendations to stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for allocation resources for Disaster Risk Reduction and capacity building for Dalit communities through dedicated funds like Sub-Plans • Mainstream and strengthen social protection programming in Disaster situations • Enhance budgetary allocations under social security schemes, especially the flagship schemes based on SECC data • Universal coverage of Dalit households in all social protection schemes on a mission mode • Put in place accessible and people friendly complaints, grievance registration and redress mechanisms • Humanitarian organizations, UN and EU should be considerate of the intersection of different vulnerabilities with social reality in India and collect disaggregated data. • Daily Wage earners: The survey revealed that the respondents among Dalits have 66% of the daily wage earners compared to 11% of the non-Dalit counterparts. That clearly shows how vulnerable they are to the corona pandemic therefore, there is a need to prioritize them and provide both short term and long term support for their rehabilitation. • Caste based discrimination: There are several incidents of caste based discrimination which has been reported in the media. The surveys in India and Nepal also revealed that 67% of the Dalit respondents mentioned some kind of discrimination. There is a need to spread the message of anti-caste-based discrimination and this has to be done by Dalits and non-Dalit actors (both government and nongovernment bodies). • Status of work: During the lockdown 77% Dalit had no work so as with only 25% no-Dalit and those who worked partially were 10%. Therefore, an alternative arrangement should be made to provide work to the people.
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B. Disinformation

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on the Theme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of expression and opinion: prosecuting journalists and censoring government critics • Information access and dissemination: withholding COVID-19 information from the public and lack of government spending transparency • Right to privacy: digital surveillance, movement tracking, and dissemination of private information of COVID-19 infected people • Digital rights: prospect decline since 2019

<p>States Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 disinformation, especially political criticism nature, has been responded with fines and imprisonment by government with existing laws. 1) Penal Codes, Criminal Codes, and Technology and Public Order Acts (Fines: US\$84 (Nepal) - US\$117,000 (Bangladesh), Imprisonment: 6 months (India) - 168 months (Bangladesh)) 2) ‘Fake News’ Laws : Laws criminalizing the spread of false information (Fines: US\$20 (Philippines) - US\$3 million (Pakistan), Imprisonment: 6 months (Philippines) - 180 months (Nepal)) 3) COVID-19 Temporary Laws and Practices State of Emergency Decrees, Committees and Task Forces, Public Order Guidelines (Fines: US\$13 (India) - US\$20,000 (Philippines), Imprisonment: 2 months (Philippines) - 60 months (Thailand))
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology Companies’ response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fact-checking - Labelling false information content - Policy updates
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To governments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Align reactions to disinformation along SDG 16.10 and 9.C. • To technology companies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outline digital rights that are protected through their platforms, equally towards all users. • To international organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call for a strong network of collaboration between IOs and INGOs, in combating disinformation. • To Donors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the urgency of and allocate funds to INGOs, IOs and other civil society organizations working on disinformation • To CSOs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement evidence-based research, capacity building activities such as webinars and forums and advocacy activities and strengthen online capabilities via social media outreach and video-blogs and podcasts

C. Inequality

Section	Main points
<p style="text-align: center;">Impact of COVID-19 on the Theme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is likely to affect the poor and informal sector more than others • Groups affected (Faces of Inequality): Geographically inaccessible areas, orphans, LGBTQI, elderly, women, children, Indigenous communities, Dalits, sex workers, beggars, homeless people, small and marginal farmers, daily wage workers in the urban areas • In South Asia, 132 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty and inequalities will be accentuated • Demand for unpaid work increased bearing more burden on women and the time has witnessed a rise in gender-based violence • Countries like Nepal whose economy are remittance dependent, are more affected than others – inequality between countries during COVID • Hunger reported in South Asia, and in SE Asia food was available but the issue was access for the marginal groups as malls opened but not street food • Non-residents have been unfairly blamed for spreading the virus. They have faced violence and discriminatory practices – across the region • Afghanistan - health system affected by conflicts; in India – millions of migrants walked the streets hungry and many died en route; Japan – issue of privacy of the sex workers and in Singapore poor living conditions for 300,000 migrant workers
<p style="text-align: center;">States Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lockdowns and shutdowns to prevent spread of COVID • Testing, tracing and treating COVID - free in some countries, but expensive in most countries • Public intervention to increase hospital capacity on medical supplies • Subsidies for testing and treatment of the disease • Support to the poor by supplying food and rations • Cash dole out (Singapore), Ehsaas scheme (Pakistan) etc. and economic package for long term recovery in most countries • Tax-exemptions and subsidies to revive MSMEs • Hong Kong, China and Singapore have subsidised some sectors like retail, food, transport and tourism, which involves the livelihood of low-income families • Regional Cooperation - SAARC COVID-19 emergency fund (\$21 million till April 2021) • ASEAN level communications - organized multiple meetings and conferences in the areas of health, economy and security areas

<p style="text-align: center;">Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globally 400 CSOs working on human rights and SDGs issued a 12-point demand charter • Just recovery - universal healthcare, reducing inequalities and guaranteeing human rights • Re-think our economies in response to the parallel crises of climate change and biodiversity • Global Solidarity Action on 22 May with hashtag #StrongerTogether. • Asia level: regular webinars among the interested civil society organizations to update each other on the developments in countries and do a cross comparison • Relief programmes and mobile kitchens were set up by the CSOs • Mobilizing support to jobless people in informal sector • Monitoring the government relief and cash supports • Issuing statements - many GCAP National Coalitions and others did • Afghanistan – SDO and other NGOs are involved in tracing testing and treating the patients • Pakistan–Awaz foundation helping the most marginalised to get benefits of Ehsaas Cash Grants • Nepal -NGO Federation formed the Human Rights Monitoring Network to monitor the human rights situation during the COVID-19 pandemic • Philippines – use of social media to highlight the cause of poor and vulnerable people and link to relief • Dalit groups in India – App to track migrants and help them • CSOs in general also intensified the use of digital platforms • UN bodies release regional reports and did webinars • CSOs did rise to the occasion despite shrinking civic space
<p style="text-align: center;">Proposals and Recommendations to stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government should (1)provide comprehensive social protection to the most vulnerable groups – cash transfers, health insurance, etc.; (2)prioritize investments in education to increase chances for social mobility; (3)address the digital divide and provide access to technology – also related to data collection; (4)protect people from environmental hazards – climate-proof agriculture and food systems, DRRM; (5)ensure a HRBA to sustainable development • UN Systems should (1)provide guidance to states on interlinking the processes of Human Rights (UPR) and Sustainable Development (HLPF); (2)enhance multilateral efforts for financing sustainable development thru the unconditional cancellation of the debts of poor countries; set up mechanisms to address illicit financial flows that will effectively penalize tax havens, etc. • CSOs should (1)strengthen solidarity through closer cooperation at all levels; (2)engage national and local governments through partnerships, whether through direct service delivery or policy advocacy; (3)establish accountability and integrity mechanisms and report back to people to enhance participation; (4)amplify the voices of communities through all means available to provide access for the marginalized

D. Migrant - Asia

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on the Theme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With border closures, many migrant workers couldn't go back home • The lack of access to health facilities, absence of proper quarantine facilities • Migrant workers globally, especially in Asia often lacked any access to welfare services and basic human rights. • The unexpected lockdown and economic shocks led to insecurity, layoffs, worsening working conditions of migrant workers
<p>States Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deglobalization and rebuilding economy • Intensifying Nationalization of labor markets • Bilateral Agreements • Data sharing systems • Missions of CSO • State-non-state actors and their partnerships
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information and advocacy • Labor rights and access to justice • Social protection, access to relief, and income support • Return and reintegration
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments should <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) streamline access to basic services; (2) ratify and adhere to international conventions; (3) develop standard operating procedure and improve preparedness to address emergencies; (4) address payment of wages and dues during COVID-19; (5) improve social protection provisions for MWS (6) access to healthcare for returnees; (7) provide skill recognition and development for returnees and prospective MWS; (8) improve data collection-recruitment, return, regulatory frameworks; (9) improve participation of MWS in electoral processes – overseas voting mechanisms • CSOs should <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) disseminate information and provide basic services through tech platforms and social media; (2) foster partnerships with state, non-state actors, and missions of majors COOs at destination countries; (3) reintegrate progs for repatriated sustainably; (4) assist MWS-grievance redress upon return; aware for prospective MWS - recruitment during and post Covid-19

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals for KMDF 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand Scope of Migrant Rights - Equality & Access to Justice for Migrants - Centering Migrant Voices in Migration Governance - Corporate Accountability - Global Governance of Migration - Climate Justice and Migrant Rights
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E. Migrant - ASEAN

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on the Theme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Singapore vulnerable migrant workers are often discriminated. Covid-19 Medical test were conducted later leading to daily high increase of 100s of “positive” cases among migrants in dorms. Migrant workers face stigma and discrimination – are treated differently. They are paid lower wages and considered as deposable to be send back home if the employer terminates the contract. Singapore dormitories are crowded and difficult to implement “social distance” and other issues. • Malaysia, undocumented migrant workers are detained and imprisoned • Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia migrant workers return from Thailand into quarantine. • Thailand under the Emergency Decree, labor strikes and lockouts were prohibited which worsened the working conditions, increased layoffs, and unemployment of migrant workers. • In the context of Covid-19, migrant workers are more vulnerable: continued working by need of employer compulsions; unfavorable conditions for social distancing and insufficient personal protection equipment; no social security; no relief measures; the first target to be retrenched; increased gender-based violence during emergencies; stranded migrant workers, who may have completed their contracts or lost their jobs, by border and international travel closures; detention of undocumented workers.
<p>States Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary Extensions of visas and work permits by Thai Gov. for migrant workers • Financial and material resources for health systems • Testing and treatment • COVID-19 containment and distancing measures, PPE • Government and CSOs provide PPE – Masks • Extensions of social security systems and special, temporary measures • Migrant welfare funds • Economic relief: cash transfers, financial and food assistance • Paid sick leave – support workers income and prevent spread of Covid19, but social insurance coverage is low and the informal sector has no sick leave.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid quarantine leave - few countries have adopted this measure for all workers, including migrant workers • Social protection measures support the workers and their families' livelihood but 60% of the employed are working without social protection in the informal sector. Only Thailand offers payment to the self-employed and/or informal workers • Wage support scheme - Singapore government adopted wage support schemes to all employers for a period (9 months) • Job retention measures – in Thailand the government will hire 50,000 local residents for six months; in Philippines the government will implement a 10-day emergency employment program for workers in the informal economy; and Singapore announced the creation of temporary jobs to ease the unemployment etc. • Governments have placed barriers to CSOs effective support. With limited or no consultation and participation of CSOs and Trade Unions in the decision-making process to find solutions to the public health crisis. • There are limits to access of information (internet), expression of opinions (censorship), and new measures to heavily penalize fake or false news related to Covid-19. • Restrictions are justified if based on public health concerns. • Governments that passed emergency laws and the increasing involvement of the military to control and enforce “social distancing” is worrying in the Philippines and Thailand
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal support by CSOs, trade unions, MRCs, labour attachés, etc. for migrant workers • CSOs are actively supporting all migrant workers by providing; public education to prevent Covid-19, food rations, face masks, PPE, care packages, etc.
<p>Proposals and Recommendations to stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and civil society organizations need to work together to overcome the Covid-19 public health crisis by implementing the ASEAN Labour Ministers Response to the Impact of COVID-19 on Labour and Employment (14 May 2020). • TFAMW CSO in Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia (East Asia) to work together on better coordinating the protection of the rights of migrant workers and their families (ASEAN Consensus 2017)by implementing the ACMW Action Plan 2021 – 2025. • The penalties imposed should be proportional and not discriminatory to vulnerable people

F. Refugees

Section	Main points
<p>Impact of COVID-19 on the Theme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic upshot of the crisis jeopardizing subsistence to provide services for refugees • A risk that refugees may result in local populations reacting forcefully to contain them, creating a potential for escalating violence • Devastating effects of restrictions on mobility on refugees-many of whom live in crowded conditions with limited access to employment • Small national responses to contain massive socio-economic impact on refugees • Economic damage • Risk of detention of vulnerable refugees on the streets • Many asylum-seekers blocked at int'l borders without immediate humanitarian assistance and human rights protection • Growing number of refugees returning home • Requires a debt standstill
<p>States Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75 new measures responding to Covid-19 pandemic in 25 countries • Passage of laws, regulations, orders, decrees, executive orders, uncodified practices (policies criminalizing spread of info about Covid-19) • 16 countries have taken robust legislative action whereas 15 countries either fully or partially prohibited gatherings • 29 declarations of state of emergency, national health emergency. • Executive orders or proclamations of national disaster in 21 countries • Restriction of free movement/peaceful assembly and gatherings. • Abuse of force, free expression/disinformation restrictions. Some countries have ensured transparency/access to information • A number of states stood out for implementing positive regulatory measures around civic space during Covid-19 • Some countries loosened rules in reducing barriers to funding/project approval • Best practices/examples of providing for effective government oversight • Countries held periodic elections to safeguard political rights
<p>Civil Society Response to the COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating for civic freedoms towards protection efforts of refugees/forced migrants/vulnerable communities • Public awareness-raising thru knowledge products on pandemic prevention • Promoting regional solidarity to address impact on refugees by monitoring/tracking threats to civic space • Documenting/advocating for policy change ensuring that information is accessible to all refugees w/o discrimination • Lobbying for fundamental principles of human rights/refugee protection standards • Holding governments, private sector, international agencies accountable for their readiness/quality of preparedness in handling the pandemic with HRB principles/practices • Pressurizing governments and international organizations working in health/social protection to allocate budgets for public health activities in emergencies for refugees with dedicated budgets

**Proposals and
Recommendations
to stakeholders**

- Governments and international organizations should (1)empower/collaborate directly with refugee communities and CSO leaders; (2)ensure right to highest attainable standard of health for refugees; (3)entail zero tolerance to discrimination, criminalization, exploitation; (4)promote stronger partnership among national govt. institutions; (5)implement strategies by fostering design and implementation of projects for the protection of refugees with specific needs; (6)Localize the provisions of the Global Compact for Refugees; (7)promote regional collaboration; (8)implement medical safety measures to mitigate future Covid-19 resurgence; (9)provide essential services to all, regardless of migration status; (10)review situation of unsuccessful asylum-seekers in immigration detention, release them to maximum extent possible; (11)refrain from refugee refoulement based on fears or suspicion of Covid-19 transmission; (12)act in conformity with border controls and with international law, including respect w/o exception for right to seek asylum & consider lifting borders closure; (13) include refugees into national, local-level health response plans; (14)take all feasible measures to prevent family separation/risk of refugees going missing or dying; (15)effectively tailor existing institutional arrangements;

VI. Open discussion

22. Daya Sagar from Nepal began his statement by observing that civil and political rights and the Economic and Social Rights Convention are extremely violated and all SDGs are adversely affected in the region. He explained shrinking civic space in South Asia (Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka: Obstructed/ India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Maldives: Repressed). Freedom of expression, assembly and peaceful protest were in threat and there were attacks on human rights defenders, religious minorities, sexual minorities, and refugees.
23. He noted that COVID-19 has impacted different people differently and especially the poor, working class people, migrants, indigenous people, Dalits, PWDs, different minority people, women, LGBTIQ, senior citizens, children and youth are suffering from COVID-19.
24. He noted South Asia has been hit hard by COVID-19 even in the world, however, the region had been already suffering from different types of pandemics such as poverty, inequality, climate crisis, and bad governance etc. He added that states were not able to save the lives of the people as they failed to formulate right policies and failed to establish people-oriented systems and institutions and geopolitics threat impacted not only peace and security in the region, but also impacted the COVID-19 crisis.
25. In terms of health, he noted that hospitals had not provided good services to the people and delivery capacity of public service institutions is weak. He added that 82 percent of positive cases were people in home isolation rather than in the hospital with decreasing trust to public institutions. Also, the mortality rate increased in all the countries. In case of Nepal, the government lifted to support free testing and free treatment. He observed that mental health problems were neglected during the discussion though rate of suicide was increasing and people were not happy.
26. He observed that COVID-19 gave rise to a justice crisis not only the health crisis. Regarding this he noted growing impunity, growing policy corruption, nepotism, favoritism, ineffective anti-corrupt bodies, uneasy access of the formal justice system, delaying justice, weak implementation of court verdicts and attack on the media.
27. He stressed that the need to monitor arbitrary arrests, killings, fake encounters, people dying in police custody as well as the need of effective leadership in times of crisis and inclusive and meaningful participation of stakeholders in COVID-19 response. He concluded by casting some questions regarding the practice of real democracy, whether elections guarantee democracy, and internet freedom such as cyber laws and self-censorship.
28. Ms. Aziza asked what the strategies to improve access to information are including access to statistics in the countries.
29. When asked why Cambodia did not include minority issues, Cambodia responded that there is less information about that. But he added that there is surely negative impact on minority(Muslims) such as higher discrimination and gaps of information and education.
30. When asked about constraints of minority groups in Japan, Japan responed people tended to avoid medical workers, and LGBTs in Japan face severe discrimination in terms of minority groups. Indonesia added that indiginous people in the country already have a mechanism on quarantine and measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in their communities.

VII. Comparison and Synthesis

31. Anselmo Lee led the discussion on the pre-survey results. 97 people responded to the survey, of which about 30 attended the Forum.
32. On which groups had been economically and socially most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, Arjun Phillips from India said that the medical staff was the most vulnerable community in India as they faced discriminations and were not protected themselves well although they were combating COVID-19 on the first line. Inkara Mukatova from Kazakhstan said that the most affected category was the elderly and medical personnel in Kazakhstan. Refugees, indiginous minorities, and LGBTs were not much in Kazakhstan. Mongolia said the result is quite similar in Mongolia expecially regarding the situation of women with closing schools and kindergardens.
33. On which human rights have been most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, Thapa from Nepal said in terms of freedom of movement, right to education, and right to food, the survey results reflect exactly the situation of Nepal. Everything was locked down and all the education facilities were closed. Zia ur Rehman from Pakistan said, freedom of movement was imposed by the state but was not followed by people at large in South Asia. He thought it was better to ask how much they were free to go to work and sightseeing as people had several restrictions but they bought something and went out everyday. Philippines agreed on restriction of 'freedom of movement' by lockdown and quarantine etc. It had strong effects on all the other things like freedom of assembly and access to food.
34. On what worsened COVID-19, Indonesia pointed out economic and social inequality everywhere and in terms of transparency, added that the government released daily numbers everyday but there was still doubt on reliability and transparency. Japan said, in terms of excessive urbanization, there was social inequality in urban cities, which made it harder for poor people to get protection measures. In South Asia, the lack of leadership plays a key rold and stressed that all the governments of South Asia should work together and stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.
35. Regarding the most important factors in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Arjun from India said that political leadership has been strong during lockdown in India. Meanwhile, Zia ur Rehman from Pakistan said that political leadership was not strong during lockdown in Pakistan, so it was criticized by civil society and people. He thought the citizen's perception and public communication were very well in Pakistan. Gopal Krishna Siwakoti pointed out that the outcome of this perception should not be treated as scientific results, however, it is a very good opening as the results are based on colleagues' perceptions who were working directly in the field. Thapa from Nepal stressed that political leadership was a key factor for decision-making and policy implementation. Indonesia said, in terms of cooperation between central and local governments, lockdown decision was always on debate between them. Meanwhile, they lost implementation protocols and measures. Urantsooj Gombosuren from Mongolia answered that there was not good coordination in Mongolia

and they shouldn't be divided to implement SDGs and local governments had to have their own power.

36. On what should be the priority for civil society action in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Isha from Sri Lanka answered that civil society had to engage with the government during the COVID-19 socially, economically, and in the governance side because the government couldn't reach the citizens in every corner. Civil society had more access to the people, so they had to build strategy on that. And she proposed that WHO had to engage with civil society and its strategy.
37. As a last recommendation, Thapa from Nepal said there was no doubt that civil society were supposed to engage in preparing public policies. Inkara said that she agreed with her colleagues that inclusive national mechanisms were very important and it was quite difficult to be engaged and be inclusive. In terms of the survey, she thought all of them were important. Arjun from India said firstly they should be comprehensive and work in a collective manner in regards to a global response of civil society and global organization. Secondly, fundraising and providing financial assistance to people in need was important. Zia ur Rehman from Pakistan said that regional cooperation had been hard during COVID-19 as they had issues, however, they needed to reinforce regional cooperation as they shared issues and borders.

VIII. Closing Statements

A. Closing Remarks

38. Convener of Asia Development Alliance **Hideki Wakabayashi** delivered a closing speech of commitments of ADA to empower the civil society as a catalyst for social change using SDGs of Agenda 2030 as a tool to promote CSOs engagement in the national monitoring and implementation of SDGs and voicing up these concerns at the regional and global level. In the last couple of years, ADA has come up with two global reports on SDG 16 and its latest 2020 report highlighted the shrinking civic space based on 18 national case studies.
39. He hoped all the participants take what they have learned from the Forum to various other platforms and use the KDF Statement for advocacy with our networks, allies and partners and to keep monitoring situations around the COVID-19 pandemic, civic space, human rights and SDGs for the coming months introducing these at the online Tokyo Democracy Forum in February 2021.
40. Parvat Gurung, **Netra Timsina** said that we need to consider the backlash of democracy in terms of pre-COVID and during and post COVID-19. It includes drastically reduced investment in basic services particularly in basic health and employment, which needs to be included on the KMDF draft Declaration. He also mentioned that worsened inequality, violation of human rights, shrinking civic space by emphasizing the need to think of some alternative practices.
41. He also mentioned people's vaccine campaign around the world, which means the poor, marginalized and low-income countries, poor communities and vulnerable peoples should get the vaccines first and this kind of global campaign is needed now. ADN and all the CSOs need to engage with this. He closed his speech by emphasizing the need of eradication of COVID-19 for right to life and demand for people's vaccine which is accessible to all the peoples of the world and at no cost as well as alternative practices of conventional democracy again.
42. The Secretary General of Community of Democracies, **Thomas Garrett** thanked the speakers, moderators and participants for the valuable information shared regarding the SDGs and the impact of COVID-19 in democracy and human rights, as it provided an important overview of challenges and possible solutions to ensure that post-pandemic we are able to build back better. He especially endorsed the Forum's attention to the critical role that civil society plays, including monitoring of emergency legislation and restrictive measures for public safety during this pandemic and their effect on commitments related to human rights and fundamental freedoms in a coordinated manner.
43. He also emphasized on a few points: The comprehensive discussions involving the national and thematic reviews during the past days enable us to identify challenges and evaluate progress made on the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Agenda within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. They underline the need for a human rights-based and gender sensitive approach to the COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, that is also in line with the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore they highlighted the importance of cross-sector collaboration and multi-stakeholder partnerships that bring together diverse expertise and resources to

increase impact and ensure much needed progress of the SDGs in this Decade of Action.

B. Closing Chief Guest

44. Vice Chairman of National Planning Commission of Nepal government **Dr. Puspa Raj Kadel** highlighted the commitment of Nepal Government to democracy, SDG 16, and protection of the poor and vulnerable people. In terms of democracy, he mentioned the democratic system, democratic slogan, and periodic plan related to democracy and in terms of SDG 16, he introduced the government's commitments including VNR reports, national targets and indicators, and SDGs mainstreaming. He also explained its commitment to marginalised groups such as Dalits and migrants.
45. Also, he mentioned the economic impact of COVID-19 to the livelihoods of people, the situation that Nepal was not prepared for the pandemic, and the government's response for reviving economy and supporting the vulnerable people in Nepal. He also added some expectations to CSOs from Nepal government, which is the need to run the movement in the international level for vaccination, advocacy for delivering ODA, advocacy and movement for all SDG goals.

Annex

I. Program

Day 1 November 4, 2020 2PM-6PM BKK Time	
2pm-3pm	Opening Ceremony
3pm-5pm	<p>Session 1: South and Central Asia Presentation Moderator: Anselmo Lee, Kyunghee University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Kazakhstan – Ms. Inkara Mukatova, Civil Society Development Association ARGO b. Bangladesh – Dr. Md. Shahid Uz Zaman, ESDO c. India – Mr. Arjun Phillips, VANI d. Nepal – Mr. Hum Prasad Bhandari, NFN e. Pakistan – Mr. Zia Ur Rehman, Pakistan Development Alliance and AwazCDS f. Sri Lanka – Ms. Isha Miranda and Mr. Udan Fernando, Consortium Humanitarian Agency
6 pm	Session 2: Open Discussion
Day 2 November 5, 2020 2PM – 6PM BKK Time	
2pm-5pm	<p>Session 3. Southeast and Northeast Asia Moderator: Ichal Supriadi, ADN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cambodia – Mr. Sovanna Ry, CCC b. Indonesia – Ms Tatat, INFID and Ms. Kirana Anjani, Lokataru Foundation c. Philippines – Mr. Renato Llorin, PAHRA d. Singapore – Mr. Ted Tan, THINK Centre e. Thailand – Mr. Don Tarjaroeunsuk, PEF f. Japan – Mr. Aoi Horiuchi, JANIC g. Mongolia – Ms. Urantsooj Gombosuren, CHRD

5pm	Session 4: Open Discussion
5:30 pm	Session 5: Synthesis of 13 Reports and Comparison
Day 3 November 6, 2020 4PM – 8PM BKK Time	
4pm–6pm	Session 6. Thematic (International) Reports Moderator: Patricia Galdamez, CoD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Dalit Rights – Dr. Deepak Nikarthis, Asia Dalit Rights Forum b. Disinformation – Dr. James Gomez, Asia Centre c. Inequality – Ms. Beckie Malay and Mr. Pradeep Baisakh, GCAP d. Migrants (Regional) – Ms. Eswari Das and Mr. Akhil C S, Migrants Forum in Asia e. Migrants (ASEAN) – Mr. Sinapan Samydorai, Task Force on ASEAN Migrant Workers f. Refugee - Mr. Gopal Krishna Siwakoti, INHURED International
6pm-7pm	Session 7: Regional Synthesis
7pm	Closing Session

II. List of Participats

Theme / country	Organization	Name
Dalit	ADRF	Deepak Sasi Nikarthil
Information	Asia Centre	James Gomez
Inequality	GCAP	Beckie Malay
Migrants - Asia	MFA	Eswari Krishnadas, Akhil CS
Migrants - ASEAN	Task Force on AMW	Sinapan Samydorai
Refugee	INHURED	Gopal Krishna Siwakoti, PhD
Kazakhstan	ARGO	Inkara Mukatova
Bangladesh	ESDO	Md Shahid Uz Zaman
INDIA	VANI	Arjun Phillips
Nepal	NFN	Hum Prasad Bhandari
Pakistan	PDA - Awaz	Zia ur Rehman
Sri Lanka	Consortium Humanitarian Agency	Isha Wedasinghe Miranda
Sri Lanka	ACSRN	Udan Fernando
Cambodia	CCC	Ry Sovanna
Indonesia-HR	Lokataru Foundation	Kirana Anjani
Indonesia-SDG	INFID	Tatat
Philippines	PAHRA	Renato Llorin
Singapore	Think Centre	Ted Tan
Thailand	PEF	Don Tajaroenusk
Japan	JANIC	Aoi Horiuchi
Mongolia	CHRD	Urantsooj Gombosuren
	CoD	Thomas Garrett
	NFN	Jitram Lama
	Ministry of Communication and Information Technology	Parbat Gurung
	NPC	Min Bahadur Shahi
	NPC	Puspa Raj Kadel
	Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Nepal	Park, Chong-suk
	ADA	Hideki Wakabayashi
	Nepal Red Cross	Netra Timsina
Organizer	Kyunghee University	Anselmo Lee
	CoD	Patricia Galdamez
	ADN	Ichal Supriadi
	ADN	Soo Suh
	ADN	Yaerum Jung
		Ahreum Bae

III. Selected Photos

Figure 1 CoD Secretary General Thomas Garrett delivering the opening remarks



Figure 2 Ichal Supriadi delivering the opening remarks



Figure 3 Jitram Lama delivering the opening remarks



Figure 4 Parbat Gurung delivering the opening speech



Figure 5 Min Bahadur Shahi delivering the congratulatory remarks



Figure 6 Park Chong-suk delivering the congratulatory remarks



Figure 7 Anselmo Lee giving the overview of the situation in Asia

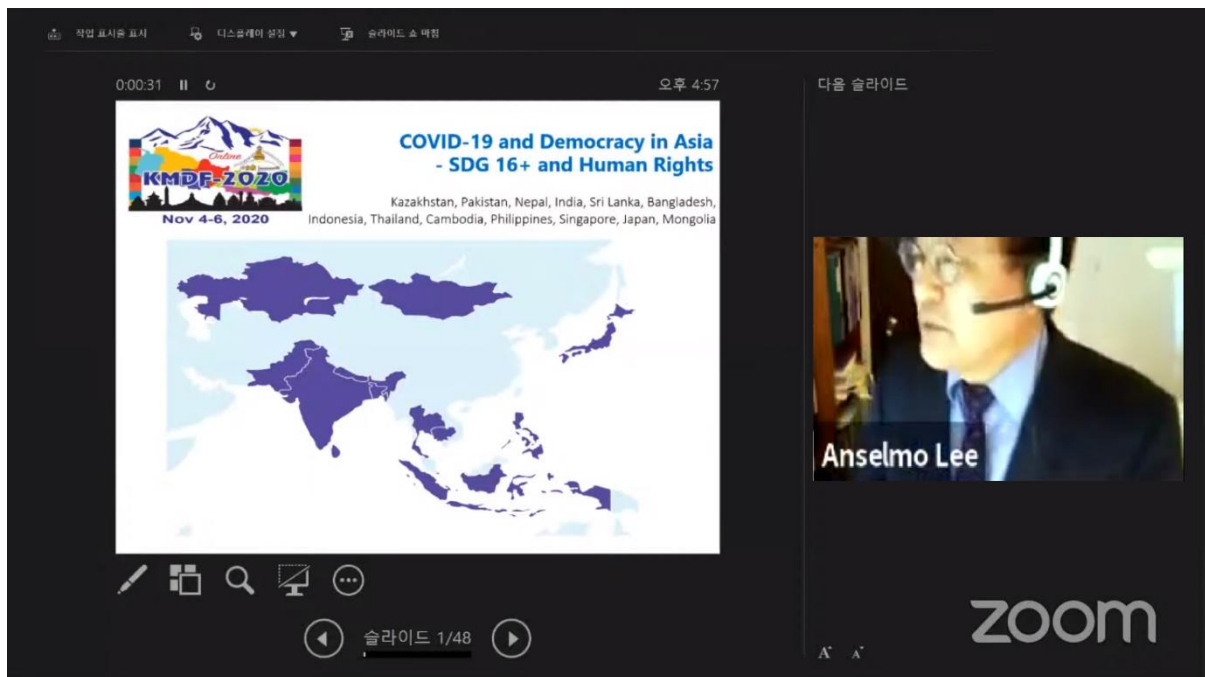


Figure 8 Presenting the national report

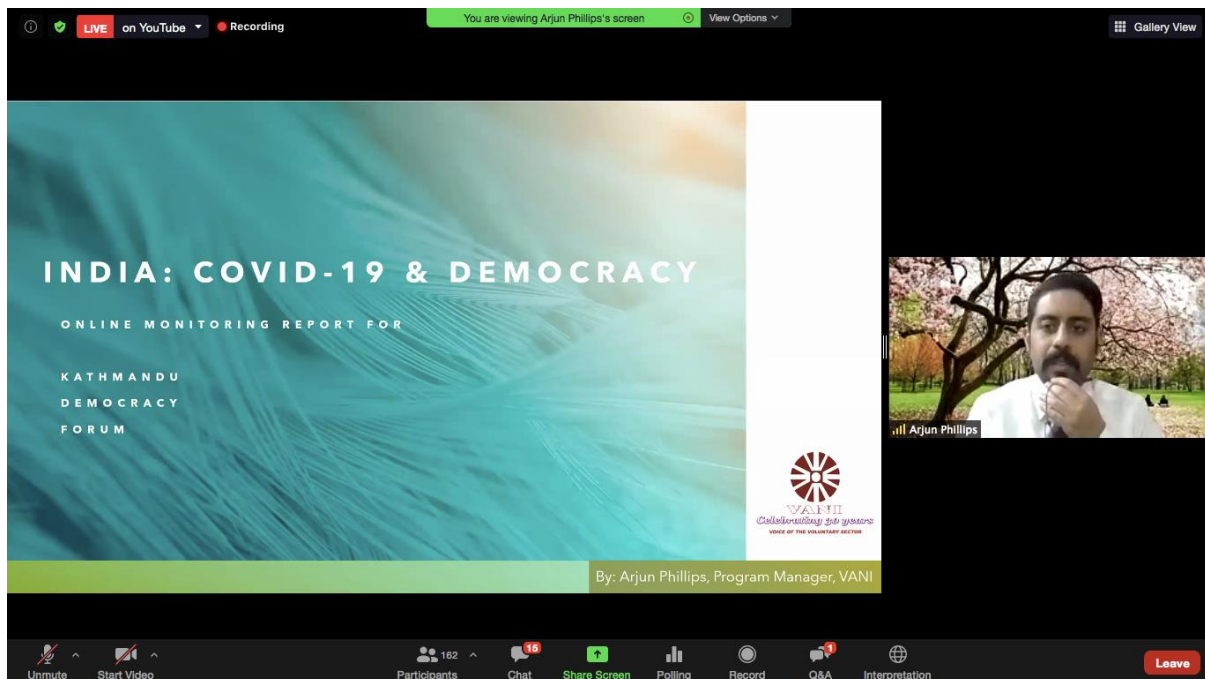




Figure 9 Presenting the thematic report

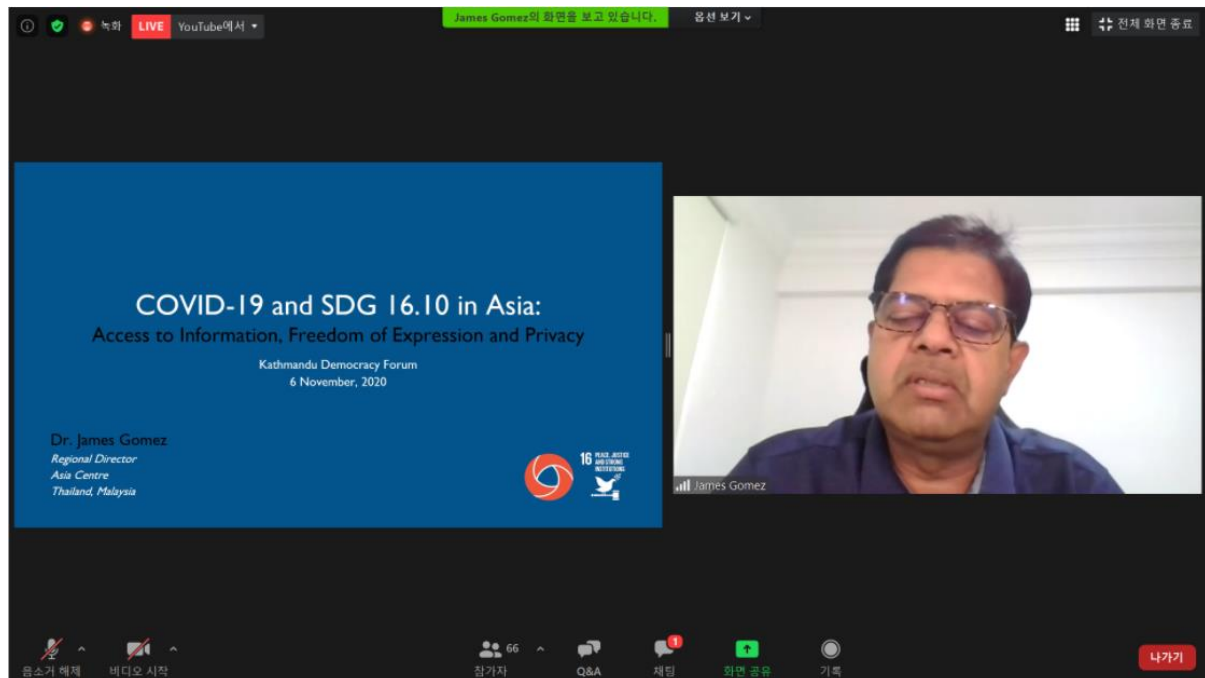




Figure 10 Open Discussion & Synthesis

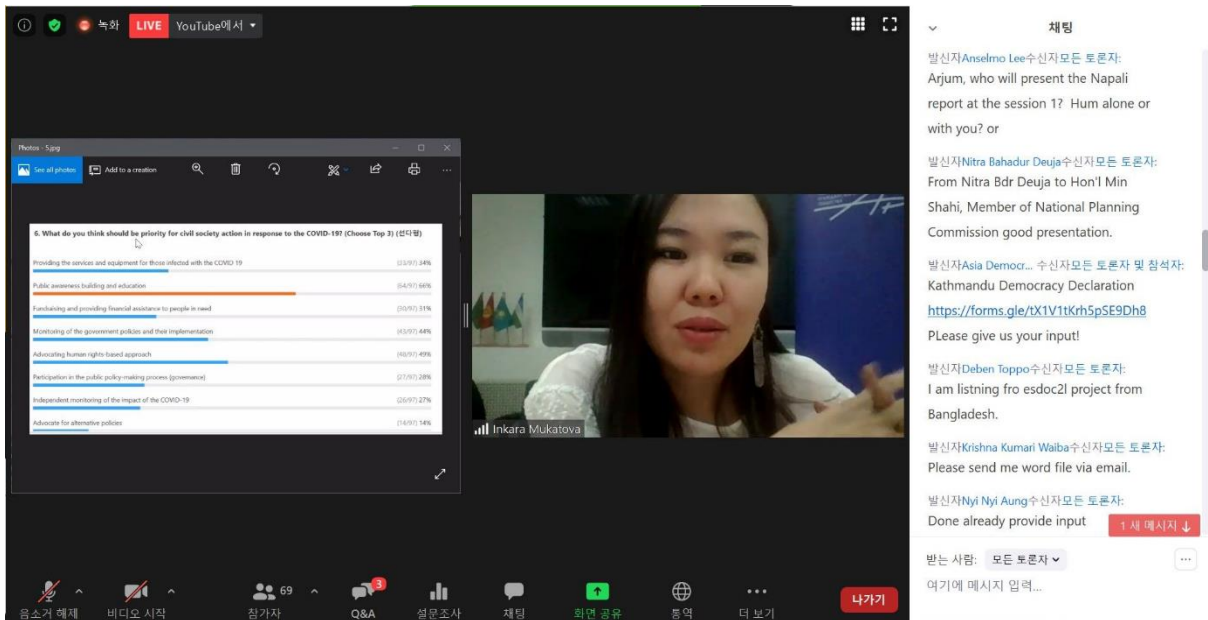


Figure 11 Patricia Galdamez moderating the Session 6



Figure 12 Hideki Wakabayashi delivering the closing remarks



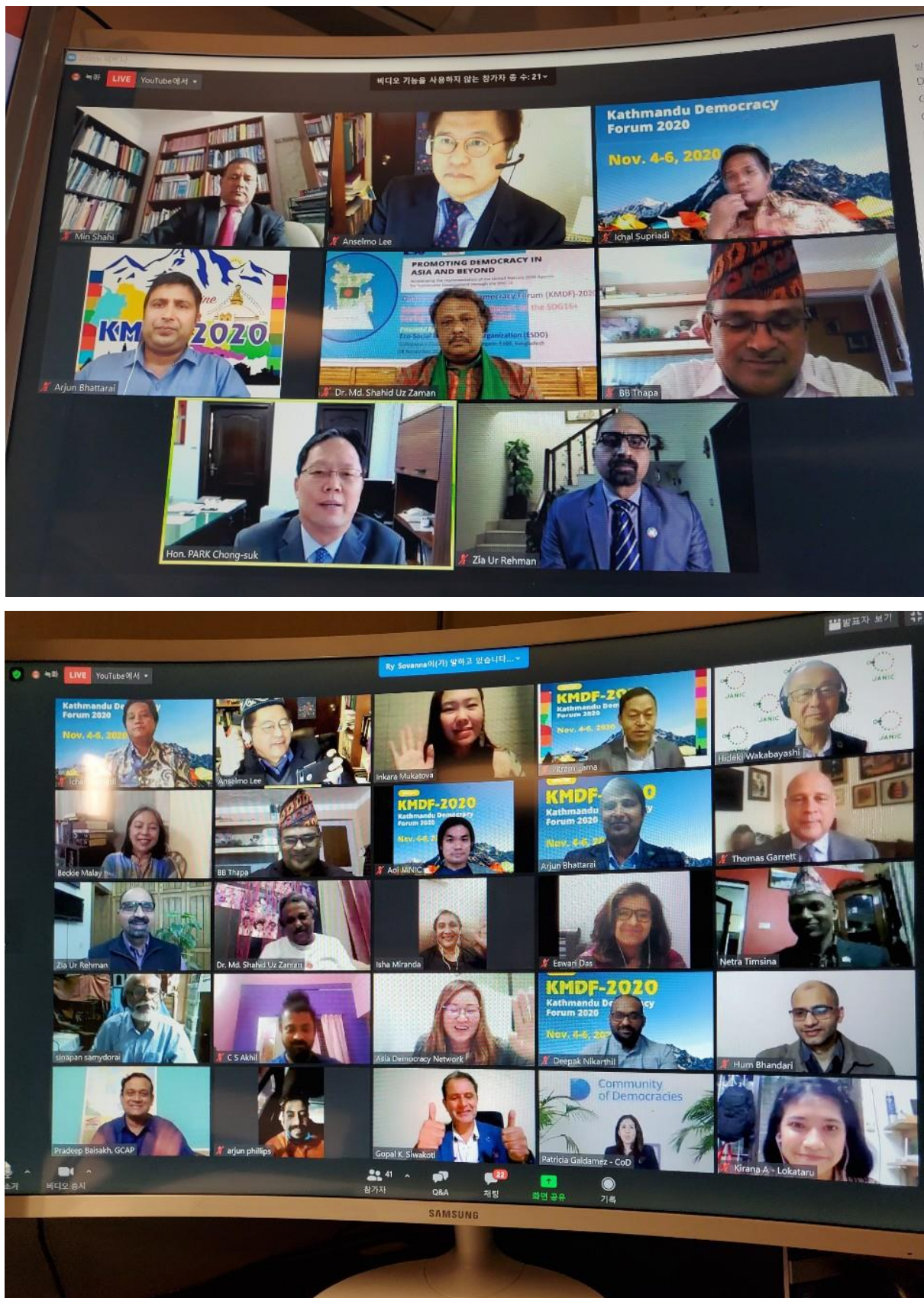
Figure 13 Netra Timsina delivering the closing remarks



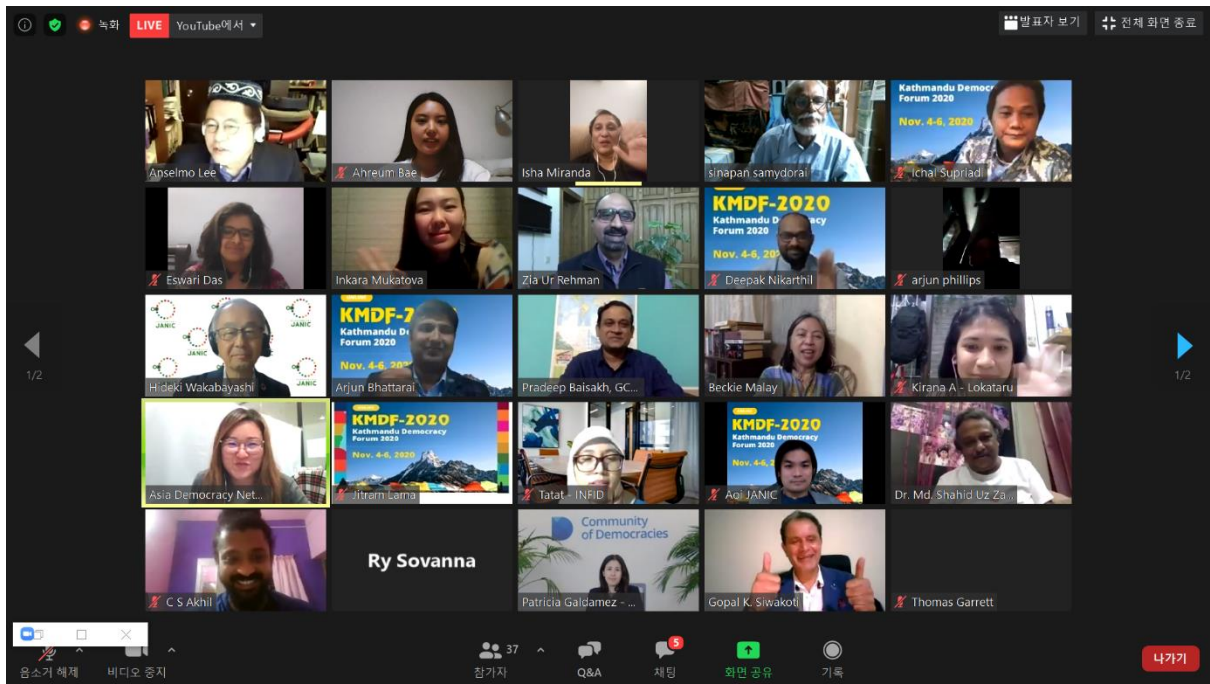
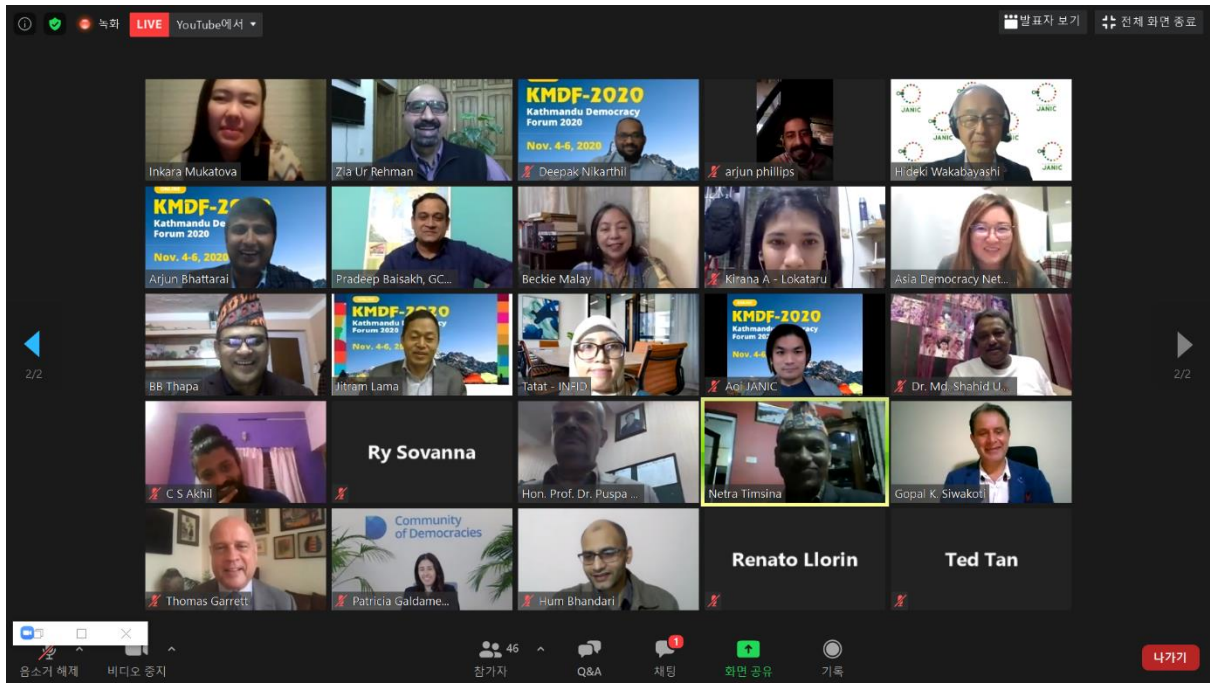
Figure 14 Dr. Puspa Raj Kadel delivering the closing remarks



Figure 35 Group pictures



Online Kathmandu Democracy Forum / November 4-6, 2020



IV. Kathmandu Declaration 2020