

The cover features a solid orange background with a white dotted pattern in the top-left and bottom-right corners. The text is centered and rendered in a white, bold, sans-serif font. A horizontal orange line is positioned below the main title.

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

ASIA DEMOCRACY NETWORK

ASIA DEMOCRACY NETWORK

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is a fact that 2020 with the pandemic has posed overwhelming struggles for all components of civil society and democracy activists worldwide not only adapting to a new working environment in the new normal as well as facing challenges from democratic regression during the pandemic. The silver lining of the challenges has jolted us all in the direction of improving and innovating realistic programs. The birth of the *Asia Democracy Chronicles*, coming to a new approach in our *National Consolidation Program*, and the *Youth Assembly* are vivid examples that can be taken as lessons which we will continue in the future.

We embraced the challenges and found a way to adapt and continue to provide services in promoting democracy as much as we can. I believe our member organizations, partners, and many other civil societies have the resilience and passion to endure through these difficult times and continue the pushback on the regression of democracy such as the increasing authoritarian taking advantage of the crisis. Throughout the year with support of many, ADN was able to strategically modify its program to bolster the campaign for democratic resilience, enhance unity and empower local democracy as these factors are important to provide an immediate response to emerging crises.

We, the civil society, adapted to organize work in the virtual space, over hundreds of hours invested for coordination and implementation of our programs. We foresee that this way of work will continue for many years ahead. The Asia Democracy Network and its allies are committed to advancement of democracy in the region as well as to use the lessons learned during the crisis to empower the year ahead with selective work proposed in this document through consolidation efforts to strive for better democracy.

PANDEMIC 2021: ENDURING GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND HOW WE ADAPTED

The global pandemic has forced all of us to adapt and change the way we go about our lives. With the pandemic's travel restrictions and closing of borders, the way we conduct our work has also had to change. Programs we carefully crafted a year in advance had become moot and we had to restructure our programs quickly as it was vital that we do not lose momentum in continuing the democracy movement. However, with the flexibility and graciousness of our donors and partners, the Asia Democracy Network (ADN) was able to smoothly adapt quickly and continue our work.

A. Diversion of the 2020 Pushback and reclaim the civic space

Realizing the democracy regression in 2019 (see 2019 annual report) ADN launched the #DemocracyPushback2020 campaign program in early 2020, involving many consolidation meetings and campaign activities among key regional CSOs. Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, these programs were modified to the best of our capacity to have impact on democracy. Despite the barriers of not being able to implement programs in person, we used technology and coupled with the people's strong will to continue the movement, ADN successfully initiated programs aimed to strengthen unity and solidarity through the programs we will explain throughout the report.

B. Taking Democracy to the Virtual Space

Despite having many faces to face interactions, meetings, and conferences scheduled for 2020, due to the pandemic and to maintain the safety of our partners ADN had to cancel all in person activities requiring travel. However, these set agenda were implemented on the virtual platform. Like many across the world, the staff was immediately tasked to be familiar with online communication technology to ensure a safe communication with partners. ADN continuously assesses and progresses the status of the digital security of the organization. Throughout 2020, over hundreds of hours were invested into virtual communication through events and meetings to stay connected with our network and coordinate our overall regional work on democracy.

PROGRAMS

1. STRATEGIC MODIFICATION: BUILD DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE, ENHANCE UNITY, AND EMPOWER LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Over the twelve months of the pandemic crisis, we were also faced with exacerbated challenges to democracy and human rights. In addition to adapting to the circumstances, the organization has survived and continued its work to promote and defend democracy in the region through adjustment, modification, and initiation of the program to respond to the mounting challenges in democracy space. Through the interaction with various partners virtually, there is a common expression that with increasing control from the government using the pandemic situation to strengthen its power, or merely the government's failure to respond to the crisis, the condition of the freedom of space for civil society and the media is getting smaller. In response to this, ADN designed a resource platform to aggregate democracy and human rights issues related to the pandemic. Through the aggregation we aim to publicly disseminate to keep the public informed on the regional situation. Several activities to increase the resilience and solidarity of democracy activists have also been conducted and expanded to advocate democracy, SDGs, and Human rights to local level actors that include NGOs, National Human Rights Institutions, and the local government.

Specific programs that focused on the above are as follows:

- a. **Asia Democracy Chronicles: Civil Liberties and Human Rights Amid COVID-19 The View Across the Region**

ASIA DEMOCRACY CHRONICLES

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS AMID COVID-19: THE VIEW ACROSS THE REGION

Home Features & Analysis Countries Issues Democracy Digest Visual Stories About Back to ADN

Special Feature

Timor-Leste shelves controversial draft defamation law. What came before and what comes next?

Government's plan to criminalize "offenses against honour, good name and reputation" no

In 2019, the globe was experiencing a drastic regression of democracy and human rights igniting a year of mass protests. It was a clear indication that across the world that the continued oppression of the people's fundamental rights was not going to be tolerated. The rise of mass protests throughout all corners of the world and especially in the Asia region also indicated that people were becoming more engaged in the political process. We entered 2020, ready to more actively and aggressively push back on regression of democracy and coordinate solidarity and advocacy campaigns and increase capacity building to sustain movements. However, our excitement for the new year was cut short when the global COVID-19 pandemic forced the world to stop. The pandemic has drastically changed the way we go about our normal lives and placed us to shelter in place. This caveat has forced civil society to re-imagine all our programs and activities.

Within these circumstances, challenges to democracy have accelerated significantly with dictators and authoritarian regimes taking advantage of the obstacles, emergency laws in the name of containing the pandemic to further restrict fundamental freedoms.

Against the foregoing backdrop, the Asia Democracy Network (ADN) has embarked on the Asia Democracy Chronicles project. This timely initiative aimed to map the human rights and democratic landscape in the region in the wake of the global health crisis. Ultimately, we hope to see a truly humane and rights-based response that puts people above any political and pecuniary interests.

Chronicling the state of democratic rights or fundamental freedoms – particularly in Asia – is expected to stoke further debate and enrich ongoing discourse about the linkages between health and human rights in the context of the coronavirus scourge. It is further hoped that original stories from the ground as well as analysis and opinion pieces that will be featured on the Asia Democracy Chronicles platform will help inform policy making and facilitate national, regional, and international efforts to thwart unacceptable state measures to tackle the pandemic.



Sri Lanka's troubling picture of ethnic cleansing, militarized operations, oppressed minorities, and increased authoritarian power amid the ravages of COVID-19

By Ashik Kumar

On the surface, Sri Lanka seems an idyllic and relaxed tropical country in the Indian Ocean, an island getaway with its beaches, forests, and Buddhist temples – almost peaceful and removed from the rest of the world. But underneath the façade of democracy lies an authoritarian government with a human rights record of persecuting minorities, suppressing any political opposition, and recently, attempting to contain the COVID-19 pandemic using draconian measures.

The government's long, drawn-out ethnic cleansing campaign against the country's ethnic Tamil minority, which began with the pogroms now known as Black July in 1983, and culminated in the *Mullaitivu massacre* of 2009, resulted in the death, displacement, and disappearance of hundreds of thousands of Tamil civilians. More than a decade later most of them have still not been accounted for. The government continues to deny that they died or disappeared. As former US President Barack Obama recently acknowledged, the ethnic cleansing in Sri Lanka represents one of the great failures of international peacekeeping.



A main aim of the ADC is to explore diverse voices of the Asia region. We utilized our strength of being a broad network to obtain diverse stories on the state of the democracy human rights during the COVID-19 pandemic covering cross-cutting issues. Through this, the ADC has become the conduit to connect our network base closer to each other and establish partnerships.

In addition to the original content, the ADC team aggregates content from the web that focuses on democracy, human rights, and the pandemic in the Asia-Pacific region. This has

become a useful tool as a one stop resource center to see up to date and focused information on the region and its circumstances.

News



We aim to further expand our collaboration to include more original content as well as expanded varied programs in connection to them. With the expanded collaboration and findings of the ADC we aim for this to be the foundational basis to initiate or sustain advocacy campaigns on the national and regional level.

b. Global Youth Assembly: Building Democratic Resilience Across Generations and Borders

On December 15 and 17th, 2020, we held the Global Youth Assembly: Building Democratic Resilience Across Generations and Borders with youth leaders from across the world. This event debuted a large scope of different movements in Asia, the Pacific, Africa, Latin-America, and Eastern Europe. The aim was to begin to connect, motivate, and increase support among the region's youth democracy movement with each other as well as other leaders from other parts of the world. The event was well attended, and we had the opportunity to hear from the national Youth movements of Thailand, Bangladesh, India as well as regional movements from the Pacific, Milk-tea Alliances, Network of Young Democratic Asian (NOYDA), and youth on Dalit minorities movement. The event attracted hundreds of youth audiences to the two-day event. Detailed information can be viewed at: <https://adnasia.org/2020-asia-youth-assembly/> and the two days of the event can be viewed on our [ADN YouTube Channel](#).

The Asia Democracy Network will continue to annually implement the youth assembly as a space to convene youth organizations, individuals, and movements in the Asia Pacific as well as other regions for solidarity expression and to build unity among different groups who share common values on democracy and human rights. At the assembly we were able to see that the youth inspired each other to chase common actionable campaigns and strategize on enhancing civic resilience to democracy.

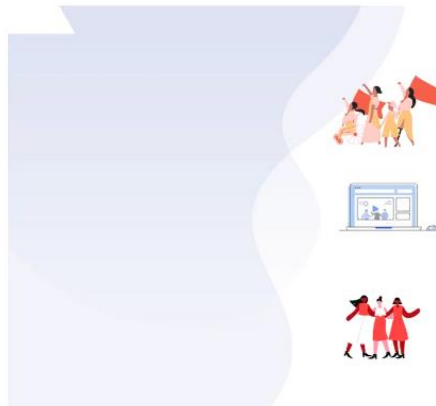
The event was held in conjunction with the Indonesian Human Rights Festival 2020, co-hosted by the National Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Indonesia (Komnas HAM), Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, the local government of West Kalimantan, and the International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID).



**YOUTH ASSEMBLY
FOR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE
IN ASIA AND PACIFIC**



Fatihah Zahrah
Asian Youth Forum



Feminism Lens

Digital Security

Empowering
community on the
ground

www.adnasia.org/2020-asia-youth-assembly

**YOUTH ASSEMBLY
FOR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE
IN ASIA AND PACIFIC**

DECEMBER 15th 2020
14.40-16.00
Jakarta/ Bangkok Time (UTC + 7:00)

SESSION 2: SOLIDARITY BUILDING: NATIONAL MOVEMENTS IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

Bobby Siarani
Honika Youth Council in Solomon Islands

Manik Marganamahendra
President of the Student Union of the University of Indonesia

Jutatip Sirikhhan
Free Youth Movement, Thailand

Rezaur Rahman Lenin
Academic Activist, based at Chikha' Combaati

Moderator:
Karel Antonio Galang
Asia Democracy Network

Somaly Khum
Cambodia Youth for Democracy

LIVE STREAMING

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION PROVIDED

@adn_asia Asia Democracy Network (ADN) @adn_asia

www.adnasia.org/2020-asia-youth-assembly

**YOUTH ASSEMBLY
FOR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE
IN ASIA AND PACIFIC**

DECEMBER 15th 2020
13.00 - 14.40
Jakarta/ Bangkok Time (UTC + 7:00)

**SESSION 1: YOUTH MOVEMENT LEADERS: BUILDING RESILIENCE
AND SHAPING THE MOVEMENT**

Filimone Tuivanua'alevu
Asia Urban Youth, Fiji

Ibrahim Faruk
The Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth and Advancement (YIAGA), Nigeria

Daria Minsky
The Village Magazine, Belarus

Margarita Maira Serrano
Fundacion Ciudadano Inteligente, Chile

Moderator:
Soo Yan Suh
Asia Democracy Network

LIVE STREAMING

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION PROVIDED

@adn_asia Asia Democracy Network (ADN) @adn_asia

www.adnasia.org/2020-asia-youth-assembly

**YOUTH ASSEMBLY
FOR DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE
IN ASIA AND PACIFIC**

DECEMBER 17th 2020
15.00 - 16.45
Jakarta/ Bangkok Time (UTC + 7:00)

SESSION 3: SOLIDARITY BUILDING ON THE REGIONAL LEVEL THROUGH ALLIANCES

Fatihah Zahrah
Asian Youth Forum

Dipanshu Rathore
Asian Dalit Rights Forum

Thachaporn Supparatanapinyo
Mikasa alliances

Fi Tseng
Network of Young Democratic Asians (NYDA)

Moderator:
Nikita Rakhyani
Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), India

LIVE STREAMING

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION PROVIDED

@adn_asia Asia Democracy Network (ADN) @adn_asia

c. **Blended Learning Course for Local Actors: Localizing Human Rights in the SDGs Processes: Jointly organized by RWI, UCLG-ASPAC, and ADN-JANIC.**

The Blended Learning Course for Local Actors: Localizing Human Rights in the SDGs Processes was jointly organized by RWI, UCLG ASPAC and the Asia Democracy Network to implement a program aimed to introduce the concepts, experiences, and building networks on localizing human rights through the SDG process to local actors across Southeast Asia. The program spanning about 6 months had 30 participants from representatives from NGOs, local government, and National Human Rights institutions (NHRI's) in 7 countries of the SEA. which is (Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar).

The online program was launched on July 22nd, 2020 and continued with a self-learning program implemented through an online learning platform embedded within Lund University. The program also provided five small grants for the participants who successfully passed the education program and developed a compelling mini project for implementation. With the additional funds obtained from the Japan NGOs for International Cooperation (JANIC), we were able to empower the quality and quantity of the program participants and number of small project grant receivers. The small grants are designed into two phases, whereas the first phases are granted to 15 organizations/participants for the multi-project of the NGOs, Local Govt, and NHRIs. The second project is granted to 10 CSOs to empower the civil societies role in implementing expansion of the first activities, or initiation of new activities.

For ADN strategically, this engagement has led to the venture in promoting SDGs and Human rights at the local level that has mixed involvement of multi-stakeholders that can be expanded for robust democracy promotion at the local level.

The poster features logos for RAOUL WALLENBERG INSTITUTE, UCLG ASPAC, ADN, and JANIC. The main title is 'Closing Event : The Blended Learning Course For Local Actors LOCALISING HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SDGs PROCESS'. Below the title, it states 'In Conjunction with the Human Rights Festival 15 - 18 December 2020'. Three speakers are listed: Morten Kjaerum (Director of RWI), Bernadiah Tjandradewi (Secretary General of UCLG ASPAC), and Ichal Supriadi (Secretary General of ADN). A 'Main Agenda' section includes 'Reflection Session' and 'Key Takeaways & Feedback from BLC Participants'. The event details are: EVENT: Closing Event, DATE: December 18, 2020, TIME: 10.00-17.15 Jakarta/Bangkok time, VENUE: 10.000 meeting, https://lu.se.com/online/111111, and CODE: 689 - 6731 - 1197. It is supported by Sweden (Sverige).



d. National Consolidation

Democracy and human rights have deteriorated across the Asia region, and the pandemic has further accelerated this deterioration. With the travel and gathering restrictions brought upon by the pandemic, it has significantly placed tall barriers for civil society to implement their basic functions of advocacy. Authoritarian governments have taken advantage of these barriers and implemented various draconian laws that further narrow civic space. During times of crisis, it is now more than ever necessary that diverse civil society unify together to push back on the regression of democracy and human rights in Asia.

As a response, the Asia Democracy Network (ADN), and Verité Research spearheaded a national consolidation initiative which aimed to generate exchanges of information and democracy and human rights in Sri Lanka. With the advent of a new and challenging political environment in the country, such national consolidation was conceptualized cognizant of the greater need for pro-democracy actors to unite and work together in addressing the challenges faced not only nationally but also regionally. The discussion also served as a platform to brainstorm and strategize to form a plan that responds to the issues faced by CSOs in tackling human rights and democracy issues.

Similar political and democracy-related developments have been springing in various parts of the region. As such, ADN is currently working to replicate such solidarity building exercises in various parts of Asia. ADN is currently working with think-tank organizations, and members of ADRN in the Philippines to implement a similar action to unite pro-democracy stakeholders to champion democratic principles and endeavors. This endeavor will unite pro-democracy stakeholders working on different areas of democratization such as elections, human rights, development, and democracy studies.

Furthermore, actions to support besieged civic spaces such as Hong Kong are underway, by building bridges not only among civil society organizations within and outside the territory, but also connecting these communities with actors which can assist them in their struggle such as intergovernmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations, and funders. ADN is currently leading such an endeavor in the region and has been recognized regionally and internationally as among the prime movers and supporters for national consolidation in besieged spaces.

ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS

ADN has been proactively responding to democracy related issues which affect various communities in the region. It has formed great connections with other human rights and democracy institutions, which enabled effective advocacy efforts. Among them are the following:

1. Free Joshua Wong, Agnes Chow and Ivan Lam, repeal Hong Kong’s undemocratic Laws (December 10, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4428697>)

“We are one with these three young, brave activists as they face a legal and judicial system that penalizes demands for greater freedoms and justice – a situation which, unfortunately, many Asian pro-democracy advocates in countries such as Thailand, Bangladesh, the Philippines and other parts of the region share. We call on the Hong Kong authorities to immediately and unconditionally release the three activists, as well as other pro-democracy advocates who have been arrested for merely exercising their fundamental rights and drop all charges against them. These include the owner and founder of newspaper Apple Daily Jimmy Lai, RTHK journalist Choy Yuk-ling, and eight pro-democracy former members of the Legislative Council.”

2. Thailand: Respect Free Speech and Right to Peaceful Assembly (August 13, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4324853>)

“We support the Thai youth as they demand for the expansion of civic space in their country, which is the only rightful trajectory after the 2019 General Election. We request that the Government remove all impediments against the free expression of Thai citizens, listen and positively act on these calls to realize a meaningful, genuine transition to democracy in Thailand”

3. **The Philippines' Anti-Terror Law: Instrument of Repression (August 10, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4321181>)**

THE TERROR OF THE PHILIPPINES' ANTI-TERROR LAW

On July 3, 2020, President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines signed Republic Act 11479, more commonly known as the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020. The Philippines follows a trend of using security measures to crack down on dissent and free expression.

HOW DOES THE ANTI-TERROR LAW WORK?

- It empowers a body of executive officials the power to order warrantless arrests and detention of people falling under the body's definition of a terrorist – an power usually given to the judiciary;
- Security officers can conduct a 60 to 90 day surveillance of suspected terrorists. Suspected terrorists may be placed under surveillance or wiretapping upon approval of the Court of Appeals.
- A suspected terrorist can be detained for 10 to 14 days, without a warrant of arrest;

WHAT MAKES THE LAW SO DANGEROUS?

- 1. In contrast to the Human Security Act of 2007, the Anti-Terror Law carries overly broad definitions of who may be considered as terrorists, which opens possibilities for abuse of power; (Arbitrary Arrest)
- It removes penalties for security officers for wrongful arrests and actions; (Impunity)
- Any person can be accused of inciting terrorism for expressing dissent to government positions and for holding progressive views; (Attack on Civil Liberties)
- It puts progressive and human rights groups at greatest risk for their advocacies which security forces associate with communist sentiments. (Creating Environment of Fear)

We call on the international community to monitor the sharply declining quality of human rights and democracy in the Philippines, further aggravated by the passage of the Anti-Terrorism Law.

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4. **Hong Kong National Security Law: Instrument of Repression (August 3, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4321181>)**

HONG KONG NATIONAL SECURITY LAW: AN INSTRUMENT OF REPRESSION

Since June 2019, the citizens of Hong Kong have been clamoring for reforms and the protection of their autonomy and rights. While triumph over the Extradition Bill was realized through citizen efforts, a greater drawback happened as China imposed a National Security Law (NSL) over Hong Kong. In a span of 6 weeks since it was first announced, China drafted and deliberated on the law without any semblance of a democratic legislative process. No one has seen the contents of the law until it was made public and came into effect on June 30, 2020.

What does the law define as security threats?

There are four major actions the law considers as security threats, namely:

1. Secession (as defined in Articles 20-21)
2. Terrorism (as defined in Articles 24-28)
3. Collusion with foreign entities which endanger national security (as defined in Articles 29-30)
4. Subversion (as defined in Articles 22-23)

10 points on what makes the National Security Law problematic

1. Created without any semblance of a transparent, democratic legislative procedure.
2. The NSL is rife with vague legal wording in defining security threats which gives enforcement authorities arbitrary powers in implementing the law
3. Damages to transport and transport facilities, no matter the degree, is defined as terrorism. [Art. 24 (3)]

4. China's Standing Committee of the National Peoples' Congress has the sole power to interpret the law (Art. 65), and will be implemented the Office for Safeguarding National Security of the Central Peoples' Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Arts. 48-61), and the Hong Kong Committee for Safeguarding National Security (Art.12), which the law will establish.
5. Should the security law be found to be inconsistent to the laws of the Hong Kong SAR, the security law prevails (Art. 62).
6. The Office of the Chief Executive, a position appointed by and loyal to China, will have the power to appoint judges to hear security law violations (Art. 44).
7. The new security office will have the power to send some cases to be tried in mainland China (Art. 54). Some trials will also be heard behind closed doors (Art. 41).
8. Wiretapping and surveilling those suspected to be violating the law is sanctioned [Art 43 (6)]. The law gives a maximum sentence of life imprisonment (Arts. 20, 22 24, 25, 29), as well as bans to run for public office (Art. 35).
9. The law enables the Hong Kong Government to control information released to the public by creating greater controls over the management of non-government organizations and media (Art. 54).
10. The law also claims jurisdiction over non-permanent residents within and outside of Hong Kong (Arts. 36-39)

We call on the international community to go against this instrument of repression that is meant to destroy fundamental rights and democracy in Hong Kong!

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5. **Joint Open Letter to Foreign Governments (July 21, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4306441>)**

“The Cambodian government continues to crack down on civil society, independent media, and the political opposition and human rights defenders to silence critical voices in the country. In the past three years it has adopted a series of repressive laws that unduly restrict human rights. In November 2019, the Cambodian authorities had arbitrarily detained nearly 90 people solely on the basis of the peaceful expression of their opinions or political views as well as their political affiliations. While 74 opposition members, detained on spurious charges, were released from

detention in December 2019, the charges against them remain, and they risk re-arrest. Opposition leader Kem Sokha's criminal trial for unsubstantiated treason charges has been marred by irregularities since it began in January. Sokha remains banned from politics and faces up to 30 years in prison if convicted. The Prime Minister announced that the trial could drag on into 2021."

6. China and Hong Kong: Repeal the National Security Law, respect rights and freedoms in Hong Kong (July 20, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4305709>)

"We, as human rights advocates and pro-democracy actors condemn the enactment of the National Security Law and demand that it be repealed. China and Hong Kong should adhere to their obligations to protect the fundamental rights of their peoples.

We stand in solidarity with peoples of Hong Kong, who continue to fight for their rights and freedoms peacefully as they face unprecedented repression and violence.

We are further concerned that China's influence to eradicate human rights extends beyond Hong Kong, and that the spaces in which communities are able to exercise their civil and political rights are systematically being eroded."

7. Cambodia: 4 Years On, No Effective Investigation into --Kem Ley's Unlawful Killing (July 9, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4296577>)

"Today, on the fourth anniversary of the killing of prominent political commentator and human rights defender Kem Ley, we, the 30 undersigned organizations, call on the Cambodian authorities to create an independent Commission of Inquiry to conduct an effective and impartial investigation that is long overdue into Kem Ley's death. We further urge Cambodian authorities to cease intimidation and harassment of persons peacefully commemorating his passing."

8. COVID-19 crisis threatens democracy, leading world figures warn (June 25, 2020, <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4284453>)

"The coronavirus pandemic poses serious threats to democracy. Many governments around the world have assembled emergency powers that restrict human rights and enhance state surveillance, often disregarding legal constraints, checks and balances, and time frames for restoring constitutional order.

That is the key message in "[A Call to Defend Democracy](#)", an Open Letter initiated by the Stockholm-based International IDEA and the Washington-DC-based National Endowment for Democracy, and supported by the [Asia Democracy Network \(ADN\)](#) and 72 other pro-democracy institutions as well as political and civic leaders around the world, including 13 Nobel Laureates and 62 former heads of state and government."

9. Thailand: Government should commit towards locating missing activist and protecting human rights defenders (June 17, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4277245>)

“The Thai government’s inadequate response to the enforced disappearance of pro-democracy activist Wanchalerm Satsaksit demonstrates its failure to protect human rights defenders and other dissenting voices, Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) and Asia Democracy Network said today.

Unidentified assailants abducted Wanchalerm in front of his residence in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 4 June. Following the 2014 coup when the ruling Pheu Thai government was ousted by the military, Wanchalerm fled to Cambodia in fear of reprisals. Wanchalerm was affiliated with the Pheu Thai party. In 2018, he was issued with an arrest warrant for allegedly violating the Computer Crime Act over his role as an administrator of an anti-government Facebook page.”

10. The Anti-Terrorism Law: Advent of a greater human rights catastrophe in the Philippines (June 12, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4274713>)

“The Asia Democracy Network (ADN) condemns the move by the Philippine Government to legislate the Anti-Terrorism Law which contains provisions that endanger the fundamental rights of citizens and undermines peacebuilding efforts in the country. We call on members of the Philippine Congress to reconsider the said bill given the many flaws which leaves it open to abuse by authorities. Given the country’s poor human rights record, Filipinos are rightfully worried about crackdowns on human rights advocates which might occur under the guise of curbing terrorism. It is worth noting that laws of similar effect are being utilized by undemocratic regimes, most recently in Hong Kong, to curb dissent.”

11. Stand with Hong Kong Campaign (June 2, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4263669>)

“On May 28, 2020 the Chinese parliament passed the national security law for Hong Kong, signaling an end to Hong Kong’s autonomy. Despite the global outcry condemning the move and calling to ensure the One Country Two Systems constitutional principle for the Special Administrative Regions.”

12. Reject Assault on Hong Kong’s Autonomy and Human Rights (May 27, 2020, <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4258505>)

“The Asia Democracy Network (ADN) is one with Hong Kongers in condemning the attempt by China to impose the passage of a security law, which is a direct assault against the city’s autonomy, rule of law and liberties. This act is a clear attempt by Beijing and the Lam Government to decisively put an end to the citizens’ struggle to protect democratic values in Hong Kong.”

13. Thailand: Ensure accountability for Thailand’s 2010 political massacre (May 19, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4251445>)

“In a joint statement today, the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) and the Asia Democracy Network (ADN) call on the Government of Thailand to re-activate its investigation into the crackdown and ensure transparent proceedings and due process for all involved.”

14. ABS-CBN and the Philippine free media: the Duterte Regime’s latest victims (May 6, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4237297>)

“On May 5, 2020, Filipinos witnessed the country’s largest television network, the ABS-CBN, went off-air at 6 pm, Manila time. It was an event reminiscent of the same network’s closure in 1972 during the dictatorial regime of Ferdinand Marcos -- a prelude to the country’s darkest days under Martial Law. Indeed, when the chilling presence of autocracy starts to seep within a society, the free press and freedom to express are among the first and inevitable casualties.”

15. Celebrating International Labour Day 2020 During the Covid-19 Pandemic: Protect Workers, Protect Human Rights (April 30, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4231389>)

“The Asia Democracy Network embraces and celebrates laborers from around the world who answered the call of duty and risked their lives to provide for those afflicted by the virus. The sacrifice of these frontline workers is a critical factor to ensure not only to the functioning of the world economy, but more importantly resuscitating the health of our societies. We call on governments to faithfully perform their duty of guaranteeing these workers’ economic, social and physical welfare, in the same manner they protected us in this time of dire need.”

16. Hong Kong: Pro-Democracy Arrests Undermine Democracy and Humanity (April 21, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4221241>)

“In the biggest crackdown since the protests in 2019, 15 well-known democracy advocates of Hong Kong were arrested on allegations of joining and organizing demonstrations last year. The arrests of these veteran activists come as a shock, as the protests they were accused of organizing were widely initiated by the youth and have no known formal leadership structure. By targeting prominent democracy actors and silencing longtime critics, it is evident that Lam’s regime continues to curtail democratic values, which has long served as a hindrance to their agenda of fully surrendering Hong Kong to Beijing’s interests.”

17. ASEAN urged to heed UN Sec-Gen call for global ceasefire, ensure human rights amid COVID19 (March 30, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4198314>)

“We, in the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)-Southeast Asia and the Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID), together with the undersigned civil society organizations and individuals, strongly urge the Member-States of the Association of Southeast

Asian Nations (ASEAN) to heed the call of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres for immediate global ceasefire in active armed conflicts in all parts of the world, in order to focus on the fight against the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. We likewise call on States to place human security and conflict sensitivity as core principles in their emergency responses, ensuring that measures are proportionate, necessary and non-discriminatory aligned with international human rights law and standards, and are sensitive to the disproportionate vulnerability to pandemics of conflict-affected communities, refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless, internally-displaced persons (IDPs), people with disabilities, women, children and elderly”

18. *2020, A Year of Push Back Against Democratic Regression (February 2, 2020; <https://us3.admin.mailchimp.com/campaigns/show?id=4134090>)*

“Democratic regression, attacks on human rights, and a growing manifestation of authoritarianism and marginalization. These are the very challenges confronted by democracy advocates in 2019, not only in Asia but across the globe. Despite the awareness of this herculean task, we have only seen democracy advocates unite, organize and resist democratic collapse and authoritarian abuse. The year saw massive citizen mobilizations in 17 countries across the globe, which took the lives of around 963 martyrs of democracy and sacrificed the freedoms of thousands of imprisoned and exiled activists.”

FUTURE PROGRAMS 2021

Anchored to the three pillar of activities that has been set as 3 years' work-plan, ADN will proceed the future work that will be divided as:

4.1. Democracy Unity and Solidarity.

a. Democracy Consolidation:

- i. Biennial Democracy Summit: Due to the pandemic, the scheduled summit for 2020 was canceled. Therefore, due to the current circumstances we are working towards designing a virtual event on the online platform for 2021. This event shall convene all democracy stakeholders in the region to highlight issues and build strategy to push back on regressing democracy and to reclaim civic space.
- ii. National Consolidation: We will be aiming to hold quarterly meetings amongst national stakeholders to discuss current democracy issues within the country, build connections, and develop action to strengthen unity. ADN aims to have this activity in 10 countries in Asia and currently working on the specifics of the program. We will be partnering with ADN's sister network the Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN) and still is open for other cooperation to enhance the program. We are preparing to really connect research and advocacy to strengthen campaigning for democracy.

b. Advocacy and Solidarity Support

- i. Asia Democracy Chronicles as a common platform.
- ii. Solidarity for the country with democracy regression as crisis arises. ADN will participate in solidarity expressions in the form of press releases, statements, joint statements, etc.
- iii. High Level Advocacy: Seek cooperation of member organizations to conduct advocacy at the high-level forums such as UN Assemblies, and EU annual events.
- iv. Amplifying concern and relay the campaign: ADN supportive to the advocacy that has been conducted by its members and seek how ADN can enhance their

campaign. ADN will also continue its effort to conduct advocacy work in East Asia whereas possible and continue coordinating function on the solidarity building in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and including the thematic issue that has not been worked by others.

4.2 Next Generation of Democracy Advocates

- a. **Democracy Academy:** The secretariat will continue its work to nurture the next generation of democratic advocates through its training program that will be held quarterly at the regional level and will further expand to the country level. In addition to the current English curriculum, we also aim to expand the reach of the program by translating it to various languages, such as Urdu, Bahasa Indonesia, Korean, Myanmar, and Mandarin. We also hope to establish ties with universities and other stakeholders at the national and sub-national level to enlarge the number of beneficiaries and engagement of the local audiences particularly the youths. In addition, ADN will establish a curriculum on digital security safety as well as connecting organizations who have such expertise to provide intensive training targeting youth, journalists, and NGOs to elevate their digital safety.

- b. **Youth Assembly:** ADN will also continue to consolidate the democratic youth movement in the region and national scope and continue to hold the Youth Assembly for Democratic Resilience event in 2021.

4.3. Empower Local Democracy

SDGs processes provide tools and occasion to strengthen democracy and human rights at the local level. Through this connection ADN continues to engage to strengthen local democracy and utilize the existing SDGs events globally and elevate engagement of the CSOs to the local government. Some of the events are foreseen: Busan Democracy Forum, World Human Rights Cities Forum (Gwangju), ADN Annual Democracy Forum, and the Indonesia Human Rights Festival.

In addition, ADN will continue the Blended Learning Course to localize human rights on the SDG processes in Southeast Asia and could be expanded and modified once the resources are available.

2021 FINANCIAL REVIEW

In 2020, ADN financial position is reported as below in USD:

Total Income	1,294,327.89
Income from Donor 1	14,899.44
Income from Donor 2	18,660.00
Income from Donor 3	238,000.00
Income from Donor 4	944,366.66
Income from Donor 5	5,651.79
Income from Donor 6	72,750.00
Expenditures	1,077,425.61
Balances	216,902.28

ANNEX

Member Organizations

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) - Southeast Asia Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID)
<https://www.gppac.net/regions/southeast-asia>

The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) is a global network led by civil society organizations (CSOs) actively working to prevent violent conflict and build more peaceful societies. The network consists of 15 regional networks, with priorities and agendas specific to the regional environment. The Southeast Asia GPPAC network is currently housed under the Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID).

Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN)
<http://www.adrnresearch.org>

The Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN) was launched in November 2013 to conduct research related to democratic governance and human rights promotion in Asia. By identifying emerging threats to democracy and suggesting policy responses, the network aims to contribute to the consolidation of democracy in the Asian region. By sharing expertise about our own countries, all members can develop a deeper understanding of problems and challenges in other countries and identify the issues that the region faces as a whole. Participation in ADRN is expected to increase the impact, quality, and reliability of the research produced by our member institutions for practitioners working for the democratization of the region.

Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
<https://www.forum-asia.org/>

The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) works to promote and protect human rights, including the right to development, through collaboration and cooperation among human rights organizations and defenders in Asia and beyond.

FORUM-ASIA is a network of 82 members in 23 countries, as of December 2020, across Asia. It was founded in 1991 in Manila, the Philippines. Its Regional Secretariat was established in Bangkok, Thailand in 1992. Since then, offices have been opened in Geneva, Jakarta, and Kathmandu.

FORUM-ASIA is committed to building a peaceful, just, equitable and ecologically sustainable community of peoples and societies in Asia, where all human rights of all individuals, groups and peoples – in particular, the poor, marginalized and discriminated – are fully respected and realized in accordance with internationally accepted human rights norms and standards.

Asia Development Alliance (ADA)

<https://ada2030.org/>

Asia Development Alliance (ADA) an innovative regional network empowering civil society for effective social change. It gathers 30 national CSO platforms (NPF) from South, South East, North East and Central Asia, together representing over 10, 000 organizations.

Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL)

<https://anfrel.org/>

The **Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL)** was formed in November 1997 to promote and support democratization in Asia at the national and regional levels. It has since established itself as the foremost NGO working for democratic elections in the region.

ANFREL is an international, multi-sector, independent and non-political alliance of like-minded organizations working together to advance a common vision: that every State should have a government whose authority derives from the will of the people as expressed by secret ballot in genuine free and fair elections held at regular intervals on the basis of universal and equal suffrage. We strongly believe in the principles enshrined in Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Migrants Forum in Asia (MFA)

<https://mfasia.org/>

MFA is a regional network of non-government organizations (NGOs), associations and trade unions of migrant workers, and individual advocates in Asia who are committed to protect and promote the rights and welfare of migrant workers. It is guided by a vision of an alternative world system based on respect for human rights and dignity, social justice, and gender equity, particularly for migrant workers. MFA acts as a facilitator, a regional communication and coordination point between member-organizations and advocates, forging concerted action to address discriminatory laws and policies, violence against women migrants, unjust living conditions, unemployment in the homeland and other issues affecting migrant workers.

International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID)

<https://www.infid.org/>

International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID) is a non-governmental organization founded in 1985 under the name INGI (Inter-NGO Conference o-n IGGI Matters). INFID was established at the initiative of several prominent figures such as Gus Dur, Asmara Nababan, Gaffar Rahman, Adnan Buyung Nasution, Dawam Rahardjo, Fauzi Abdullah, Wukirsari, Kartjono, and Zoemrotin KS, as well as civil society organizations in Indonesia and their partners in the Netherlands, and many others, for conducting policy advocacy efforts at the international and national level on development issues and democratization in Indonesia.

People's SAARC

Civil society (people's movements and NGOs) have been working together for some time to forge a people-to-people forum in the SAARC region and to enable non-government voices to come together at the regional level. In 1994, a meeting was held in Kathmandu to discuss ways to foster cooperation, solidarity and action at the people-to-people level in a fragmented South Asia. The South Asian Forum on Human Rights (SAFHR) hosted the meeting, and participants drafted an 18-point Statement of Concerns, which was handed over to the SAARC Secretary General.

The following year, a consultation on the "Alternative Agenda for South Asian People's Solidarity" jointly organized by INSAF, INSEC, PILER and PP21 (People's Plan for the 21st century) was held in New Delhi. Participants sought an alternative agenda for a People's SAARC to address the concerns and aspirations of the people, reflecting the struggle for empowerment, livelihood and dignity of the South Asian people as a whole. This meeting produced a 14-point agenda for action. In 1996, the 1st SAARC People's Forum was held, and lobbied the official SAARC meeting on the issue of trafficking. This led to an acknowledgement at the 9th SAARC summit that trafficking is a grave concern for the region, and a commitment to develop a convention on the trafficking of women and children. The 2nd SAARC People's Forum further lobbied to change the text of the draft convention, and thereby impact on the policy framework of SAARC.

Asian Dalit Rights Forum (ADRF)

<http://asiadalitrightsforum.org/>

The Asian Dalit Rights Forum as a collective of Dalit rights protagonists, originated as a germinal idea at the World Social Forum 2004 in Mumbai, India. This led to events being organized for Dalit rights activists from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the India Social Forum, Delhi in November 2006. This collective idea of an Asia Dalit Rights Forum gained further clarity of perspective at the Karachi Social Forum in 2007. The rationale for this networking lay in the contiguity of the South Asian region countries, and the commonality of the systemic nature of discrimination and violence suffered by the peoples living in this region.

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Asian Muslim Action Network (AMAN)

<https://amanindonesia.org/>

Asian Muslim Action Network is an interfaith organization that works for humanitarian aid in several countries such as Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, Bangladesh and India. Since 2017, the program agenda of AMAN switched to Islamic Education Reform.

Islamic education reform is a way to build peace. Not only a vision to bring back a tradition of knowledge and science of Islamic culture but also a process to be more adaptive and understand Islam as a way of life. Member of Asian Muslim Action Network believes that peace is a process to perceive the diversity of culture and celebrate humanity. Violence comes from a disability to perceive a reality of diversity where human is motivated to build self-centered ego and forget about the values of Islam. The responsibility is for everyone and the practice is for everything.

Asian Muslim Action Network has therefore declared that education is a strategic tunnel to bring the humanity and peace building where the future is on the responsibility of young generation today. As a saying said, Generation today is a leader tomorrow.

GOVERNING COUNCIL MEMBERS

John Samuel | Convener | Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)

John Samuel is the Executive Director of Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA). He has more than 25 years of experience and expertise in strengthening democratic governance, human rights advocacy, sustainable development and institution building in India, Asia and internationally. His work combined policy research, advocacy capacity building, strategic leadership and social mobilization across the world. He has worked with civil society, government agencies and academic institutions to promote inclusive participation of the marginalized people in governance. He was the Global Head of the Global Programme on Democratic Governance Assessments and Global Democratic Governance Advisor at the UNDP. Prior to joining the UNDP, he was the International Director of ActionAid International, based in Bangkok, leading its global thematic work on just and democratic governance and heading the Asia-pacific region. He helped to establish and served as the Chief Executive of the National Centre of Advocacy Studies in India. Mr. Samuel has a multi-disciplinary academic background. He was a visiting fellow at the Institute of development Studies, University of Sussex and at the Advocacy Institute, Washington. He helped to initiate and develop participatory methodologies and tools such as ELBAG (Economic Literacy and Budget Accountability for Governance) and social audit to promote democratic governance assessment at the grassroots, national and international levels. He has helped to initiate and establish several advocacies and research organizations and civil society alliances, including Infochange, Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability, Centre for Communication and Development Studies, Open-space network of young people, Bodhigram, Asian Media forum, International Social Watch and GCAP (Global Call to Action against Poverty), and Institute for Sustainable Development and Governance. He has published extensively on issues related people-centered advocacy, democratic governance and civil society.

Augusto Miclat | Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) South East Asia Chapter

Gus Miclat is the Executive Director and Co-Founder of the Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID), an advocacy, conflict prevention and solidarity organization based in the Philippines with campaigns and programs on peacebuilding and democracy in Southeast Asia particularly on Burma, Mindanao, South Thailand and Timor-Leste. He is also a former journalist, editor, university lecturer, theatre artist and organizer. He was deeply involved in the broad anti-dictatorship and democratic front against the then Martial Law regime of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos from the mid 1970s up to the late 1980s and organized the so-called “Middle Forces” and coalitions in Mindanao composed of professionals, lawyers, church people, teachers, journalists, artists, businessmen and politicians. He has been involved in people's diplomacy and international solidarity work since 1985. Gus was a humanity graduate at the Ateneo de Davao University, where he also taught journalism and theatre, among others. He is an editor and contributor to some books, including: “From Boardroom to the Slums” (1990), “Out of the Valley of Dry Bones” (1990), “Beyond the Cold War” (1992), “Breaking the Silence” (1995), “East Timor for Beginners” (1997), “Primer on Globalization” (1997) and “Burma for Beginners” (1998).

William Gois | Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)

William Gois is the Regional Coordinator of Migrant Forum in Asia, a regional network of migrants' organizations, NGOs, advocates, grassroots organizations and trade unions working to promote the rights and wellbeing of migrant workers and members of their families. Over the last twenty years, he has been at the forefront of international advocacy efforts engaging and influencing international and multilateral organizations to promote equitable and fair migration and development policies. He was a Co-Chair of the Civil Society Days of the 2011 Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). He continues to represent MFA in the International Steering Committee of the Civil Society Days of the GFMD. He also chairs the Global Coalition on Migration (GCM), a coalition of regional and global networks of migrant associations and trade unions. William represents MFA in the Steering Committee of the Asia Democracy Network (ADN), a civil society led multi-stakeholders' platform among democracy advocates and human rights defenders dedicated to the strengthening of democracy and Human Rights; Advisory Committee of the International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS); and in the Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment of the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHBR). He also leads and facilitates the engagement of MFA to the Colombo Process and Abu Dhabi Dialogue where MFA as civil a society is officially invited as an observer and works closely with UN Treaty Bodies, with the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Committee on Migrant Workers and other special mandates. He heads a team of MFA members to the International Labour Conference (ILC) of the International Labour Organization to monitor the development of labour migration issues within the ILO framework.

Sugeng Bahagijo | International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID)

Mr. Bahagijo is currently the Executive Director of INFID, where he directs a research-advocacy program on inequality, Post-2015 Agenda, and human rights democracy. He was also member of Steering Committee Open Government Partnership (OGP). Sugeng also member of Steering Committee of ADA (Asia Development Alliance). From 2006 to 2007, Mr. Bahagijo served as a policy advisor for Indonesia's Ministry for Social Welfare on mainstreaming poverty reduction and human development. Previously, he was a technical advisor for Ministry for National Planning of Indonesia and was a visiting fellow at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), at Sussex University in 2004.

Sook Jong Lee | Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN)

Sook Jong Lee is professor of public administration at Sungkyunkwan University and directs the East Asia Collaboration Center inside the University with the support of Korean National Research Foundation. She is Senior Fellow at the East Asia Institute, an independent Seoul-based think tank, and served the Institute as President from 2008 to 2018. She has been directing the Asian Democracy Research Network since its formation in 2015. About nineteen research organizations from the Asian region collaborate to promote democracy under the support of the Washington based National Endowment for Democracy. Dr. Lee also participates in the Trilateral Commission, Council of Councils, and many other transnational networks on research and policy studies. Since 2015, she is serving as a Steering Committee member of the World Movement for Democracy. Her research interests include multilateralism, democracy, and civil societies, focusing on South Korea, Japan, and other East Asian countries. Previously, Dr. Lee was research fellow at the Sejong Institute, visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution, professorial lecturer at the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) at Johns Hopkins University, and visiting fellow at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies. Her recent publications include *Transforming Global Governance with Middle Power Diplomacy: South Korea's Role in the 21st Century* (ed. 2016), *Keys to Successful Presidency in South Korea* (ed. 2013 and 2016), *Korea's Role in Global Governance for Development Cooperation* (ed. 2012), *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia* (eds. 2011), *Japan and East Asia: Regional Cooperation and Community Building* (eds. 2011), and *Toward Managed Globalization: The Korean Experience* (eds. 2010). She published numerous articles in both Korean and international academic journals. Dr. Lee received her Ph.D. in sociology from Harvard University.

Dr. Netra Prasad Timsina | People's SAARC | SAAPE

Netra Prasad Timsina is Regional Coordinator of South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE), a regional network of mass base organizations such as peasant rights organizations, women rights and labor rights organization, human rights organizations, academic institutions and critical intellectuals of South Asia. He is also coordinator of People's SAARC- a regional common platform of peoples of South Asia. Netra is former president of NGO Federation of Nepal, a national platform of CSOs of Nepal. He obtained post graduate degree (PhD) from the University of Reading, UK in 2003.

Chandanie Watawala | Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL)

She is the Executive Director of the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL). She has been involved in organizing several of ANFREL's election observation missions as Mission Coordinator and was the manager in charge of Myanmar office from June 2015 to August 2016. She has been participating in international election observation missions since 2007 and has observed 15 elections. Prior to her work in ANFREL, she has been with different organizations. She started her NGO activism in Sri Lanka as a National Human Rights Coordinator to Caritas Sri Lanka (SEDEC), a Program Associate for the Southeast Asia Program of Forum Asia, and as a Fund-Raising Adviser at the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). She concurrently serves as a Steering Committee Member of Asian Democracy Network (ADN), an umbrella organization of various regional networks in Asia.

Soeung Saroeun | Asia Development Alliance (ADA)

Mr. Soeung Saroeun is the Executive Director of a longest and largest membership organization in Cambodia namely the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC), a longest and largest membership-based organization in Cambodia. Mr. Saroeun is a co-founder and former Vice Chair of Transparency International Cambodia. At national level, on behalf of CCC, Mr. Saroeun is a member of Partnership & Harmonization Technical Working Group (TWG) of Council for Development of Cambodia (CDC), a member of Decentralization and Deconcentration TWG of Ministry of Interior (MoI), a member of Poverty Reduction and Planning TWG of Ministry of Planning (MoP), and a member of Public Administrator Reform TWG of the Ministry of Civil Servant (MCS), and he is a Co-chair of Working Group between General Tax Department and Associations/NGOs, Ministry of Economic and Finance. At the regional and international levels, Mr. Saroeun is the Co-Convener of Asia Development Alliance (ADA)-a regional forum of national development CSO platforms in Asia on UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and Steering Committee member of Asia Democracy Network (ADN). He is also the Vice President of Forus – an innovative global network of over 22000 organizations, empowering for effective social change. He used to serve as a Regional Coordinator for Beyond 2015 in Asia for the co-creation of UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. Mr. Saroeun holds BBA and MBA in General Management from local Universities, and graduated Master of Art in Peacebuilding from Coventry University (UK).

Advisory Council

Nimalka FERNANDO | Sri Lanka

Dr Nimalka Fernando is a lawyer and social activist. She served as the president of the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR) till recently. She is a member of the Women's Political Academy (Sri Lanka) an institute pioneered by her. She has been involved for over 35 years with several women's networks both national and regional on peace, security and human rights issues and democratic, social and economic rights of South Asian citizens (SAAPE and People's SAARC). She is presently a member of Women's Rights Network in South Asia focusing on women, peace and security. She is a well-known democratic activist in Sri Lanka and bears a reputation as a human rights defender globally. She is also a commissioner of the Office on Missing Persons in Sri Lanka.

Sushil PYAKUREL | Nepal

He is the former Commissioner of Nepal's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), and founder of the Nepalese human rights organization INSEC. Since the peace agreement was signed last year 2006 Nov, Mr. Pyakurel has been engaged in raising national and international attention on the issue of Past Human Rights violation and Impunity as well as transitional justice mechanism. Mr. Pyakurel played a lead role in the movement for the establishment of National Human Rights Commission 1996-2000 in Nepal. He was appointed as a commissioner at the first National Human Rights Institution, NHRC representing the Civil Society in 2000. Currently, Mr. Pyakurel is Chair of Alliance for Social Dialogue, (ASD). As the most respected and distinguished human rights defender in Nepal, he is lobbying towards addressing the avoidance of impunity and accountability in capacity of the President of the Accountability Watch Committee (AWC) a collective initiative of civil society against Impunity. Mr. Pyakurel is the winner of Gwangju Prize for Human Rights in 2010.

Jose Luis "Chito" GASCON | The Philippines

Jose Luis Martin "Chito" Gascon was appointed Chairperson of the Human Rights Commission of the Philippines in 2015; and his term will last until 2022. He has been active in public and government service for more than 30 years, at one time holding positions at the Department of Education and Office of the President, both as Undersecretary, and had most recently served as member of the Human Rights Violations Victims Claims Board. He is the youngest member of both the Constitutional Commission that drafted the 1987 Philippine Constitution and the 8th Philippine Congress. He served as Panel Member at Peace Negotiations with the National Democratic Front (NDF) from 2001-2004 and was the Chairperson from

2010-2014 of the Government's Human Rights Monitoring Committee (GPhMC) of that peace process within the framework of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). His continuing reform advocacies are in the areas of human rights, access to justice and the rule of law, transparency and accountability initiatives, political and electoral reforms, peace and conflict transformation, people's participation and civic education, and state building in the context of democratic transitions. He holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy and law from the University of the Philippines, and a Master of Law (LLM) degree specializing in International Law (Human Rights, Law of Peace, and Settlement of International Disputes) from Cambridge University as a member of St. Edmund's College through a joint British Chevening and Cambridge Overseas Trust Scholarship. He has received recognition for his reform efforts, including the Benigno S. Aquino Fellowship for Public Service in 2001, the Asian Public Intellectual Fellowship in 2007 and the Asian Leadership Fellowship in 2008.

Dr. Michael KAU | Taiwan

Dr. Kau is currently a Senior Fellow at the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, a non-profit national think tank devoted to the study and promotion of democracy and human rights. Previously, he served as Taiwan's Representative to the European Union, and was Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and founding President of the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy. Born and raised in Taiwan, Dr. Kau studied political science at National Taiwan University and earned his PH. D. degree in comparative politics and international relations at Cornell University. He had a long and distinguished academic career in the United States, before returning to Taiwan to serve in government. He was a Professor of Political Science and Director of the East Asian Security Program at Brown University for over thirty years, during which he also served as faculty advisor to various East Asian programs /centers at Columbia, Cornell, and Harvard Universities.

Dr. Hyung-Sik Shin | South Korea

Dr. Shin is currently an Adjunct Professor of Pukyong National Univ. He has previously held positions as director of planning, director of memorial project, director of education and training, director of planning & public relations department, and director of planning & coordination department at the Korea Democracy Foundation. Dr. Shin worked for Asia Democracy Network as Secretary General from founding assembly Autumn 2013 until December 2015. He received his B.A. in Sociology from Seoul National University and received M.A. and Ph. D in Political Science from Kyonggi University.