



ASEAN Civil Society Conference ASEAN Peoples' Forum 2014

*Advancing ASEAN Peoples' Solidarity Toward Sustainable Peace, Development,
Justice and Democratization*

Proceedings of the ACSC/APF 2014



21 – 23 March 2014

Myanmar Convention Center, Min Dhamma Road, Yangon, Myanmar

Event Organized by:



ASEAN Civil Society Conference / ASEAN Peoples' Forum 2014

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Justice and Democratization*

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PREFACE



Dr. May May Pyone,
Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee

As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Myanmar accepted the gavel that symbolizes the ASEAN presidency. This was a historic moment since this is the first time Myanmar has taken the Chair since it became a member of ASEAN. As Chair, Myanmar is responsible for hosting many important regional forums and events during 2014.

The ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC), also known as the ASEAN Peoples' Forum (APF), is held independently by the ASEAN Chair country in advance of, and parallel to, the official ASEAN Summit, which is attended by ASEAN and regional leaders. The first ACSC/APF took place in Malaysia in 2005. Since then it has taken place in the Philippines (2006), Singapore (2007), Thailand (2009), Vietnam (2010), Indonesia (2011), Cambodia (2012), Brunei (2013) and this year in Myanmar (2014). The 10th ACSC/APF took place

on 21 – 23 March 2014 at the Myanmar Convention Center in Yangon, Myanmar.

Over 83 civil society actors from different backgrounds contributed their knowledge, experience and effort into planning the 10th ACSC/APF through a series of preparatory meetings, national consultation meetings, and regional consultation meetings. As a result of the combined effort, over 3,000 people from Myanmar, ASEAN region, Timor Leste, and beyond attended the ACSC/APF this year, marking the largest recorded participation in the history of ACSC/APF since its inception in 2005.

This conference is a venue for civil society and individuals to share their concerns on the regional and national issues that impact the peoples' lives and aims to strengthen their voice. To welcome as many as 3,000 people to participate in discussions ranging from human rights, peace, democracy and development, showed the strength and solidarity of the ASEAN people and its supporters. The successful outcome of the ACSC/APF 2014 was a reflection of the collaborative efforts of the National Organizing Committee, regional friends, volunteers and participants.

A significant aspect of the ACSC/APF 2014 was the inclusiveness of the National Organizing Committee and its unique character in a critical time during Myanmar's ongoing transition, as well as the large regional participation in this year's process. The ACSC/APF 2014 successfully exhibited coordination and collaboration among national and regional civil society as well as strengthened the ties and friendship between diverse groups of people. This year's ACSC/APF was able to present the voices and recommendations of the ASEAN people with a strong sense of solidarity.

ASEAN civil society will continue to work cooperatively and engage constructively with ASEAN governments in the spirit of partnership, ownership and self-determination for the improvement of the quality of life and dignity of the ASEAN people.

Yangon, Myanmar, May 2014

ACSC/APF 2014 STATEMENT



March 24, 2014

Statement of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014

Advancing ASEAN Peoples' Solidarity Toward Sustainable Peace, Development, Justice and Democratization

We, more than 3,000 delegates from civil society, peoples' and grassroots organizations and individuals in Myanmar, the ASEAN region and beyond, jointly discussed a wide range of thematic and systematic issues currently confronting the ASEAN people at the ACSC/APF 2014 in Yangon, Myanmar from 21st to 23rd March 2014. We urge the ASEAN leaders of the 24th ASEAN Summit to consider the following statement and recommendations made with a view to ensuring peace, plurality, justice, collaboration, and sustainable and gender responsive development in the region, particularly to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of the people of ASEAN. The theme for the forum, "Advancing ASEAN Peoples' Solidarity Toward Sustainable Peace, Development, Justice and Democratization," reflects current challenges in the region and calls for strengthening diverse national and regional voices in the decision making processes of ASEAN towards a genuinely people-centered ASEAN.

We reaffirm the fundamental principles of a people-centered ASEAN with sustainable peace and development, democratic and just governance, rule of law (not rule by law), universal human rights and dignity (including women and child rights, etc.), social, cultural, economic and ecological justice, gender equality and gender justice, non-discrimination, inclusivity, reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, in the best interests of the people of ASEAN, especially of vulnerable and marginalized groups, including but not limited to women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic and indigenous peoples, LGBTIQ and persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, including intersex persons, all workers including migrants and workers in the informal economy, religious minorities, young people, political prisoners and their families, refugees, internally displaced persons, stateless and landless people, artisanal fisherfolks, sex workers, victims of prostitution and all forms of violence and forced labour, trafficked persons, drug users, and persons living with HIV/AIDS.

We pledge to work cooperatively and engage constructively with ASEAN governments and other regional and international stakeholders in the spirit of partnership, ownership and self-determination for the improvement of the quality of life and dignity of the ASEAN people.

As civil society, peoples' and grassroots organizations and individuals, we are not only beneficiaries, but also active partners and contributors for social, economic and political transformation and community development. We are therefore creatively responsive to the needs and rights of the peoples of ASEAN. Civil society will continue monitoring laws, policies and actions at the national, regional and global levels, and contribute to the realization of a genuinely people-centered ASEAN.

We fully support the amplification of the voices of young people, their empowerment and the increase of their capacity to ensure that ASEAN is youth-driven as well as people-centered.

We are determined to contribute to all ASEAN processes including and in particular the upcoming review of the ASEAN Charter and Community Blueprints, the Terms of Reference of ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), the ASEAN Commission on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and other global initiatives and processes that affect the lives of people in ASEAN.

ACSC/APF 2014 in the Context of Myanmar's Transition

This year, we have the privilege of being hosted in Myanmar, a country in transition. Despite its progress, Myanmar still must overcome its overdue deficit in meeting the needs of the people. As Myanmar engages in its peace process to end more than 60 years of civil war, we wish to emphasize that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without truth, transparency, accountability, social justice and trust. Truth requires an honest discussion of the events of the war, transparency requires freely available information in language that people understand regarding investment and development plans in ethnic areas, and trust requires the immediate cessation of all military pressure and operations. Given the remaining climate of distrust and fear, the government must take significant care to implement all upcoming projects, such as the census-taking process, within an atmosphere of transparency and responsiveness to the peoples' concerns. For peace-building efforts, all peoples must be included in the process, including women. Even with the reform process, women still face the risk of sexual violence, especially in areas affected by conflict.

The furthering of democratization in Myanmar will require full, transparent, and participatory reform to reinstate all fundamental rights and freedoms. We call for the repeal or amendment of all laws that do not conform with international human rights standards and legal principles, including the reform of the 2008 Constitution, the building of a genuine federal state and the decentralization of power.

The poor and marginalized are deprived of their rights through land grabbing by private and military actors. Special Economic Zones in the country have been oriented around the pursuit of profit, and not the wellbeing of the people. Workers continue to struggle for their right to decent work. We call for economic policies that uphold the principle of 'do no harm,' and which protect the rights and dignity of the affected people.

Similarly, this government must work to revise the decades-long deterioration of the education system, which has deprived the youth of their foundation to become the future leaders of this country.

Peace

Our region faces serious challenges to peace and security involving sovereignty, internal conflicts arising from assertions of right to self-determination and ethnic struggles for autonomy, disputes over cross-border territorial and maritime issues, political unrest, poverty, human trafficking, forced migration, competition for access to and control of natural resources, human insecurity and a high level of violence. These are glaring manifestations of ASEAN's failure and inability to bring about sustainable peace, justice and development in the region.

We contest ASEAN's claim of its success to maintain peace and security in this region. The conflict and post conflict situation in ASEAN have impacted human security, particularly of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Conflicts in the ASEAN region have occurred due to different reasons. In many cases the roots of conflict stem from the unjust treatment, unjust resource allocation and denial of rights of the people, which are obstacles for ASEAN and its peoples to achieve sustainable peace and human security in the region. Recognizing the impacts of intra- and inter-state conflict on the peace and stability within the entire ASEAN region, and the lack of any existing redress mechanism, it is recommended that a Disputes and Conflict Prevention Settlement Mechanism is established as a regional mechanism for preventive and emergency response.

It is important for government, non-state actors and all parties involved in conflict to recognize the local and indigenous initiatives in peace building and reconstruction processes. The roles of affected women and young people are also often overlooked despite the disproportionate impact on their lives. Governments engaging in peace processes must show their sincerity to put the interest of the people as the priority in the situations of conflict. In some cases, international communities, financial institutions and the private sectors investing in conflict areas exacerbate on-going conflict.

Recommendations

Include a chapter on Regional Dispute Prevention and Settlement Mechanism in the future review of ASEAN Charter.

- Develop a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security according to principles enshrined in the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, CEDAW and General Recommendation 30.
- Demonstrate commitment to comprehensive security as stated in the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint by cutting military spending, and ensuring accountable and transparent utilization of state budgets for community development, providing an enabling environment for women's meaningful participation and representation in decision-making processes at all levels, including support for women's leadership, and community education to counter all forms of gender-based discrimination and violence.
- Integrate peace education programs with gender and human rights perspectives both in formal and non-formal education systems at all levels as well as supporting peace initiative activities of young people and civil society.
- Ensure the rights of freedom of expression and assembly and freedom of media to promote peace through mainstreaming peace in traditional and digital media.

Human Rights and Justice

Despite having its own human rights mechanism, countries within ASEAN continue to face a multitude of challenges relating to protection of human rights and access to justice for all, especially for vulnerable and marginalized communities.

Women, children, young people, people with disabilities and LGBTIQ and persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, including intersex persons, continue to be neglected by ASEAN Member States in shaping its future. It is important to recognize that violence against women inhibits both the fulfillment of women's rights and participation in all decision-making and community building processes. Despite all states within ASEAN having ratified CEDAW and other relevant international treaties and declarations, ASEAN has failed to establish effective, rights-based and indicator-based monitoring mechanisms to address violence against women. Similarly, significant gaps exist in meeting the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all, particularly women and other vulnerable and marginalized groups. Furthermore, lack of comprehensive sexuality education and youth friendly services, in addition to existent gender inequality, stigma and discrimination, create barriers to young people's access to sexual and reproductive health and rights to information and services. Persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expression continue to face criminalization denying them of enjoyment of basic rights, freedoms and benefits of development guaranteed to all persons within ASEAN.

Migration is a reality within the region and yet ASEAN does not have adequate protection for all migrants especially forced migrants and stateless persons. Children are particularly vulnerable to the negative effect of migration and many Children on the Move (COM) are not recognized by existing laws or law enforcers and therefore are denied access to basic services and exposed to heightened risk of economic or sexual exploitation, abuse or neglect. Most importantly while workers' wages in most ASEAN countries fall far below living wages, which fail to cover basic living expenses, migrant workers experience additional discrimination in terms of denial and restrictions on basic rights to freedom of movement, freedom of assembly, access to quality education and health services, and legal remedies.

The above situations fail to be addressed by AICHR and ACWC because of a lack of power as human rights bodies. One of the causes of weakness of the bodies stems from the weak Terms of Reference (TOR) of AICHR.

Due to be reviewed in 2014, improvement to AICHR's TOR can contribute to the strengthening of its mandate, particularly that of human rights protections. Key problems in the TOR are the existing principles of consensus, non-interference and the lack of independence of the Commission, which must be addressed by ASEAN Member States. In the review of the TOR, it is important to ensure the inclusive and meaningful participation of other human rights institutions, such as ACWC and national human rights institutions, as well as civil society.

Recommendations

- Establish indicators that recognize the diversities of women to ensure holistic monitoring of progress in addressing violence against women. ASEAN governments should utilize indicator-based methods and establish partnerships with civil society in monitoring progress on implementation of commitments and obligations in eliminating violence against women, and involvement of women in the process of peace building in resolving conflicts.
- Demonstrate stronger political commitment and provide sustained investments to improve the sexual and reproductive health and rights status of women, young people and other vulnerable and marginalized groups. These include the provision of comprehensive sexuality education and youth-friendly services.
- Immediately repeal laws and regulations that directly and indirectly criminalize LGBTIQ and persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, including intersex persons, and harmonize national laws and regional human rights instruments, policies and practices with the United Nations human rights treaties and the Yogyakarta Principles through consultation with and active engagement of LGBTIQ and persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, including intersex persons.
- Stop the immigration detention of children, forced migrants and stateless persons, and implement alternatives to detention for these populations. Use immigration detention only as a measure of last resort for other forced migration populations. The rights of Children on the Move, including those who are affected by disasters and natural calamities, should be promoted and protected without discrimination by providing access to free compulsory basic education and quality health services, legal protection, provision of alternative care, and protection from all forms of abuses and exploitation.
- Guarantee the right of all workers including migrant workers to non-discrimination, entitlement to the equal social and labour rights regardless of their legal status, and access to justice through free legal aid and rights education. We call upon the ASEAN Member States to immediately stop all forms of oppression against workers who exercise their right to freedom of expression and assembly and association, including their right to strike. Additionally, we call upon the ASEAN Member States to ensure minimum wages are living wages and decent work for all workers in ASEAN Countries.
- Recognize sex workers as equal rights bearers for their economic contribution and share in the opportunities and benefits that tourism brings to ASEAN, including but not limited to equal protection under national labour law and freedom from discrimination.

Development

Our region also faces the challenge of [rapid increase in older population due to low fertility rates and improved longevity] and exacerbated social, economic and gender inequalities, due to the impact of globalization and the Free Trade Agreement. Current unsustainable market or corporate driven economic policies are resulting in negative impacts including the diminution of our natural resources, the rise of greenhouse gas emissions leading to climate change, deepening poverty and increased hunger, exacerbated vulnerability for workers both within countries and across borders, lack of social protection and basic services especially among vulnerable and marginalized groups and widespread land grabbing which devastates communities and robs people of their livelihoods, cultural heritage and collective rights, especially those of indigenous peoples. Large-scale

investment and development projects, including those in ethnic or indigenous areas, have triggered massive forced displacement and enabled human rights abuses. Civil Society leaders, like Sombath Somphone, who highlight these negative impacts and promoted sustainable participatory development, have been increasingly targeted. We are deeply concerned that the advent of the ASEAN Economic Community will only worsen the situation if it continues with these harmful development policies.

Current development trends in ASEAN are resulting in serious transboundary problems caused by mega-hydropower dams, extractive industries, expansion of large-scale monoculture plantations, climate change, unaccountable corporate investment, and government and military involvement in business. These are having negative impacts on communities and their livelihoods, land, natural resources, water and food sovereignty and security, identity, health and environment, leading to increased conflicts and instability in the region.

The governments of ASEAN have prioritized economic development over a just, equitable and sustainable development model that truly places the people and their wellbeing at the center. Social protection and basic services are not prioritized and remain limited, non-inclusive and inadequate to ensure peoples' dignity. The local communities affected by investment and development projects are not provided sufficient relevant information about these projects, are not meaningfully consulted or asked for their consent, and are not able to participate in decision-making processes.

While most ASEAN states have fairly robust legal frameworks governing the core areas of land, natural resources, labour and the environment, enforcement of these laws and regulations remains a challenge. Corruption and lack of transparency and accountability exacerbate negative impacts of development projects and investment on local communities. Militarization of resource rich areas results in intensified repression in terms of enforced disappearances, extra-judicial killings, land grabbing and displacement of communities.

Recommendations

- Adopt measures to counter the adverse impacts of climate change and globalization, including an increased focus on education, health, social protection for all, poverty-reduction, food sovereignty and security, pro-people economic institutions, effective regulations and mechanisms to hold governments and companies to account, and to safeguard sustainable development and human rights.
- Establish an Environmental Pillar in ASEAN which includes an independent monitoring mechanism, a regional framework on the transboundary utilization and sharing of natural resources, protect all peoples' rights including indigenous peoples' rights and resolve cross border impacts, stop all destructive hydropower dams and promote sustainable renewable energy alternatives.
- Establish an ASEAN safeguard policy to ensure accountability, transparency and the meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including local communities and indigenous peoples, civil society organizations, and vulnerable and marginalized groups in the design, implementation and monitoring of national and regional investment and development projects and policies in order to protect the rights and wellbeing of all peoples in ASEAN.
- Abide by and ensure compliance of businesses with international best practices including but not limited to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and ISO 26000 to respect the rights of all affected individuals and communities, improve peoples' living conditions, which involves consulting fully and meaningfully with affected communities, providing fair and suitable compensation and ensuring adequate resettlement sites when people accept to be moved.
- Implement the newly issued rights-based and inclusive ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection with meaningful and substantive participation of civil society, peoples' and grassroots organizations and individuals.

Democratization

Democracy literally means “government by the people” through the enjoyment of civil and political freedoms that enable people to govern and determine their own lives. ASEAN, as envisioned in the ASEAN Charter and Community Blueprints, commits itself to promoting “a people-oriented ASEAN” in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building. However in its implementation, this commitment by ASEAN Member States is still far from being achieved. There are still crucial issues in the region that need serious further attention by all ASEAN Member States.

Continued existence of military rule, military sanctions and threats to civilian governments, control of economic resources by military enterprises, as well as defense policies that are non-compliant with rule of law, pose grave challenges to democratization and democratic transition.

All people, especially vulnerable and marginalized groups, are negatively impacted by ASEAN integration and various domestic challenges and threats relating to democratization. Such challenges include:

1. Severe restrictions of fundamental freedoms, both online and offline, such as freedom of assembly, association, expression, information and religion;
2. A lack of protection from violence, arrest, imprisonment, and harassment, including the unlawful imprisonment of human rights defenders, activists and union representatives;
3. Impunity and a lack of judicial redress in the absence of the rule of law;
4. A lack of democratic participation, consultation and self-governance;
5. Severe restrictions on land and labour rights as a result of development projects and businesses’ refusal to abide by international standards on business and human rights; and
6. Pervasive corruption and a lack of transparency at all levels of government.

However, civil society across the ASEAN region has achieved many positive results in the face of such challenges. Civil society has successfully employed various advocacy strategies, including solidarity and collaboration between groups, establishing regional networks, information sharing, raising awareness and educating people about their human rights, consultations at local and national levels, engaging in non-violent and legitimate protests, directly lobbying and intervening with businesses, directly engaging with ASEAN Member States, and monitoring human rights abuses and other actions by ASEAN Member States.

Despite these positive efforts by civil society, governments still need to show good will and honor their commitments under the ASEAN Charter and address the issue of democratization in the ASEAN region.

Recommendations

- End impunity by fully investigating all acts of violence and disappearances, and provide a safe space, both online and offline, and an enabling environment for human rights defenders, journalists, community activists and leaders, and other civil society actors to meaningfully engage with authorities and to carry out their legitimate activities without fear of physical or judicial harassment, arrest, imprisonment, killing or other violence, or restrictions on their fundamental freedoms; and immediate release all political prisoners, human rights defenders, community leaders, union leaders and development workers detained by ASEAN Member States.
- Reform the security sector in all ASEAN governments, with the involvement of civil society in monitoring the reforms, using human rights and women’s rights perspectives, in collaboration with national parliaments to legislate policies consistent with democratization.
- Establish robust legal frameworks that are in line with international human rights standards and best practices, ratify and implement applicable international instruments, amend or repeal repressive laws, and ensure that all laws and regulations are properly enforced by reformed judiciaries which are independent, competent and non-corrupt, including at the ASEAN level.

- Ensure that all people – especially vulnerable and marginalized groups – are legally recognized, able to enjoy their civil and political rights free from discrimination and prejudice, entitled to self-governance, empowered through access to information and education to participate in and be consulted about important decisions affecting their lives and livelihoods, and enjoy respect, recognition and protection of their freedom, security, dignity, identity and human rights.

General Recommendations and Conclusion

We, the ACSC/APF 2014, mandate the Steering Committee to formulate a flexible and inclusive mechanism to strengthen the ACSC/APF process and ensure continued linkage between the ACSC/APF and ASEAN.

We call on all ASEAN governments to:

- Commit to achieving justice, equality, inclusion and the elimination of all forms of violence so as to bring about sustainable peace and security. This success can only be achieved through the full participation of grassroots peoples and civil society organizations.
- Recognize the diversity of ASEAN people and develop mechanisms for protection of all human rights irrespective of religion, sex, gender, disability, LGBTIQ and persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, including intersex persons, ethnicity, race, occupation, political ideology and citizenship. Such mechanisms should be consistent with international law and standards.
- Ensure the independence of the AICHR members as opposed to the current structure of the mechanism as an inter-governmental body. Ensure inclusion of additional human rights protection mandates in the TOR (including provisions that establish the review of the human rights record of ASEAN Member States; enable AICHR to conduct country/on-site visits; and allow AICHR to receive, investigate and address complaints on human rights issues and violations); change/modify the principles of consensus rule and non-interference in AICHR that have resulted in its ineffectiveness. Enable AICHR to establish independent experts (Special Procedures, including Special Rapporteurs), similar to the Special Procedures mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council and other regional mechanisms. These experts shall be independent and not be bound by the consensus rule so that they can effectively implement actual human rights protection work.
- The reviewed TOR must allow for decisions to be reached by a majority in situations where decisions cannot be reached by consensus, especially in addressing and preventing serious human rights violations. Further, the AICHR TOR review should head towards effective cooperation among the different human rights mechanisms and across the different pillars and sectoral bodies of ASEAN to ensure stronger human rights protection in the region.
- Ensure that consultations for the review of ASEAN Blueprints in 2015 are conducted with civil society, peoples' and grassroots organizations and individuals, and especially vulnerable and marginalized groups, to mitigate any negative impacts on them.
- ASEAN Member States should sign and ratify important international conventions and their Optional Protocols in recognition of the universal, inherent, inalienable and inter-related human rights of all ASEAN people, and their diverse and multiple identities.
- ASEAN Human Rights Institutions including AICHR, ACWC, and ACMW are urged to coordinate their efforts and work together for the promotion and protection of human rights for all.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Myanmar civil society and people for hosting the conference, and to the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for its support and cooperation towards ensuring the success of the ACSC/APF 2014.

END

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March 21-23, 2014

MCC Hall (Yangon - Myanmar)



ABOUT ACSC/APF

The ACSC/APF is held annually by the ASEAN Chair country in advance of and parallel to the official ASEAN Summit, attended by ASEAN and regional leaders. It is held independently from the ASEAN summit and is considered the peoples conference for civil society organisations from ASEAN region as well as from Timor Leste and beyond, to join together to present their ideas, network, and collaborate on common issues and demonstrate the solidarity of civil society in ASEAN.

The ACSC/APF is a space for the people of ASEAN that is not only independent but also inclusive and represent the diversity of the ASEAN peoples. With the first ACSC convened by the Malaysian government as the ASEAN chair in 2005, the ACSC/APF process since then evolved as a civil society-led process and each year was organized with the aim of building community and solidarity amongst ASEAN peoples, networking in the host country, creating space for engagement with ASEAN Heads of State, and contributing towards the institutionalization of engagement mechanisms and processes in ASEAN. There remains a great challenge for participants, since the independency and inclusiveness of the ACSC/APF depends on the level of social and political freedom allowed in the

host country and there sources available for such a civil society gathering.

At the close of the East Asia Summit in Brunei in October 2013, President Thein Sein accepted the gavel of ASEAN that symbolizes the presidency of ASEAN that was then officially transferred to Myanmar for 2014 chairmanship. The Myanmar government has reaffirmed to ASEAN and the international community that it is ready to take up the chairmanship.

The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon commented that the chairmanship was a “good opportunity” for Myanmar to build on its socio-economic progress and democratic transition while he expressed concerns for the many challenges the country is facing. ASEAN said it realized the challenges the country is facing and would encourage the Myanmar government to continue to undertake more reforms. Amidst all of this, what comes with the chairmanship is for Myanmar to host more than 1,000 ASEAN-related meetings in 2014.

With Myanmar's commitment for chairmanship, the civil society groups, especially those in Myanmar took up the responsibility of holding the 10th ACSC/APF in Yangon, Myanmar.

BACKGROUND OF ACSC/APF 2014

In March 2013, a group of civil society actors from Myanmar People Forum Working Group, NGO Gender Group, Women's League of Burma, National Youth Congress, Burma Partnership and Kaung Rwai Social Action Network attended the ACSC/APF 2013 in Brunei. At the closing, the group led by Dr. May May Pyone of NGO Gender Group received the transfer of mandate from Brunei to host and organize the ACSC/APF in Myanmar in March 2014. They held a meeting with other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Yangon on April 29, 2013 to share the experience of the Brunei APF. The participants who attended this briefing decided to call for a first national consultation meeting for the organizing of the ACSC/APF 2014.

The national consultation meeting, organized by Myanmar People Forum Working Group, was held at Micasa Hotel in Yangon on June 13-14, 2013, attended by more than 100 representatives from NGOs, CBOs and border-based organizations, as well as representatives from INGOs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs attended the meeting as resource persons on ASEAN affairs and informed the CSOs about the Myanmar government's plan to chair ASEAN in 2014. The National Organizing Committee (NOC) and 4 sub-committees were formed on June 14 with the mandate to convene the ACSC/APF, namely the Logistic Committee, the Program Committee, the Drafting Committee and the Media Committee based on the principle that the membership of the NOC and the sub-committees was on a voluntary basis and the total number of members was to be left open to ensure inclusiveness. The committees consisted of organizations and individuals from the

following categories: NGOs, mass organizations, social movements, networks, border-based organizations and ethnic groups (with women, youth and people with special needs etc. as crosscutting in each category).

This national consultation meeting was followed by a number of working committee meetings, the NOC meetings, and the first regional consultation meeting was held on August 3-5, 2013. These meetings finally led to significant progress for the ACSC/APF 2014, including the following:

1. Establishment of the Finance Committee and the Coordinating Committee
2. Clarification and adoption of mandates and Terms of Reference of the National Organizing Committee, the Coordinating Committee, sub-committees and the secretariat
3. Outreaching and welcoming new NOC members
4. The NOC's election of 5 representatives to join the Steering Committee which would be formed with the participation of CSOs from other ASEAN countries and regional networks
5. Establishing communication mechanisms.

Working committees continued with their respective committee tasks including developing work plans, budgets and preparation for the 2nd regional consultation meeting which was held 20 – 21 October, as decided in the 1st regional consultation meeting. Two additional consultations were held in January and February 2014 prior to the conference, where further issues regarding finance, logistics and agenda of the conference were discussed and decisions were made.





The ACSC/APF is a space for the **PEOPLES** of ASEAN that is not only **INDEPENDENT** but also **INCLUSIVE**, representing the **DIVERSITY** of the ASEAN peoples



STRUCTURE, COMMITTEES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Organizing Committee

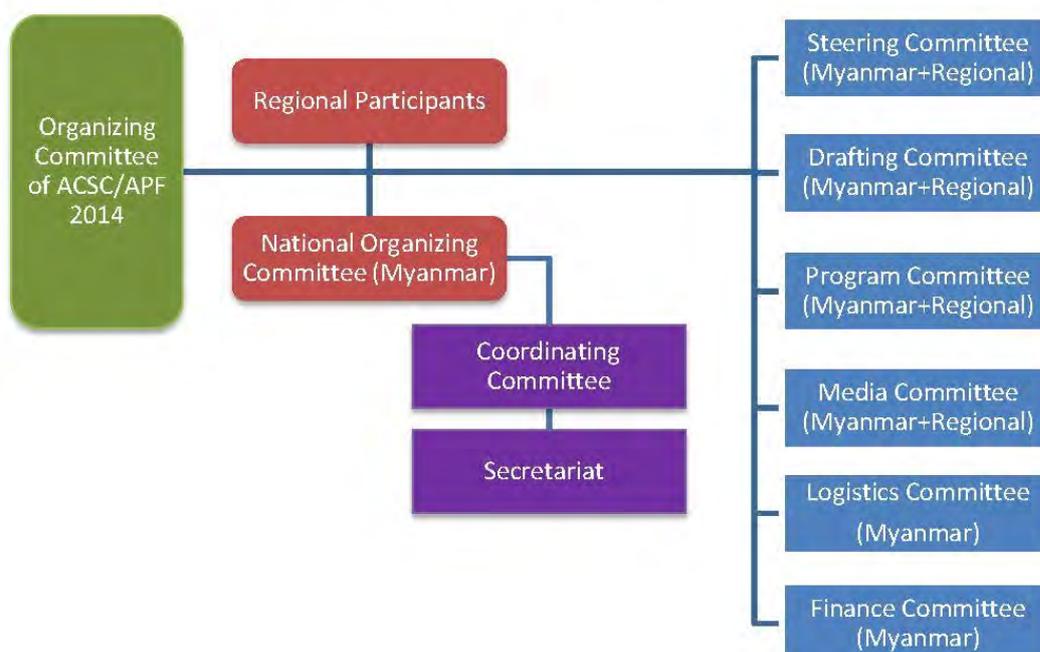
Organizing Committee meetings were held in the form of Regional Consultations. The meeting holds the highest decision-making power regarding the conference. Four Regional Consultation Meetings were held throughout the preparation process. The Organizing Committee of the ACSC/APF 2014 is comprised of the following committees and bodies.

1. Steering Committee (SC)
2. Coordinating Committee (CC)
3. Finance Committee (FC)
4. Program Committee (PC)
5. Drafting Committee (DC)
6. Media Committee (MC)
7. Logistics Committee (LC)
8. Secretariat Office (SO)

At the first Regional Consultation Meeting of the ACSC/APF 2014, the composition of the Committees including the regional organizations, and Timor Leste as observer, was adopted as follows:

- Steering Committee (5 from Myanmar + one each from 9 other ASEAN nations + one from Timor Leste + 4 from regional networks)
- Program Committee (Myanmar + one each from 9 other ASEAN nations + one from Timor Leste + 4 from regional networks)
- Drafting Committee (Myanmar + one each from 9 other ASEAN nations + one from Timor Leste + 4 from regional networks)
- Media and Information Committee (Myanmar + one each from 9 other ASEAN nations + one from Timor Leste + 4 from regional networks)

Structure of Organizing Committee of ACSC/APF 2014



National Organizing Committee

National Organizing Committee (NOC) is comprised of 83 Myanmar civil society organizations from diverse backgrounds and expertise. Since the initial stage of the preparation process, it valued the importance of inclusiveness, and to ensure it, the NOC outlined the principles inviting organizations that fall under the following categories to join the NOC.

- NGOs
- Mass Organizations
- Social Movements Organizations
- Border-based Groups
- Ethnic-based Organizations
- Networks
- Women, youth and people with special as cross-cutting

The committee acts as a national executive body for the ACSC/APF 2014 to take initiatives and ensure implementation of tasks assigned to individual sub-



committees. NOC meetings were held once a month and a day before Regional Consultation Meetings, as well as when needed. See the list of NOC members below.

National Organizing Committee Members

1. 88 Generation Peace and Open Society
2. Advancing Life and Regenerating Motherland
3. Ar Yone Oo
4. Arakan National Network
5. ASHO Women's Organization
6. Ashoka Social Development Association
7. Association of Disabled Women's Affairs
8. Association of Human Rights Defenders and Promoters
9. Aungzeitakhon Social Development
10. Better Life Organization
11. Border Areas Development Association
12. Burma News International
13. Capacity Building Initiative
14. Chan Mcung Social Development
15. Child Focused Nest Development Association
16. Chin Agency for Development
17. Chin CBOs Network Group
18. Colours Rainbow
19. Environmental Conservation and Livelihood Outreach Foundation
20. Equality Myanmar
21. Food Security Working Group
22. Friendly Child
23. Gaihahita
24. Gender and Development Initiative – Myanmar
25. Generation Wave
26. GOLD Myanmar
27. Interface Youth Coalition in Aid
28. Kachin Peace Network
29. Karen Development Network
30. Karen Women Empowerment Group
31. Kaung Rwai Social Action Network
32. Khownumcung Rural Development Organization
33. Knowledge & Dedication for Nation-building
34. Lanthit Foundation
35. Local Initiatives Foundation
36. Local Resource Center
37. Mawpi Social Development Foundation
38. Mon Women's Organization
39. Myanmar Agro Action
40. Myanmar Baptist Church Union
41. Myanmar Business Executives Association
42. Myanmar Consumers Union
43. Myanmar Council of Churches

44. Myanmar Democrat Training Center/Zarmani Administrative Knowledge Promoting Organization
45. Myanmar Japan Socio – Economic Development Association
46. Myanmar LGBT Rights Network
47. Myanmar National Association of the Blind
48. Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association
49. Myanmar Professional Social Workers' Association
50. Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs' Association
51. Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation
52. Myanmar Youths Contributive Organization
53. Myitta Campaign
54. Myitta Mon
55. National Good-Governance Individual
56. National NGOs Alliance on HIV/AIDS (3N)
57. National Youth Congress
58. New Generation (Shan State)
59. NGO Gender Group
60. Nyein Foundation
61. Paung Ku
62. Phan Tee Eain (PTE) (Creative Home)
63. Rakhine Coastal Region Conservation Association
64. Rhododendron Integrated Development
65. Rural Development Services
66. Safety Net
67. Shwe Gas Movement
68. Shwe Min Thar Foundation
69. Social and Health Development Association
70. Social Vision Services
71. Swanyee Development Foundation
72. Task Force on ASEAN and Burma/Burma Partnership
73. Tavoyan Youth Organization
74. Thabyay Education Foundation
75. The Light of Charity Clinic
76. Thirst Aid Myanmar
77. Transparency Individuals
78. Volunteer Training Team
79. Women's League of Burma
80. Women's Organizations Network of Myanmar
81. Yangon YMCA
82. Yaung Chi Thit
83. Youth for Social Change Myanmar

Steering Committee

Chair: Dr. May May Pyone

Co-chair: Ms. Premrudee Daoruang



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Make decisions on key issues that are significant to the whole process of the events
 - Be responsible for and provide guidance to the ACSC/APF 2014 and other side events
 - Maintain communication and consolidation with other committee
 - Maintain communication with national and regional processes
 - Ensure alignment with existing principles of ACSC/APF in regard to statements, media purposes and security plan
 - Ensure that conference objectives are met
- Be responsible for the organization of Plenaries and review list of conference speakers
 - Oversee and approve the programme, committee/work and provide advice
 - Oversee and approve the media plan and official media statement
 - Deputize the official spokespersons from among the Steering Committee members of the ACSC/APF
 - Approve the Conference Statement
 - Represent the ACSC/APF in its cooperation with external partners
 - Ensure the integrity of the ACSC/APF as a civil society platform for engagement with ASEAN
 - Ensure the preparation of the final Conference Report of ACSC/APF 2014
 - Ensure a proper handover to the next ACSC/APF 2015 (Malaysia)



Coordinating Committee

Coordinating Committee was comprised of 16 Myanmar members: 5 Steering Committee Members, two focal points each from Drafting, Media, Program, Finance and Logistics and the Coordinator. The committee acted as the driving force of the NOC.

Committee Name	Representative Name
Drafting Committee	Daw Khin Ohmar (Task Force on ASEAN and Burma) Salai Isaac Khen (Gender and Development Initiative - Myanmar)
Media Committee	U Nyunt Hlaing (Myanmar Business Executives Association) U Su Tin (Social Vision Services)
Program Committee	Dr. May Shi Sho (Knowledge & Dedication for Nation-building) U Hla Myint (Swanyee Development Foundation)
Finance Committee	U Kan Aung (Lanthit Foundation) U Sai Kyi Zin Soe (Myanmar Consumers Union)
Logistics Committee	U Min Min Tun (Myanmar Youths Contributive Organization—MYCO) Daw Thin New Soe (Thirst-Aid)
Steering Committee	Dr. May May Pyone (NGO Gender Group) U Mg Mg Soe Tint (Border Areas Development Association) U Ngwe Thein (Capacity Building Initiative) Dr. Thar Nyan (Yangon YMCA) U Aung Myo Min (Equality Myanmar)

Program Committee

Chair: Dr. May Shi Sho, Co-chair: Ms. Thida Khus

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Design the draft Programs of the APF/ACSC and submit to the Steering Committee for final approval
- Design the content and objectives of plenaries; Identify topic speakers and moderator for the plenaries
- Draft the policy and guidelines for the call for workshop proposals for approval by SC
- Cluster the proposals and give recommendations for merging/collaboration; Submit the draft Workshop proposals to Steering Committee for final approval
- Invite speakers, and follow up for their attendance
- Coordinate with the Logistic Committee, Finance Committee, the Drafting Committee, the Secretariat, and the Steering Committee in the discharge of the responsibilities described in this Terms of Reference
- Organize and coordinate the 3 sub-committees as necessary to carry out this Terms of Reference

implementation:

- Coordination Sub-Committee
- Plenary Sub-Committee
- Workshop Sub-Committee
- Develop draft guidelines for the documentation of the whole APF/ACSC for the Secretariat, Chair and Co-Chair
- Coordinate with all sub-committees and carry out all the tasks as described in the Terms of References



Media Committee

Chair: U Nyunt Hlaing, Co-chair: Ms. Debbie Stothard

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Develop detailed media plan with deadlines, which is coordinated with Program Committee and all related committees and which must be approved by Steering committee
- Provide timely information and news through website and social networks, as well as broadcast and print media
- Serve as liaison to the media (both local and foreign)
- Coordinate interviews and media briefings as needed. When doing so, clearly distinguish those who do or do not represent ACSC/APF organizers
- Organize pool of media spokespersons/talents, to be reviewed by Steering Committee. This includes official spokespersons of the organizers. (Media committee does not function as spokesperson for the ACSC/APF)
- Produce draft of media statement prior to, during, and after the ACSC/APF as needed, subject to approval by Steering Committee
- Develop media directory / media contact list
- Develop media rules and relevant guiding principles for the media committee and organizers
- Coordinate volunteers and citizen reporters to generate reports and content for the website.

WORKING PRINCIPLES

- Encourage translation of key information into regional languages, with priority given to Burmese and English
- Be inclusive of and coordinate with other committees
- Respect the social and political diversity of regional civil society
- There is to be no purchase of equipment for Media Committee

Logistics Committee

Chair: Daw Thin Nwe Soe, Co-chair: U Min Min Tun

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Placement of guests/ participants (Communicate with the Hotels for booking and rates)
- Organize side events & Handicraft Booths (Opening Dinner)
- Developing Logistic/Admin Notes for the

participants (to bring national costumes, taxi rental ...)

- Dining Service (deal with Suppliers)
- Health Care Services and Emergency issues, Water and Sanitation
- Providing Disability friendly Services (Sign Language...)
- Security for the ACSC/APF
- Design for the Decorations and Ceremonies (Opening, Solidarity and cultural Night and Closing Ceremony) in coordination with Program Committee
- Arrange for the Workshop Venues in coordination with Program Committee
- Arranging Islamic Prayer room, Halal Food and Food for Monks and Nuns and Vegetarians; Preparing and Providing Conference Kits and information/logistic kits for Participants (Hotel, Transportation...)
- Supporting & Coordination with the Secretariat Office and other Committees
- Booth (Souvenir etc.)
- Registration (Local, Regional Participants/ Speaker/ Observer)
- Accommodation (Hotel List & Communication Links)
- Equipment (Audio system, Projector, etc.,)
- Conference Hall & Workshop Room (Decoration & Supporting)
- Food (hygienic food)
- Dinner & Other Entertainment
- Security (Myanmar Police Force/Private Security)
- Health Care (Emergency unit)
- Tag & Information kit; Money changer (Regional client)
- Special Assistance for Special People/ Disabled Persons





Drafting Committee

Chair: Salai Isaac Khen,

Co-chair: Ms. Atnike Sigiro Nova

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Prepare a template guidelines for documentation of outputs and recommendations of the workshops and disseminate them amongst workshop organisers
- Collect documentation and organize inputs/ recommendations from the plenaries and workshop in co-ordination with Programme Committee & Workshop organizers
- Take note of the plenaries for the purpose of drafting the preamble
- Prepare a draft statement of the ACSC/ APF 2014 to the plenary for adoption
- The hosting country of the Drafting Committee to chair the plenary for adoption of the final statement for the ACSC/ APF 2014

WORKING PRINCIPLES:

- The draft statement prepared by the Drafting Team Committee must reflect the discussions and outputs of the plenaries and workshops
- The decision on the final statement shall be made by the plenary for adoption
- The Drafting Committee can name and criticize any country and ASEAN where relevant to the ACSC/APF, with focus on solutions rather than condemnation
- Any dispute must be guided by the universality of human rights and the objectives of the ACSC/ APF 2014

Finance Committee

Chair: U Kan Aung, **Co-chair:** Saw George Shey

Board of Treasury:

- Dr. May May Pyone
- Dr. May Shi Sho
- U Nyunt Hlaing

Donor Liaison: Daw Khin Ohmar

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Draft proposal for the conference, which includes budget for pre and post conference activities and for the Secretariat
- Donor outreach (INGOs and International Governments)
- Supervise the finance department led by the Finance Officer and staffs
- Authorize the disbursement to each committee
- Develop financial procedures
- Prepare claim forms
- Prepare financial reports
- Commission Internal/external audits
- Administer the financial flow, procedures, rules and regulation



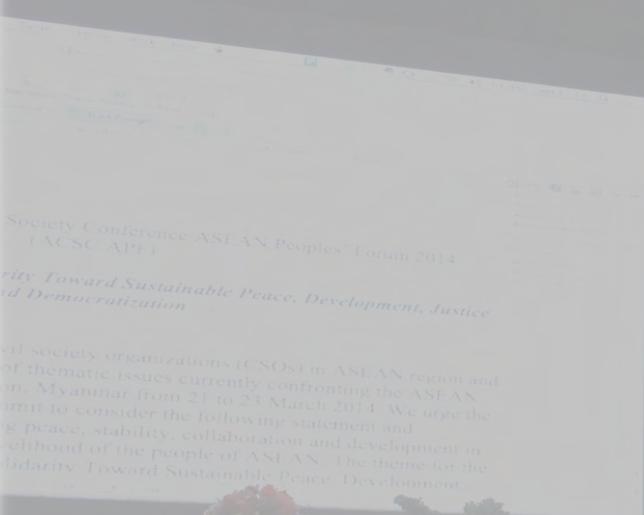
Coordinator and Secretariat

- Be accountable to the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee and thus to the ACSC/APF Forum
- Comply with ACSC/ APF guiding principles (universality of human rights including non-discrimination)
- To manage the running of the secretariat office and staff
- To manage and coordinate Staff Volunteers with Finance Team, Admin Team and other relevant committees
- To support smoothly working activities of Committees
- To call Regional Consultation Meetings with the approval of Steering Committee; and National Organizing Committee meetings with the approval of Coordinating Committee
- To work out necessary paper work for each committee to implement their responsibilities



and tasks for the organizing of ACSC/ APF 2014

- To assist and provide necessary information to Steering Committee and Finance Committee for Fund Raising and Proposal Writing
- To assist the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee and thus the SC Chair for their communication with Myanmar and ASEAN governments, as well as with the ASEAN Secretariat Office as necessary
- To coordinate between Coordinating Committee and Steering Committee of ACSC /APF 2014 and the Government Agencies for the successful convening of the ACSC /APF 2014
- To prepare Meeting Minutes within one week of the meeting and submit to the Steering Committee for approval and circulation
- To prepare Narrative Report for the Coordinating Committee in order for the CC to submit to the National Organizing Committee, Regional Steering Committee and the donors



ASC/APF 2014 OVERVIEW

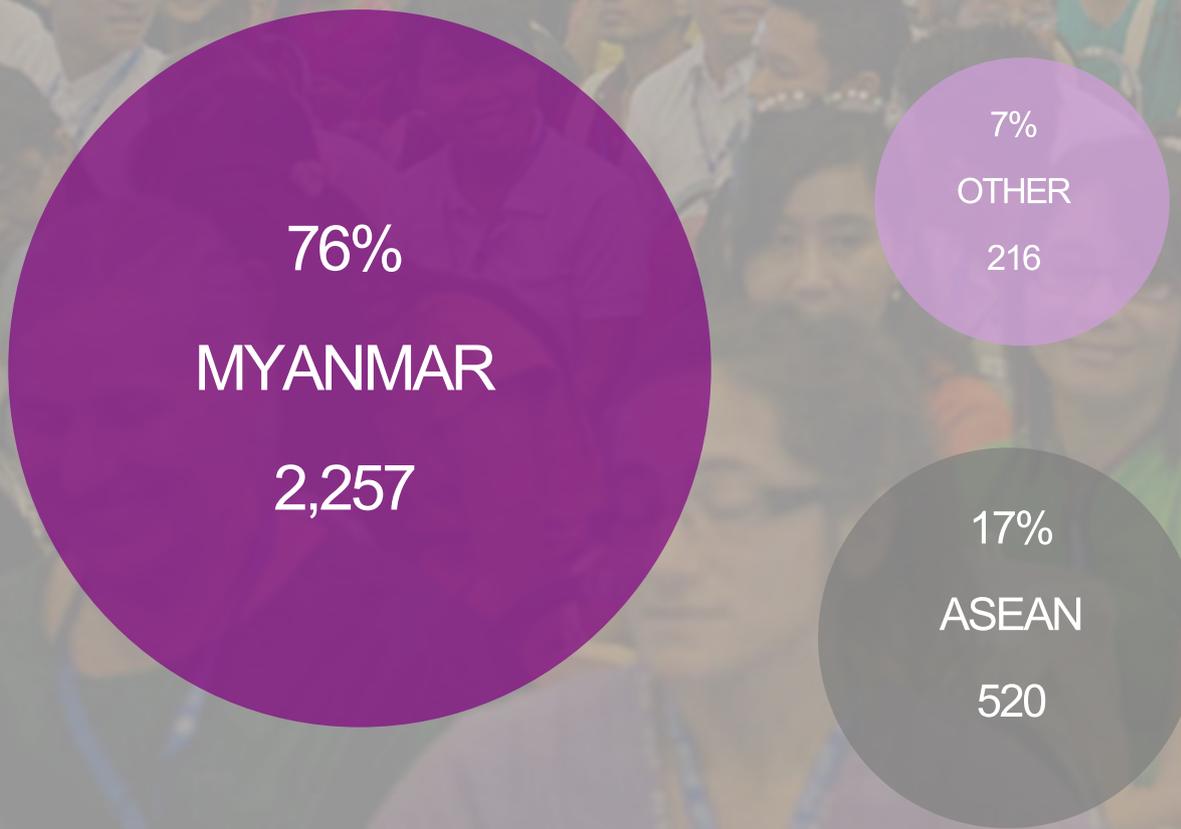
Over 3,000 individuals and delegates from civil society organizations (CSOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and grassroots organizations representing the ASEAN region as well as Timor Leste and beyond, joined together in solidarity in Yangon, Myanmar from March 21 – 23, 2014 for what became the largest ever gathering of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) since its inception in 2005. The record-breaking regional conference, held at the Myanmar Convention Center in Yangon, was also the largest of its kind in Myanmar's recent history.

The conference was a great opportunity for people of all nationalities from across the ASEAN region – CSOs, CBOs, rights activist networks, and grassroots activists – to meet people from their own

countries and from others around region as well as from Timor Leste and beyond, to share their concerns and above all, to demonstrate the strength and solidarity of people in ASEAN. The plethora of statements, recommendations and discussions in line with the theme of "Advancing ASEAN People's Solidarity Toward Sustainable Peace, Development, Justice and Democratization" allowed space for activists, individuals, and community members to synthesize problems and explore possible solutions that can be addressed together. The conference was a triumph for freedom of assembly, association and expression in a country long known as a denier of these human rights.

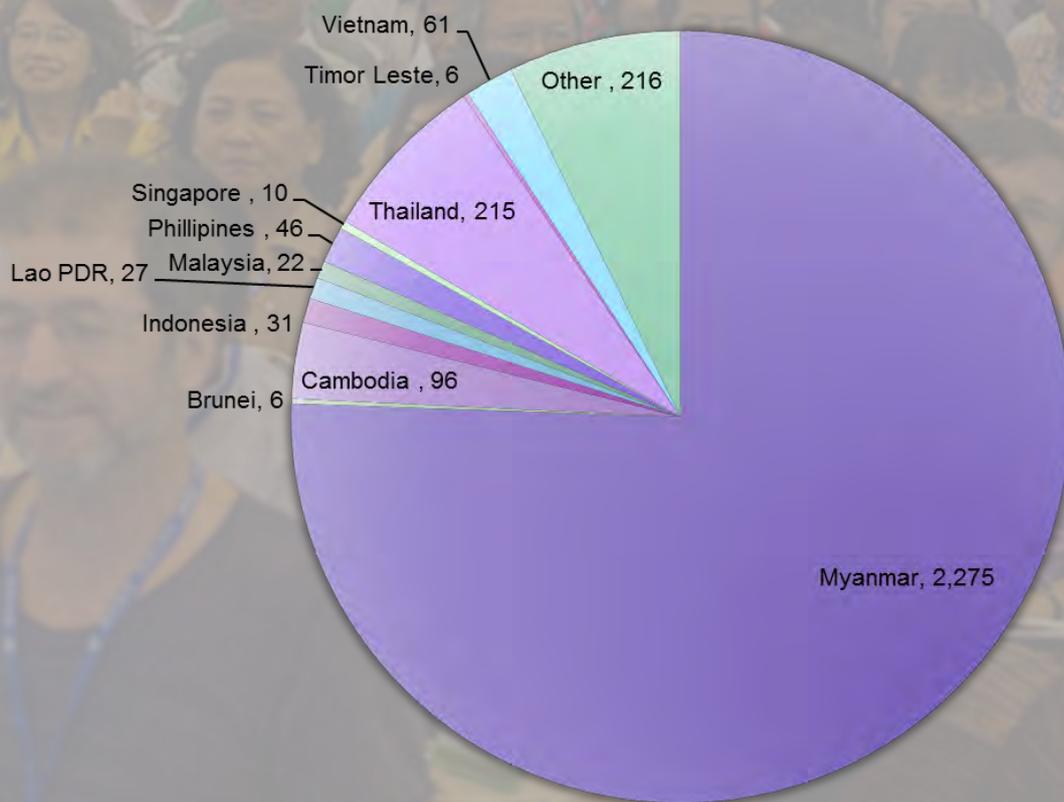
The conference successfully organized five

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS AT ACSC/APF 2014



plenaries, 35 workshops and a number of side-events and solidarity activities producing a statement, which will be distributed among civil society in the region and beyond, and forwarded to leaders attending the ASEAN Summit in May in Nay Pyi Taw.

In total, the ACSC/APF 2014 recorded 2,257 participants from Myanmar, 702 participants from other ASEAN countries, and 34 participants from non-ASEAN countries. Of these participants, over 1,877 participants were from grassroots, non-governmental or community based organizations. Over 58 participants were representatives from regional network groups and 103 participants were from international non-governmental organizations and UN agencies and diplomats. 57 journalists and reporters registered for the conference. Initially the organizing committee expected to host approximately 1,500 people for the conference. Due to unexpected and overwhelming number of participants, many people went undocumented.



OPENING CEREMONY

“Climate Vulnerability & Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change”, “No Corrupted Governments!”, “Free from Violence against Women”

The opening ceremony began with a colourful welcome performance by delegates from the ASEAN Youth Forum 2014 who inspired the participants to work together to secure freedom of expression, environmental justice, accountability, and transparency on development policies among other issues in the ASEAN region.

Future leaders of our region walked through the crowd as they held puzzle pieces with slogans such as "climate vulnerability & community based adoption to climate

change", "ASEAN democracy in crisis", "freedom of expression", and "no corrupted governments!". As dozens of pieces came together on stage to form the logo of the ACSC/APF 2014, the youth presented their statement, calling for the creation of a sustainable, rights-based, inclusive, people-centred, and youth-driven regional community. Their presentation reflected the theme and the spirit of ASEAN, setting the tone for the three-day conference.



OPENING SPEECH

Dr. May May Pyone, Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee

Good morning venerable your Grace, distinguished guests, Excellencies, Ladies, Gentlemen, sisters and brothers from the ASEAN region and other regions.

On behalf of the organizing team, I would like to welcome you all to the 2014 ASEAN Civil Society Conference / ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014. I am very pleased to see you all here in Yangon, Myanmar and wish you auspiciousness.

First of all, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to you all for your interest and participation in this event which is a remarkable moment for all of us.

I'm sure you're all aware this ACSC/APF is a historic event, since it is the first time in the history of ASEAN that Myanmar has had the honour of holding the ASEAN Chair that also means the first ACSC/APF in Myanmar. This is a very good opportunity for civil society organizations come together and we, Myanmar host the ACSC/APF 2014 where you all are part of a historic event!

As you will know, the theme of this year's ACSC/APF is "Advancing ASEAN Peoples' Solidarity Toward Sustainable Peace, Development, Justice and Democratization".

To achieve this theme we set up 5 objectives:

1. Strengthen diverse regional and national voices to advance ASEAN people's solidarity for sustainable peace, development, justice and democratization
2. Support the role of Myanmar's civil society in the country's democratization, development, peace and national reconciliation
3. Accelerate inclusive ASEAN people-to-people processes to achieve peace, security and

economic, social, environmental and climate justice for all, including migrant workers and the stateless

4. Expand learning and understanding of the different processes and political developments of ASEAN and its members, including people's struggles for human rights and self-determination in Myanmar

Assert civil society's role in ASEAN community-building and key processes including the upcoming review of the ASEAN Charter and Community Blueprints and TOR of ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and ASEAN Commission on Promotion and Protection of Women and Children (ACWC)

The ACSC/APF is the showcase event for ASEAN civil society. Civil society actors from across the ten ASEAN countries as well as Timor Leste, and beyond that have come to attend a range of programs, events, and workshops on a variety of ASEAN issues. There are 5 plenaries and 35 workshops under 4 clusters for specific topics: peace, justice and human rights, democratization, development, ASEAN Affairs and Myanmar in Transition. Apart from that there are side events includes exhibition, film shows and handicraft shows from ethnic groups. Their mandate is to represent the voices of the community people for the ASEAN.

The ACSC/APF is a vital component of the ASEAN project. A vibrant and free civil society is not a threat to governments; rather it is a necessary democratic counter-balance that strengthens governmental leadership, empowers the people and allow every man, woman, elderly, youth and child to be invested in the ASEAN.

On the other hand, a stifled and restricted civil society would contravene the ASEAN Charter – signed by all Member States in November 2007. One of its principal objectives under Article 1.13 is: “To promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building.”

This ACSC/APF is a perfect opportunity to set a positive benchmark for the future of ASEAN civil society. Now is not a time for mistrust and fear, but a time for trust building and positivity, for allowing people space to express their concerns and their hopes, and to propose their own recommendations and solutions to ASEAN issues.

ACSC/APF is a space for the people of ASEAN where the people build solidarity and networking as well as engagement with the ASEAN governments concerning the issues impacting on people’s lives.

A successful ACSC/APF will go a long way towards strengthening ASEAN and establishing the ACSC/APF as a key component of ASEAN. Furthermore, a successful ACSC/APF will inspire the people of all ASEAN countries to build relationships with their own governments and demand increased empowerment, participation and democratic standards.

With these values, principles and objectives in mind, we now have the three honourable persons who are keynote speakers for this very morning. We are delighted to have you all here with us and thank you very much for coming.

From this three days program, the outcomes of the plenaries and workshops will be compiled and develop into the statement for adoption and will also be submitted to ASEAN governments/Summit. I would like to invite you all participants to share your views, ideas and thoughts in making and shaping of this to be productive and constructive as possible and then to be able to achieve potentials for better future among ASEAN

communities and to promote the role of CSOs in ASEAN as well.

There are many opportunities as well as challenges in the region. As we are now close to ASEAN Community in 2015, we all should be aware to focus on finding possible and alternative solutions rather than focus on problems. We, CSOs should grasp this intention to be more meaningful way for ASEAN community.

Thus provides the unique opportunity to create the motivation for Myanmar people to be a part of the growing regional civil society movement towards democratization, peace and development of the ASEAN as well as strengthening the growing number of civil society within Myanmar.

Dear distinguished guests, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, my fellow civil society actors, on behalf of the ACSC/APF 2014, I would like to express my thanks to your excellencies, keynote speakers, panellists, workshop organizers, and side event programs for this event. And also to our donors who support us in many ways to hold this event successfully. And also to the government for providing this MCC hall for using as free of charge. Special thanks to AYF delegates for the creative and inspiring performance, which reflects the theme of ACSC/APF 2014. Thank you all, and without you this historic event could not happen. We very much appreciate your commitment and support, and hope that the ACSC/APF lives up to all expectations. Thank you Ladies and Gentlemen and we hope that together we can have a memorable and positive benchmark for the future of ASEAN and ACSC/APF.

I also would like to apologize that there were many inconveniences for our regional friends as well as from nationals regarding to visa, online registration and logistic issues. I apologize for all the circumstances happen during this event. I do hope that you all may understand it.

Wishing you all for happiness for these three days and may peace be upon you.



KEYNOTE SPEECHES

U Aung Min, Union Minister of Ministry of President Office

Congratulatory Message from U Thein Sein, The President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Chair of ASEAN 2014

On behalf of the government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and as the current Chair of ASEAN, I would like to send this congratulatory message to the ASEAN People's Forum held on March 21, 2014, to express Myanmar's pride in hosting this forum and to congratulate all the organizers and participants for successfully organizing such a magnificent event. On a more personal note and on behalf of the citizens of Myanmar, I would also like to warmly welcome all the participants from ASEAN countries to Myanmar. I wish all the peoples of ASEAN to be successful results and cooperation regarding the regional issues through this forum.

This is a watershed moment not only for the peoples of Myanmar but also for the peoples of ASEAN. The activities we do, the decisions we make and the policies we adopt over these coming months will affect the hundreds of millions

of people in our region for decades to come. Over 50 years ago, Southeast Asia was a byword for armed conflicts and human misery. Our countries were in violent conflicts, facing famine in place, locked in Cold War tensions, with hundreds of thousands of lives lost on the violent repression.

Today ASEAN region is entirely transformed. ASEAN now including all the states of Southeast Asia is the envy of the world. Our economies have been growing at rates never than before in the world. The idea of armed conflicts between ASEAN members is close to inconceivable. There are greater freedom and human rights in Southeast Asia than at any time before.

But we cannot be complacent. Although there are no armed conflicts between ASEAN Countries, armed conflicts are still in some countries, including Myanmar.

In Myanmar, in order to solve the armed conflicts lasting seven decades, we are working towards a historic National Ceasefire Agreement and political dialogues to cement lasting peace. The transition to true democracy, where an informed and engaged citizenry decide for themselves the laws and policies that will govern them, is a challenge for each one of our countries.

And more than anything else, in my opinion, we have the challenge of social inclusion for socio-economic development. Tens of millions are better off than at any time before but tens of millions of others are left behind. We have the gaps between the rich and the poor among ASEAN countries and also social inequalities. So we do believe that this economic integration must be paced and managed in a way that will benefit the many and not just the few. They must help not make more difficult our process of peace-building, our democratic transitions, and our efforts towards social justice.

We must also consider closely our economic policies- designed towards growth and job creation and social inclusion with our fundamental need to protect our natural environment. I believe it must be a priority for all ASEAN. We should be an example to the world on protection of environment and our unique biodiversity.

Southeast Asians have always been a mainly rural people. But we will become urban people in the coming years. Because tens of millions are moving from villages to cities, we must plan for this. We are trying our best to begin to plan our cities, modernized infrastructure, and make possible affordable housing and transport while protecting our heritages and creating truly liveable cities in the future.

In all these endeavours, the role of civil society is paramount. Therefore, we need your strength, your support, your criticism, your ability to foster and

facilitate debate and actions. I believe that cooperation and thoughts of civil societies are necessary for the development of the country because the government cannot do it alone.

In addition to resolving the above issues and challenges, I would like to invite your suggestions for other issues and challenges coming out from the discussions.

I send this congratulatory message looking forward to your thoughts on all the issues, wishing all of you to make yourselves at home during your stay in Myanmar.

President Thein Sein



U Tin Oo, Patron of the National League for Democracy

Representing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi,

at the Opening Session of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference / ASEAN Peoples' Forum, 21 March 2014

Good Morning.

For many years, our friends in ASEAN civil society have worked in solidarity with us in the struggle for human rights and democracy. Some have faced arrest and other forms of pressure in their own countries but they stood by us for all these years.

It is a great pleasure to see you here, working hand-in-hand with the civil society of this country to organize this conference. You have my deepest appreciation for all your hard work to stand up for human rights in our country and our region. Your steadfast solidarity for our struggle has contributed to the openings in our country that allow the ASEAN Peoples Forum to be held here.

However, we still have a long way to go. Our people are still suffering from conflict and violence. It is painful to know that this violence threatens so many women and children, especially in rural and minority areas. Our country is a signatory to the CEDAW and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, therefore it needs to do more to respect and protect the rights of women and children.

The peace process is overshadowed by the lack of justice and the lack of equality. We need a peace process that has the support and participation of the people, including women and youth. We need the type of peace where everyone, without discrimination, can enjoy physical and economic security under the rule of law.

Personally, I know transition is difficult and challenging. I have been a general, a political prisoner, a monk, a law student, a lawyer and a founding member of a political party, the NLD. I had to face up to the harm I did to people when I served in the army. For this, I have apologized and committed myself to the cause of human rights and democracy.

Admitting one's errors is painful, but it is an important step for reconciliation. We cannot let our ego overtake the welfare of future generations. We

should be brave enough to face the past with honesty, so that we can work together to solve the urgent problems of this country. I hope that you will continue to encourage all sides to work towards a genuine national reconciliation that is necessary for sustainable peace.

Our country is rich in natural resources, but poor in health and education. We urgently need development that is centred on people, not only money. We must ensure the development of our young people so that the future of our region is secure. For these reasons, we support the objectives and principles of the ACSC/APF 2014.

I am proud to see that civil society has not given up the struggle to stop violence and discrimination here and in other ASEAN countries. We stand in solidarity with you, and hope you will continue to stand in solidarity with us.

I am also proud that the National League for Democracy continues to stand up for peace and democracy according to international human rights principles. This has been the focus of our efforts to achieve constitutional, legislative and institutional reforms. Such reforms are necessary to guarantee sustainable peace, development, justice, human rights and democracy for our people.

We have firmly held on to these principles even though we face great pressure at national and local levels. Our members have courageously stood up for international human rights principles despite great pressure, harassment and even threats. The months ahead will continue to be extremely challenging for all groups working under international human rights principles, and we will need your solidarity more than ever.

Once again, thank you for your efforts to make our country and our region a better place. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, my colleagues and I wish you a very productive ACSC/APF 2014.

H.E. U Aung Min, Union Minister of Ministry of President Office, Honourable U Tin Oo, Chair and members of the Steering Committee and Organising Committee, Representatives of Civil Society Organisations in ASEAN, as well as the colourful and energetic ASEAN Youths, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Thank you for inviting the ASEAN Secretariat to this important meeting of ASEAN CSOs. I congratulate the Organizing Committee for the initiative and efforts to bring together representatives of civil society organisations – not only from Myanmar, from all over ASEAN and beyond to this gathering. As mentioned in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Blueprint, the ASEAN Civil Society Conference or ASEAN People's Forum provides the opportunity to explore means for effective dialogue, consultation, and cooperation between ASEAN and ASEAN Civil Society Organisations. I very much welcome this opportunity to interact with you today which is especially significant since this is also the first time Myanmar takes on the Chairmanship of ASEAN since joining the Association. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the people of Myanmar, and most notably the city of Yangon, for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality extended.

The theme for this year's Conference – "Advancing ASEAN Peoples' Solidarity toward sustainable peace, development, justice and democratisation" is timely to strengthen solidarity amongst the peoples of ASEAN especially as we work towards the culmination of ASEAN Community by 2015 and draw up plans for the post 2015 vision. This topic is also in line with the theme of Myanmar's Chairmanship of ASEAN for 2014, namely "Moving Forward in Unity to a Peaceful and Prosperous Community".

The term 'solidarity' generally refers to "a feeling of unity or agreement, or mutual support, between people of the same feelings, interests, aims, goals, etc." As such, 'solidarity' represents the unity of the countries, and therefore the peoples, of ASEAN. Such unity is realised through the process of ASEAN integration and community-building in which

all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from.

Ultimately, the vision of ASEAN is to achieve a peaceful and prosperous community with an outward-looking ASEAN playing a leading role in emerging regional architecture and contributing to the healthy development of global community; an ASEAN that is people-centred, caring, and socially responsible; and economically dynamic sustainable, and resilient. Put together, 'solidarity' is a key ingredient for ASEAN to be credible in the eyes of the world and to enable us to be fully integrated into a community, moving together as one in unity and harmony.

I would like to underline that moving together as one not only requires solidarity among ASEAN Member States but should also involve the participation and contribution of the peoples in ASEAN as represented by civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders. Therefore, conferences such as the one being organized today is welcomed so representatives of civil society organisations can exchange ideas, share their visions, and better understand each other.

The diversity of ASEAN is also reflected in the diversity of the CSOs. The sharing of ideas and building understanding among us is therefore critical as we head towards establishing the ASEAN Community. ASEAN CSOs can be a significant player and partner in increasing greater awareness and understanding of ASEAN, its programs, and processes to the peoples of ASEAN on the ground.

Ladies and Gentlemen, The need to strengthen existing bonds of regional solidarity and cooperation had been enshrined as one of the very reason why ASEAN came into existence. ASEAN's Founding Fathers recognised this in the ASEAN Declaration of 1967. The stalks of paddy (or rice) in the centre of ASEAN's emblem represent our Founding Fathers' dream for an ASEAN comprising all countries in Southeast Asia, bound together in friendship and solidarity.

The dream of the ASEAN Founding Fathers are further emphasised by the ASEAN Leaders forty years later, when the ASEAN Charter highlighted the strengthening of existing bonds of regional solidarity, peace, and stability as a prerequisite to realise an ASEAN Community by 2015. They are further cascaded down into tangible action lines in another important document: The

Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (2009-2015). The Blueprint guides the implementation for realizing the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC), and ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) through which we look forward to an ASEAN Community that is people-centred, socially responsible.

Aside from the ASEAN Charter and ASEAN Community Roadmap, other important frameworks for ASEAN Community building include the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, Initiative for an ASEAN Integration Work Plan II (2009-2015), and the ASEAN Roadmap towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals. These frameworks and work plans help directing the community building process toward the targeted goal and objectives. Our task now is to implement these roadmap and master plans in timely and effective manner to ensure that ASEAN will forge a common identity and build a caring and sharing society which is inclusive and harmonious.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Sustaining the momentum and gains of ASEAN community building process will be not be possible without the establishment of the appropriate regional architecture and mechanisms.

For this purpose, ASEAN has established coordination mechanism such as Community Councils, Ministerial/ Sectoral Bodies, Working Groups, etc. These bodies ensure effective coordination and implementation of ASEAN-wide policies and commitments. Of recent, ASEAN established new bodies such as the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), and ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR).

These bodies strengthen further promotion of solidarity, democracy, good governance and the rule of law, as

well as promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the region.

Another key document in the community building process is the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration and the Phnom Penh Statement on the adoption of the AHRD. They serve to refine and accelerate our targets and goals towards an ASEAN Community. Human rights as a cross-cutting issue ensures that people's realities are taken into account in the policy making and processes within ASEAN and across the three pillars.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Article 1.13 of the ASEAN Charter provides that one of the purposes of ASEAN is to "promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building." At the 22nd ASEAN Summit in Brunei Darussalam, the ASEAN Leaders reiterated the need to engage civil society organisations, the private sector, and other stakeholders in ASEAN's community building process.

The ASEAN community-building process therefore provides ample opportunity to increase the peoples' participation to address various perpetual challenges such as education, environment, disaster relief, and human rights. These are some of the mainstream issues that will always be important and relevant to ASEAN and our peoples. Other topics in which the CSO community can contribute are in the advocacy on some emerging topics such as nuclear safety and energy security, migrant worker rights and trade unions, among others.

To make the process effective, awareness and understanding of ASEAN and our Community building process need to be enhanced at local, national, regional and international levels. There is a need for continued engagement with all stakeholders of the ASEAN Community – both private and public sectors – to foster a better understanding of ASEAN and pave the way for more support, confidence and participation in ASEAN processes.

Past experiences have generated several lessons-learned on effective ways of engagement between ASEAN and civil society. In your future engagement with ASEAN, I would like to encourage the CSOs present here to consider the following points:

First, emphasize on mutual respect, mutual tolerance and mutual understanding of each other's roles and strengths. There are several expectations of what ASEAN can do; however, stakeholders especially from CSOs should also understand that there are many challenges and constraints in ASEAN that have to be taken into account in fulfilling these expectations, which may take time and resources; Second, encourage constructive dialogue, positive thinking and goodwill in cooperation. At ASEAN, we value fair and constructive criticisms as long as this allows us to move forward. In dialogue or negotiations, we encourage CSOs to bring forth concrete solutions and recommendations on how ASEAN can address issues and constraints; Third, appreciate and understand gradual incremental approach, rules based, and proceeding at a pace comfortable to all parties concerned. One should always bear in mind that ASEAN governments work by principles of consensus and non-interference of domestic affairs of its Member States.

This, however, should not be seen as a barrier to engaging with ASEAN, as practices have shown many CSOs have successfully worked and engaged with ASEAN;

Fourth, work collaboratively towards the common interest of the ASEAN Community and its peoples taking into ongoing ASEAN frameworks and processes; Fifth, ensure sincerity, solidarity and non-confrontational means in dialogue between ASEAN and CSOs. ASEAN-CSO engagement is still evolving and both sides are still gaining familiarity with each other. There is a need to have mutual trust and work in consensus based on the "ASEAN way".

From those lessons-learnt, the practical, workable approaches that I would like to recommend to this Conference are as follow:

1. Engagement on functional or sectoral issues such as health, education, social welfare, environment, disaster relief, among others, develops more easily;
2. It is important for CSOs to select entry points of engagement that are realistic and practical either at the national or regional levels.
3. Civil society groups should continue to build their

awareness, knowledge and understanding of ASEAN, its programs and processes. To do this, you may consider intensifying dialogue among yourselves and with relevant ASEAN Bodies or Sectoral Bodies in your activities, inviting them as resource persons or requesting inputs on specific sectoral issue or study your organisation is involved with;

4. Finally, in order to better engage with ASEAN and draw civil society into the mainstream activities of ASEAN, we encourage CSOs to become associated with ASEAN through accreditation. This is to ensure an on-going interaction between the ASEAN Bodies and relevant CSOs, and to help achieve a people-centred ASEAN Community. ASEAN has also developed the "Guidelines on the Accreditation of Civil Society Organisations" in November 2012. Additionally, ASEAN is currently exploring modalities of engaging with various other stakeholders, to ensure constructive and fruitful interactions that would contribute to the ASEAN community-building process.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to underline that ASEAN has maintained peace and prosperity within this region through our ways of regular dialogue and consultation. Unity in diversity has been the unique strength of our resilient ASEAN. I urge you – ASEAN's civil society – to continue engaging with ASEAN through enhancing your awareness of the ASEAN Community, enhancing the wider public's awareness of ASEAN, participate in ASEAN's activities, and also to encourage understanding, solidarity, and camaraderie among the peoples of ASEAN.

I hope this conference will bring results and opportunities for ASEAN and civil society organisations to find common ground towards synergising our efforts to accelerate progress in achieving the ASEAN Community 2015 as well as creating regional solidarity towards sustainable peace, development, justice, and democratisation for the peoples of ASEAN. I look forward to the outcomes of this Forum, and I wish you all a productive and successful Conference.

Thank you.

PLENARY I:

ASEAN IN THE PRISM OF GLOBALIZATION AND A MULTIPOLAR WORLD



Moderator:

- *Mr. Augusto Miclat, Director of Initiative for International Dialogue, Philippines*

Speakers:

- *Ms. Titi Soentro, Action for Gender and Sociological Justice (AKSI) and a member of the Women's Caucus on ASEAN, Indonesia*
- *Mr. Ricardo B. Reyes, Freedom from Debt Coalition, Philippines*
- *Ms. Debbie Stothard, Coordinator Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma, and Secretary General of International Federation for Human Rights*

The first plenary began with the contextualization of ASEAN in the prism of globalization and a multipolar world in order to provide the participants with an understanding of the challenges and consequences of the economic integration of ASEAN in 2015. Each activist, academic and specialist in the panel spoke on their area of expertise, dividing the theme of plenary I, "ASEAN in the Prism of Globalization and a Multipolar World" into sub-themes: "Asian Giants: China, Japan, India", "ASEAN and its Current Responses to Global Changes Towards Sustainability" and "Art of Globalization".

Moderator, Mr. Augusto Miclat, Director of Initiative for International Dialogue, Philippines pointed out that this plenary was gender balanced to give not just a historical, but also a "herstorical" understanding of the global situation as a whole.

He began by introducing the speakers and the sub-themes of Plenary I.

Ms. Titi Soentro, Action for Gender and Sociological Justice (AKSI) and a member of the Women's Caucus on ASEAN, Indonesia, a women and human rights advocate, particularly on issues relating to the international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF, discussed the possible impacts of globalization in context of the upcoming establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community.

In 2007, the ASEAN leaders decided to establish the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015. This will transform ASEAN into a region with the free movement of goods, capital, and labour. It will integrate us into globalization.

Most people associate globalization with American

style consumption of McDonalds, fast foods, big cities and high-rise buildings, advanced communications and importation of various goods. However, globalization goes beyond consumption. It is about integration of national economies into a global economy. Globalization reflects the domination of a world economy by a small circle of economic elites. It is the promotion of a world market dominated by the US, European Union, and their partners.

Globalization cannot simply be measured by consumption. Cost must also be taken into consideration. The diminution of forests, land grabbing, loss of livelihoods, non-fulfilment of economic and social rights, these are real problems for people in rural areas. The cost is very high for our people and our environment.

The ASEAN Economic Community will be the realization of ASEAN as a free trade area, as a production base geared towards the world market. ASEAN governments will remove trade barriers on goods, services and investment, facilitate trade with infrastructure like roads, and shape regulation and policy to respond to investment and trade. They will remove protection for domestic manufacturers and reduce country incomes from taxes and duties. The companies will profit, but not the government. ASEAN free trade is based on the extraction of natural resources and land, cheap labour, and migrant workers from ASEAN countries. The role of ASEAN countries will be as suppliers of natural resources in the global market.

In addition, ASEAN serves as bodyguards to foreign investment and capital. The integration of ASEAN into the global economy, as the provider of free trade and labour, only continues the historical role of introduction of cheap labour into colonial markets as occurred during the time of colonial powers. We are still dominated by former colonial powers in this 21st century.

The hope is that the ASEAN Economic Community will add value to the region by creating enterprises in our countries, increasing opportunities for investment of new technologies, increasing production from the private sector, and developing

smart entrepreneurship. However, ASEAN is also challenged by the fact that it is not ready to address the best equitable benefits of economic integration.

Opportunities in life also depend on education. We must also begin to address the issue of the lack of education in some ASEAN countries, especially around the Mekong region. Those with higher education will be the only ones to reap the benefits of ASEAN trade and industry. If you begin to look at other factors such as income and investment, many ASEAN countries will be at a disadvantage.

There are internal gaps in ASEAN that need to be urgently addressed. ASEAN governments must prioritize efforts to fill these gaps, to deal with people in subsistence economies. Current policies, however, neglect the people, and are more in favour of investors to liberalize all sectors of the economy. These policies further exacerbate inequalities. ASEAN integration will not benefit the ASEAN people without serious effort to protect the rights of people and environment. They must listen to the voices of the people. The economy belongs to the people and not just the leaders and corporations. There will be no genuine ASEAN community without the participation of ASEAN people, men and women.

Mr. Ricardo B. Reyes, Freedom from Debt Coalition, Philippines discussed how economic growth does not equal an increase in income for most people, while reminding us that regionalism, internationalism, and solidarity is needed to respond to current changes in the global economy.

We gather today with more optimism for ASEAN than in any time since its inception in 1967. There is faster economic growth, a stronger trend towards peace, closer interaction and cooperation in political and security power structures. For this year's ACSC/APF, the theme of our forum is a statement addressing challenges and threats, but it also represents hope and optimism, but how optimistic can we be? We have made many forward steps toward democratization, and the western development model has brought about some positive changes, but are they enough? More importantly, are they what really matter? What lens

are we using to view the world?

To recall the remarkable shift from post-war, post-colonial times to the present, governments subscribed to a model of shaping modern world industry and agriculture. Changes resulted in strong states, albeit many authoritarian. Yet sometime in the late 80s and early 90s, there was a shift; the market became a mantra. Enhancement of the market, and supposedly the individual, was in the concept called neoliberalism. There were big promises for the majority, for the working people, but the people, especially those who remain in the margins, were unaffected by the promises.

Nothing is being said about inequality in social, political, gender, and many other issues. Not addressing these inequalities will spell trouble for the years to come. There are major trends for economic inequality. First, economic growth in the region is measured by GNP and GDP, and due to this measurement, income inequality has risen fast. Second, drops in poverty ratios are accompanied by increases in income inequality. The rich grow much faster than the lower income layers. We speak here of incomes, not of equality. These measures are highly skewed in favour of the few or the very few.

According to a study from the Institute of Southeast ASEAN Studies in Singapore, the rise in inequalities will necessitate redistributive policies and intervention. Second, inequality constitutes a root force of economic instability and violence. Reducing disparities is thus better for growth trajectory. Third, concentration of resources undermines competitiveness. Fourth, rising inequality necessitates rising social investment. Inequality itself is opposed to the continuous economic growth that is desired by governments in the region.

Therefore, battling economic inequality holds the key to growth. If left unattended, the undesired effects of inequity will halt growth in the region. A huge paradox in the region is that economic liberalization, instead of levelling the playing field and bringing more participants into the region, is instead giving rise to bigger monopolies. In the Philippines, all branches of our economy were highly monopolized by one, two, or three enterprises, monopolies or

operating in the same manner as a monopoly.

The crisis of 2008, which hit the heartland of the world capitalist economy and the financial system, namely the United States, has moved to affect this region. Foreign investment and other portfolio investments have been channelled differently in the region. Countries which adopted industrial strategies have made use of this capital force to develop capital-intensive industries. This kind of growth rewards owners with land and capital. This is the group that has already taken hold of the economy, instead of the labour group, and is thus aggravating inequality in Southeast Asia, serving the rich of the rich and not the majority of our people.

In response to this development, the concept of inclusive growth has emerged, and is being popularized in all the countries of our region. This concept originated at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and was taken up by the Asian Development Bank; this was after their anti-poverty plans sunk, or in other words, were a big failure. We now see this language in all their developmental plans and papers.

Inclusive growth prescribes nothing more than more jobs, increased access to health and education, less corruption. However, these expanded programs do not address economic inequalities, and it does not address economic and social inequalities. We cannot allow these institutions to dictate what is good for us. We should tell them that we can dispense with their unwanted services, and conceive our own path.

Redistributive policies are imperative, and we can no longer postpone our equitable rights of the people. This remains difficult and complicated, accompanied by political animosities. However, we are all advantaged at this time by our national experiences, and by documents like the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Rights-based instruments are formidable because they are endorsed by the UN and recognized by the international community. People can be empowered to affect change,

especially with the practice of community solidarity in the spirit of ASEAN.

Another challenge is climate change. Unfortunately there has been so much stonewalling by the rich industrialized countries, especially in the North, to comply with the Kyoto Protocol. In our own countries, abetted by institutions such as the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, our countries continue to ignore the call to reduce emissions and shift to renewable energy. The same institutions and powers that raise the concept of green economy, distort it as fast as it is produced and commodify nature, converting it into something sustainable and profitable at the same time.

We have to use everything, our nationalisms, our internationalisms, and our innate solidarity to overcome these problems.

Ms. Debbie Stothard, Coordinator of the Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma, Secretary General of FIDH echoed the other speakers' point that while globalization was supposed to give wealth and prosperity to the people, it has created economic inequality and invited communal and social instability.

Globalization was supposed to make us all rich. It was supposed to make our lives better. The world is getting richer, but not the majority of the people. In the past 20 years, global GDP grew by more than 300%, but 75% of the world's population suffer from more economic inequality. So when we look at ASEAN, ASEAN countries, and Myanmar, we are suffering from the same disease. Globalization was supposed to make us all richer and more comfortable. ASEAN says it wants a more people-centered community, but globalization and ASEAN seems to be doing the opposite of what they say.

Most of our ASEAN governments destroy communities while implementing globalization. They are focusing on making more urbanized countries. They say they are forming bigger cities, getting people to move from farms to cities. How are they doing this? They're grabbing land of farmers, ethnic minorities, and poor people in rural areas. Land confiscation and land grabbing in Myanmar is a huge problem. This is also the case



"The economy belongs to the people and not just the leaders and corporations. There will be no genuine ASEAN community without the participation of ASEAN people, men and women."

- Ms. Titi Soentro, Action for Gender and Sociological Justice (AKSI) and a member of the Women's Caucus on ASEAN, Indonesia

"We need to send a message to our ASEAN leaders that if you want a more people-centered ASEAN, please listen to the people."

- Ms. Debbie Stothard, Coordinator of the Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma, and Secretary General of FIDH

in Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, Indonesia, and everywhere. Maybe the only two countries without this problem are Brunei and Singapore, but maybe this is because they don't have much land left to grab.

We are facing a situation where ASEAN governments say they want to be more globalized, to follow the globalization process. Unfortunately this process is a process of using cheap labour, cheap land, and cheap natural resources. ASEAN is investing in the financial sector and businesses, but not people. It's investing in the military. This year, Burma is spending 20% more money on the military. On the other hand, ASEAN governments are telling us that we have no money for health or education, social services, and no money to help its people.

When we look at the process of globalization and the form of development that ASEAN is using, we see it is a model that oppresses its people and puts more people in debt. It puts women, youth, ethnic, and religious minorities in more danger. In addition, it makes us more vulnerable to violence.

Companies and government interests receive protection, but ordinary people do not. We need laws that protect the people, not big business. The new laws allow foreign investors easy access to the country's resources. These laws do not help small business or farmers. We need to make

sure that laws in the ASEAN countries protect the people, or else all of us will be eaten up by globalization.

Let us remind ourselves what kind of development we want in this region. Most of us are here because we want development that protects the people, environment, and future generations. More technology doesn't mean more freedom; more nationalism doesn't mean more safety; more military doesn't mean more education. We need to stop the problems of this region like Letpadaung, Tampakan, Freeport, and big mines that rob people of their livelihood and safety. We need to think about how globalization is causing more land grabbing, and the danger to those trying to help the victim of land grabbing – like in the case of our friend from Laos, Sombath Somphone, who was kidnapped and disappeared more than one year ago. We have many friends trying to address the problems of globalization who have been killed, arrested, or have disappeared. We cannot leave them alone. We need to act. We need to send a message to our ASEAN leaders that if you want a more people-centered ASEAN, please listen to the people.

We must remember that farmers and workers are people too. Sex workers, IDPs, refugees, migrants, Kachin, Rohingya, and LGBT are all people of ASEAN.





“People can be empowered to affect change, especially with the practice of community solidarity in the spirit of ASEAN.”

- Mr. Ricardo B. Reyes, Freedom from Debt Coalition,
Philippines

Following a round of Questions and Answers, the following points were made:

- Minority voices, namely indigenous, LGBT, disabled, sex workers, poor women and the voices of the people need to be heard. Incorporating their voices into the programs, we must redefine what development should look like.
- To see the possibilities in regional cooperation and regional strengthening, taking clues from countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Brazil, who are setting up regionalism with their own development.
- We must consider the dangers of the ASEAN Economic Blueprint for Economic Integration, 2015. It will be easier for large corporations to move freely, destroying the possibility of smaller organizations, while restricting the movement of the displaced, refugees and asylum seekers and migrants. , The alternative to globalization is de-globalization. It means investing in the basic needs of people and regulating big money and big companies and to have safe and stable livelihoods.
- If ASEAN is serious about people-centered community, it has to talk to the people. People such as the unemployed, migrant, LGBT, Muslim, Christian, Kachin, Rohingya and all of the people of ASEAN.

PLENARY II:

WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE IN ASEAN 2015 INTEGRATION AND BEYOND?



ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE / ASEAN PEOPLE'S FORUM (ACSC/APF) 2014



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March 21-23, 2014

MCC Hall (Yangon - Myanmar)



Moderator:

- *Mr. Phan Anh Son, Director General, People's Aid Coordinating Committee, Vietnam*

Speakers:

- *Ms. Ton Nu Thi Ninh, President of the Founding Committee of Tri Viet University, Vietnam*
- *Dr. Syam Kamarusaman, Director of ASEAN Conflict Studies Center, Sain University, Malaysia*
- *Ms. Siriporn Skrobanek, President of Foundation for Women, Thailand*

ASEAN is facing a mountain of challenges including peace and security. In the region key issues include sovereignty and territorial disputes as well as political unrest. Numerous commitments have yet to be turned into practice. The theme of Plenary II, "Where are the People in ASEAN 2015 Integration and Beyond?", shared information and defined measures for civil society organizations (CSOs) to meet these challenges, such as conflict resolution and recommendations for better implementation of ASEAN documents. These discussions took place under the three sub-themes; "Tension and Conflicts in Southeast Asia-impact on the People, Proposal for Mitigation and Resolution", "Internal and Regional Conflict in ASEAN" and "ASEAN Integration is Useless if Violence Against Women Remains to be Unaddressed".

Moderator Mr. Phan Anh Son, Director General, People's Aid Coordinating Committee, Vietnam began the plenary by introducing the speakers and also posing the question; 'How are CSOs in ASEAN working together to make a peaceful environment?' The following three guest speakers explored this question in detail.

Ms. Ton Nu Thi Ninh, President of the Founding Committee of Tri Viet University, Vietnam, as the former ambassador of Vietnam to EU, and former vice-chair of foreign affairs committee spoke on the sub-theme; "Tension and Conflicts in Southeast Asia-Impact on the People, Proposal for Mitigation and Resolution".

Nearly 50 years after the foundation of ASEAN, we are now taking the next step towards the adoption of the ASEAN charter and the development of the

ASEAN community by 2020. As affirmed in the Preamble of the Charter, ASEAN people are committed to a region of security. There is a need for the goals to be understood through a holistic approach, including socio-economic and environmental dimensions to security.

Though compared to other regions, Southeast Asia has low tensions and conflict; there remain issues between countries such as Thailand and Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand, as well as Malaysia and Singapore. This instability in the ASEAN region includes the tension in the South China Sea, which has heightened, partly due to influences from outside ASEAN. The Mekong River is a prime example of competition for water in ASEAN as hydropower dams on the Mekong are seen as a cause for water reduction and impacting local ecosystems.

In addition, regional integration intensifies migration; over five million ASEAN citizens are working outside their countries bringing up the issue of cross-border movement. The situation for migrant workers, who tend to be unskilled, female, and one third of who are undocumented, will be one of the toughest issues to deal with. Adopting mechanisms to protect their rights through bilateral agreements is a slow process. In the meantime, the reality of cross-border movement will involve trafficking and illegal arms smuggling. Rule of law must be a priority in resolving these issues.

The speaker made four recommendations in this session:

- ASEAN governments must pay attention to tensions and their impacts on the people. These arise from everyday inter-country transactions.
- They must deal with these with a multi-stakeholder, sustainable approach.
- A flexible engagement is needed.
- A progressive emergence of ASEAN regional identity, so as to avoid confrontation. This identity must integrate a culture of peace based on inclusion and accommodation

Dr. Syam Kamaruzaman, Director of ASEAN Conflict Studies Center, Universiti Sains Malaysia

is a lecturer of political science in Penang, working especially on conflict resolution and Southeast Asian international relations. In this session, he spoke on “Internal and Regional Conflict in ASEAN”. He began by reminding us that we all share similarities as victims of conflicts, which have a profound effect on all of us. We are all aware of the realities, suffering and human rights abuses such as the conflict we observed in Thailand in 2004 where over 5,000 people died in clashes in southern Thailand. Human rights abuses, poor education, economic strife, and poverty is rife.

When we speak of conflicts we are often speaking about intrastate conflict or regional conflict (inter-state conflict). At inter-state level – issues involving identity, revolution, self-determination, human rights, livelihood, ethnic, and religious – we face conflict due to the movement of people such as human trafficking. The issues are complicated by the support from outside the country. In order to address all these complications we need to be comprehensive and creative in our ways of finding solutions.

In addition, conflict can be transferred from one area to another, particularly when people move from a conflict area. For example, Malaysia is affected by conflict that surrounds us. We currently host 130,000 refugees and asylum seekers, mostly from Myanmar, registered at the United Nations refugee agency in Malaysia. They are from Chin State, Mon State, they are Rohingya and from other parts of Myanmar with the majority consisting of refugees from Chin State. Others seek refugee status from the Philippines, and southern Thailand. Therefore, we cannot say that because a conflict arises in one country, it does not affect other countries.

Governments, whose regional mechanisms are state centric and address inter-state issues rather than intra-state issues due to the policy of non-interference, must not turn a blind eye to conflicts taking place within countries. This issue of the non-interference principle must be reviewed and ASEAN must develop a better mechanism to protect its people. The recent progress in the peace agreement between Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine government is a prime example of successful

“The recent progress in the peace agreement between Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine government is a prime example of successful mediation by Malaysia and interference, demonstrating the possibility of creative solutions in inter-state conflict.”

- Dr. Syam Kamaruzaman, Director of ASEAN Conflict Studies Center, Sain University, Malaysia

mediation by Malaysia and interference, demonstrating the possibility of creative solutions in inter-state conflict.

There is a need to strengthen solidarity and promote partnerships between the groups present today. The work that is carried out on the ground has a big role in persuading countries to address some of these issues. There is a need for facilitation between CSOs and government, as well as government and armed groups to create a dialogue. CSOs can play a crucial role in facilitating between government and armed groups, to build a bridge for peaceful dialogue. If you have solidarity you can have joint advocacy.

We need to find a creative way to find sustainable peace. Peace that is just and based on principles of transparency, democracy, dignity, and development for all. Positive peace is peace that has justice based on transparency and democracy. Only then can we have a truly sustainable peace.

Ms. Siriporn Skrobaneck, President of Foundation for Women, Thailand who has been combatting violence and discrimination against women and is a crucial member of the campaign to amend article 276, began by asking us, ‘Where is the room for women in the new ASEAN community?’ In discussing “ASEAN Integration is Useless if Violence Against Women Remains to be Unaddressed”, she addressed the issue of inequality in ASEAN, noting that the blueprint of the three pillars of ASEAN Economic Community does not articulate the role of women as equal partners.

In addition, the political and security community did not take into account resolution 1365 of the UN on

the role of women in solving conflict, as well as physical, mental and sexual violence against women (VAW). As high as 37.7% of women in southeast Asia experience physical and sexual violence from their partner, which is a higher rate compared to other regions. To tackle VAW, we need to recognize violence against women as a violation of human rights and states must be held accountable.

At the regional level, a declaration against VAW was adopted in 2004. It promotes an integrated, holistic approach to eliminate VAW:

- By formulating and taking appropriate responses to offenders.
- By including support initiatives by women’s rights organizations, NGOs and CBOs.
- By strengthening ties through networking, and collaboration with NGOs and public and private sectors.

Considering the scope of VAW, it is evident that the declarations are not binding and to a certain degree lack substance. It is also does not comply with international standards such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recommendation 19 that outlines the need to address VAW. There is a need to urge ASEAN leaders to build an ASEAN community free from VAW.

In addition, ASEAN governments should allocate resources to female victims of violence in their family and community. This assistance is especially needed for women living with HIV, disabled, migrants, and refugees. Ending VAW is a priority for the achievement of development goals including the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

The realization of gender equality and empowerment should be a priority in the 2015 agenda. President Thein Sein observed that the threat to national security is declining in ASEAN, but we need to urge leaders to recognize the human security concerns for women and children. We need to advocate for women so that they can be free from violence. We should always be reminded that human security is a reflection of the advancement of human kind.

A woman with dark hair and glasses is speaking into a microphone. She is wearing a yellow top with a white lace collar and a blue lanyard. The background is blurred, showing other people and what appears to be a conference setting.

Following a round of Questions and Answers, the following points were made:

- Many people in ASEAN are killed due to conflicts, so why has it not developed a mechanism to prevent this? We should ask ourselves what we are doing to in our activities, such as in our advocacy strategies, to urge countries to intervene.
- The term Rohingya is a contested issue in Myanmar. Regardless of whether or not the term is appropriate, people need to be treated equally with rights.
- Timor Leste should be granted membership in ASEAN, as it shares similar issues with its members. Timor Leste needs to ask what the government is doing to break the resistance. Similarities can be drawn with Vietnam in 1995 when it joined ASEAN as a member state. Though weary of its socio-political system and concerns over its economy resided, this view has changed over the years. Discussing with your own government and diplomats is a necessary process.
- More needs to be done about binding implementing mechanisms and laws to protect women from violence in ASEAN. In particular, there is hardly any information or action on the part of Myanmar government regarding this issue, although some progress has been made in the past. Domestic legislation is not enough to prevent gender violence. CSOs should have a large role in preventing VAW. We must monitor, and make sure that there are no misconceptions of what domestic violence is. Men need to also be on board in advocacy and education regarding VAW.
- Young people need to be educated on sexual reproductive health and these initiatives should also be initiated by the youth.
- In places of conflict and post-conflict, marginalized people such as women, LGBT, disabled, and indigenous peoples suffer from multiple layers of discrimination and marginalization due to historical injustices. We need to ensure their protection as ASEAN member countries.
- War in Myanmar has presided for over 60 years in its history. Many people do not have equality, especially the ethnic people, leaving them vulnerable to violence. Past peace negotiations have had unsatisfactory outcomes and the international community is now beginning to intervene. Danger and violence for ethnic people are on the rise. ASEAN leaders must commit to ending the suffering of the ethnic people. The Burma government must stop sending their army to ethnic areas. At the same time, we cannot only rely on other countries to solve conflicts; a solution must also come from within the country.
- There is no threat of invasion from neighbouring countries in Myanmar, therefore, military spending must decrease and allocated to social infrastructure.

PLENARY III:

MYANMAR IN TRANSITION

March 21-23, 2014

MCC Hall (Yangon - Myanmar)



Moderator:

- *Dr. May Shi Sho, Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Programme Committee*

Speakers:

- *Dr. Salai Lian Hmone Sakhong, Director of Burma Centre for Ethnic Studies*
- *Nang Raw Zahkung, Assistant Director of Policy and Strategy, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation*
- *Dr. Khin Ma Ma Myo, Executive Director of Myanmar Institute of Peace and Security Studies*
- *Dr. Win Myo Thu, Chairperson of EcoDev*
- *Dr. Kyaw Thu, Director of Paung Ku*
- *Daw Tin Tin Nyo, General Secretary of Women's League of Burma*
- *Ko Moe Thwe, Secretary General, National Youth Congress/ President, Generation Wave*

Burma, a country ruled by military government for over 50 years is on an adventure out into the open world. The military junta was officially dissolved in 2011 and in 2012 President Thein Sein and his nominally civilian government was installed. It is a time of political, economic, and social transition for Burma and its people. In the third plenary titled “Myanmar in Transition”, a panel of experts from Burma walked the participants through this period of transition from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Dr. May Shi Sho, Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Programme Committee, introduced the speakers and led us in the discussion of “Myanmar in Transition”.

Dr. Win Myo Thu, Chair Person of EcoDev discussed the current transition from an economic

perspective. The discussion focused on the view of the people rather than the state. He discussed the transition from a professional lens of economics drawing on both the positives and negatives of the current transition and how the people can benefit from this change.

While the reforms taken by the administration of President Thein Sein must be commemorated for its efforts in liberalizing and normalizing the foreign exchange market, allowing people to exchange money and rely on normalized exchange rates, Myanmar engages in undocumented money that is unaccounted for. This money is passed on from generations, such as from the cultivation of poppy and other illegal activities in Myanmar. The sum generated from these illegal activities is huge.

In addition, only a few people are handling 90% of the economy. The rich are investing their money in the production sector such as land and gold. Consequently, medium enterprises have a difficult time establishing themselves in their respective businesses.

Another issue is fiscal and financial policy and the allocation of money in different sectors. The military receives an overwhelming percentage of finance from the government. In contrast, only a small percentage is allocated to education and health. There is more money spent by the federal government rather than the local government and this must be improved.

Another issue is tax. The Myanmar government does not rely on tax. Very few people pay tax because the people do not believe in tax. Therefore, the government relies on revenue from natural resources. However, when we remove tax from the equation, it also removes accountability between the government and the people.

In addition, agricultural policy must be improved. One thing we can applaud the government for is the increase of micro-credit available to farmers. In the past, the sum of available micro-credit used to be \$70 USD. This has been increased to \$100 USD. There are, however, still limitations of this micro-credit actually reaching the farmers.

Transition is taking place, but where this transition ends, that is not very visible.

Dr. Salai Lian Hmone Sakhong, Director of Burma Centre for Ethnic Studies began by noting that when those who were exiled or those who departed Burma greeted each other in the past, they greeting one another by saying “next year in Yangon.” After 25 years of demanding their rights, greeting each other in the same way every year, they have finally arrived in Yangon, still shouting and demanding their rights.

Yangon means “the end of war,” which also means the beginning of peace. However, we must check ourselves. “When will we have peace in this city, and when will we have peace in this country?” This

is the question we are trying to answer. Ironically, peace is what we are fighting for. Ethnic nationalities are fighting for our rights, for our homeland, for our language, for our culture. We are fighting and we are dying. Why? Fighting is not easy. Dying is not easy. Shedding blood is not easy, but we have no other means. We hold arms as the last resort. We want to give up these arms and live peacefully. We want to live a normal life, a peaceful life. We are asking for peaceful dialogue. However, when we demand a dialogue, instead of peace, we receive bullets. Whenever we demand our rights, what we get is a battlefield. Our desire is to end the 60 years of civil war.

President Thein Sein has given this country a chance for reconciliation. This transitional period maybe the best chance to rebuild the peace which has been lost in this country for 65 years. The ethnic nationalities are engaging in this peace process and national dialogue. In holding a conference in Laiza, we were able to propose the Laiza Agreement. This agreement will help to end the killings. The Laiza Agreement was renegotiated and finalized as the Law Khee Lah Agreement. We submitted this on January 29, 2014 to the Burma government. A further round of meetings will take place on March, 2014 and will continue in the following months. We have agreed to produce a single text and to draw a cease-fire as soon as possible and a national dialogue will follow the cease-fire. We are also designing a union conference, similar to the 1947 Panglong Conference in order to bring about a transition in our country to a peaceful state.

Our country will be a place where many different groups with different ethnicities, religions, and languages can live peacefully together, like General Aung San envisioned.

Nang Raw Zakhung, Assistant Director of Policy and Strategy, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation discussed peace building and the role of civil society and prospect of peace building in Kachin land. She began by giving us a brief background of Kachin State.

Kachin State is located in the northernmost state in

Myanmar. The Kachin armed resistance started in 1961, during the country's parliamentary era. The people in Kachin land believed that the Panglong Agreement was not going to be implemented as agreed and this caused a long civil war in Kachin State and northern Shan State where the Kachin dwell.

In 1994 a ceasefire agreement was signed with the Burma Army and after 17 years of ceasefire, the fighting resumed in June 2011, just before President Thein Sein and the current administration took office. Since then, until November 2013, there have been more than ten bilateral meetings between the government and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). Two bilateral agreements have been made. The Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) hosted the first ever, ethnic armed group meeting in Laiza between October 30 and November 2, 2013. We can imagine the atrocities, the grievances, and the experiences people faced during this long civil war.

In addition, due to the resumption of fighting in June 2011, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees has increased. It's been three years now since the resumption of conflict. Currently there are an estimated 110,000 IDPs and refugees. Within these estimates, 60% are women, and 20% are children under 15 years of age. This is a very huge portion of the population given the small number of people living in Kachin State and northern Shan State. More than 12,000 households are displaced and affected. There have been reports of lost properties, and lost lives because of this conflict.

One might say that the Kachin civil society groups are vocal and strong compared to other civil society groups. There are more than 30 civil society organizations actively working on the above mentioned issues, building peace in the region. The KIO offers space for CSOs to consult, advise and approach them and to guide them when necessary. For the KIO, civil society is part of a 'team', providing humanitarian assistance.

"While violent conflict still takes place in Kachin State, new laws are allowing investment into the conflict ridden state. Civil society has to tackle these issues through their work of rights-based advocacy on land and environmental issues."

- Nang Raw Zahkung, Assistant Director of Policy and Strategy, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation

The current transformations have led to new laws which are affecting the community. While violent conflict still takes place in Kachin State, new laws are allowing investment into the conflict ridden state. Civil society has to tackle these issues through their work of rights-based advocacy on land and environmental issues.

Land grabbing and environmental concerns linked to extractive industries is a huge issue in Kachin State. In addition, gender issues and gender-based and sexual violence is directly linked to conflict. Kachin women's organizations are collecting data and advocating, but little has been done to address the reports.

Livelihood assistance and capacity building is also a crucial part of peace and democracy. The upcoming census will be an issue and many, including the Kachin, have raised their voices, but Naypyidaw has not acknowledged these concerns.

The challenge is to create sustainable peace in Kachin land. Without peace in Kachin land, there will be no peace in Myanmar. There will be no inclusive reform in Myanmar. Kachin people were one of the main ethnic groups involved in the making of Myanmar in 1945 and this is one of the many reasons these issues need to be resolved.

Looking at the future, we need to carry on our current work, and advocate on the issues taking place in the country. We need the government and its people to uphold truth and transparency. My request to our regional NGOs, local CSOs, and the international community is to build capacity and integrate whatever you are doing with Myanmar. I also would like to ask the donor community,

especially the big donors like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, who many times fail to integrate perspectives on the peace process in their policy framework, which results in harming the peace process—I would like to request that you integrate peace perspectives in whatever work you are involved in with Myanmar.

Dr. Khin Ma Ma Myo, Executive Director of Myanmar Institute of Peace and Security Studies focused on the key challenges ahead. Currently, Myanmar is in transition and in the process of political liberalization rather than general democratization, which applies an easing of repression and extension of civil liberties under a similar regime structure. The process of liberalization and economic gain as a result of the liberalization convinced military generals they'd have little to lose by opening up the political system. They could get a good deal, in terms of international legitimacy and diffusion of internal tension. However, Myanmar will have risks and challenges that may limit its progress towards democracy.

The first challenge is related to the lack of institutional boundaries in internal security forces. The military used to control the police. Top leaders used to be military officers. The hierarchical structure of the police force was military in nature. All this renders the police ill-equipped for traditional roles of crime prevention, investigation, and public order policing. This led to a state-security mentality so that every aspect of policing was related to state security importance rather than civilian oversight.

The second challenge is the delivery of a security service to common people. Under the military regime, security was defined as national security, protection of national leaders, and military structure. Therefore the definition of security in terms of democratic governance, in terms of a society living in freedom, peace and safety, in terms of civilians being part of governance, in terms of having fundamental human rights, in terms of having access to resources for basic necessities, in terms of well-being, this is a new concept for security in Myanmar. This inhibits the effectiveness of delivery service.

The third challenge is border management issues.

Post-conflict society has specific types of problems; establishment of full-fledged border control, demilitarization of militarized areas, dealing with IDPs, de-mining activities, dealing with illicit trafficking in arms, people, and other commodities.

The fourth challenge is democratic, civil-military relations. According to the 2008 Constitution, military officers are allowed to exercise legitimate and constitutional influence on civilian government. So it is a patron civil-military relationship. This is different from democratic civil-military relations, with the exercise of civilian oversight over the military and civilian authorization of war.

The fifth challenge is that government is used to a system where those in power provided economic rewards, e.g. jobs, concessions, political status, in exchange for political influence. This is a barrier to the effectiveness of anti-corruption reform in democratic governance.

The sixth challenge is the limitations of governance framework under the 2008 Constitution. The executive power of defense is controlled by military. Legislative power is limited by the presence of directly appointed officers. There are undemocratic constitutional limitations on the President and ministers.

The seventh challenge is federal issues and the democratic agenda. Ethnic conflicts are tied to resource allocation and regional autonomy. Questions of federalism still remain, as well as distribution of power based on regional or ethnic perspectives.

These are the challenges that hold the key to successful democratization of Myanmar.

Dr. Kyaw Thu, Director of Paung Ku discussed the role of civil society in the transition through a series of slides presenting key civil society movements.



- He began by showing a slide of a sex worker network in Myanmar. Many of them do not have identity cards and face serious discrimination. They are categorized as criminals because of their sexuality.
- The front cover of the newspaper with a picture of a candlelight vigil during a demonstration.
- We have been continually fighting for labour rights in the country. Fighting for their daily wages. In some cases, there are some successes, but there are still crackdowns on labour unions that are still under pressure.
- The media plays a large role in this country. A photo of a member of the local media being sued for disclosing information on “state secrets” was presented. The Media Law is still very controversial in Myanmar.
- People who lost their land are protesting at the Housing Department, but they didn’t get their land back and we don’t know where they are now.
- A photo of men standing before a tractor is symbolic of situations across the country. Farmers who have lost their land are fighting back against the private companies who took their land. It’s happening across the country, and they have yet to find a solution.
- A photo from the famous Letpadaung case. This media clip is when protestors were attacked at the dawn of a religious day in Myanmar (picture of policemen with riot gear, next picture is of a fire, third picture is of a monk with disfiguring burns on face, neck, and arm.) This is a sad story; there is no solution there.
- Some sectors of civil society responded by talking about the Letpadaung case through art.
- A picture from Hpakant where unregulated illegal mining is causing many social, political and environmental issues. These situations are happening throughout the country. Illegal mining, unregulated mining, corruption. This is a serious issue.
- A slideshow of the picture of communal violence. This started in Rakhine region, where tension started. The conflict has spread to other part of the country. It’s out of control.

Daw Tin Tin Nyo, General Secretary of Women’s League of Burma discussed the role of women in transition. Currently, women are suffering from all types of violence and conflict, being killed and tortured. Groups advocating for the rights of women are very active, especially along the borders, fighting for sustainable peace and democracy in the country. Women are playing a very active role in the transition. Women are part of all these activities, fighting for justice, raising the voice for people who are voiceless.

For women, transition in Burma is stuck. Burma is standing at a crossroads. There are reforms, peace process, and talk about peace, but regardless of these discussions, human rights violations continue. Sexual violence is an urgent issue women face, and continue to face even with these recent reforms. Burma maybe going through different reforms—reforming the economy and private sectors—but the role of women and gender for transition to a post-conflict society is not mentioned nearly enough.

Dr. Salai Lian Hmone Sakhong talked about the need for the people’s involvement in the peace process. It was beautiful language, like language spelled out by the UN. However I call for action on what is being said.

While the peace process continues, fighting also continues. All the agreements have yet to be implemented. Now, we are moving towards a nationwide ceasefire, but what is the role of women and of CSOs? Without them, can we actually build sustainable peace? We don’t even know where we are in the process because there is no transparency. Even the media cannot obtain the necessary information. No one can explain the state of our country. Why all the secrecy?

Another large concern is sexual violence. Our concern is that both sides will agree on amnesty for past crimes, and not consider justice for the women who’s rights have been violated, or all those who were victims of serious human rights violations. Women have to be a part of this process and the post-action plan so that everyone is considered throughout the entire process.

Women are largely underrepresented in politics, especially in parliament. Currently, less than 5% of women are represented in parliament. We would like to congratulate and encourage these women who work on the front line of politics. We are very hopeful that they will ensure the protection of women, and work towards ending violence against women, including the violence inflicted by the Burma Army. There must be a zero-tolerance policy for violence against women. This must apply to ethnic minorities, and all marginalized peoples. For the women, there is still a long way to go, still many challenges to face, but let's join our hands together.

We ask that our colleagues from throughout ASEAN support us. We are not different, we are all the same. Let us work to make the ACSC/APF effective and not just sit here talking about these issues.

Ko Moe Thwe, National Youth Congress/ Generation Wave spoke on the youth's role in Myanmar and its current transition.

Everyone knows Myanmar is changing. We have a parliament, some freedom of expression, and the possibility of being involved in politics, the chance to vote. We recently held the ASEAN Youth Forum in the historic setting of the Rangoon University, and now we hold this conference without any disturbance from the government. So it seems that this country has already reached a democracy. However, this is far from the truth. Our country is still under a military government.

The Army has the right to reserve 25% of seats in parliament, who are directly appointed from the Chief of Military without any vote from any of our people. The generals appoint the Ministers of Defense, Border Security, and Home Affairs. Under the Home Affairs Ministry, all village staff and local governments are working under this structure. So the military has total control of the administration and legislation.

Under a recent bill, a decision from President Thein Sein stipulates that civil service personnel cannot receive benefaction of over three lakh (300,000kyat/ approx. \$300USD). But this means they can legally receive a gift under three lakhs. This includes

judges, who can now legally accept bribes under three lakhs.

The 2008 Constitution was written by the former military dictators. We need more than 75% of the parliamentary vote to amend the Constitution. However, 25% of parliament belongs to the military, which means we cannot change the Constitution without an agreement from the Burma Army. This illustrates how the Burma Army is still in control of the Constitution.

Who will carry the transition to the future and become the key players for future democratic society? There is a lot to change in a country that has recently been released from a dictatorship, which has systematically destroyed the country, a deteriorating educational system, and economic system. Poverty is endemic and a lack of knowledge perpetuates this situation.

And even if we could amend the Constitution and the political structure, we still have a lot ahead of us. Especially in the development of economic, social, and political spheres. Development will take time, particularly a system of sustainable development. The current youth will have to lead the future of Burma.

However, the youth are not qualified to take on the future of this country due to our past and the situation this country left us in. So I would say that the former generation failed to save our youth from the dictatorship. This is not to place the blame. This is the reality. Our country will change over many generations. We must be involved in the constitutional amendment procedure and empower the youth, to invest in youth to craft the future.

"Sexual violence is an urgent issue women face, and continue to face even with these recent reforms. Burma maybe going through different reforms—reforming the economy and private sectors—but the role of women and gender for transition to a post-conflict society is not mentioned nearly enough."

- Daw Tin Tin Nyo, General Secretary of Women's League of Burma



Following a round of Questions and Answers, the following points were made:

- The issue of Rohingya is a continuing, burning issue in Myanmar.
- We must continue to strengthen farmers and civil society to work together. We must also keep in mind the importance of the role of the government's position and the progress they can make in terms of improving law and capacity building. We have to find a way to facilitate a space for public consultation, so we can find common ground to work together, and stop blaming each other.
- There is a three step process to the nationwide ceasefire 1. Nationwide ceasefire agreement. 2. Dialogue process. 3. Union conference. The discussion will have to continue even after these processes have been completed. In Myanmar the dialogue process has not started and is painfully slow. One side of the party seems to be transitioning, but we are not part of the transition yet. The people are still fighting and we are still dying. In addition, the ceasefire agreement is seen as a military matter. Though government documents beautifully illustrate the importance of inclusion, there seems to be no space for the role of CSOs (though some disagree) in the ceasefire agreement. In addition, in the face of current human rights violations, the process of political dialogue is unforeseen.
- A truth commission is one of the many ways to seek out the truth in the country. All stakeholders, political parties, armed groups, and victims will need to join together to work out a mechanism in addressing the issue of injustices which have been suffered. The root causes need to be addressed in order to achieve sustainable peace. For the ethnic conflict, it is rooted in the implementation of the Panglong Agreement. Recently there is the idea to form a genuine federal union. When considering the need for self-determination, the separate states have to have state laws to manage their own states.
- Regarding the role of CSOs in peace process, the CSOs are taking the role of watching and monitoring the peace process and reforms, making this information available to the people. They are sending the voices of the people to those at the negotiation table. They are addressing day-to-day needs of people facing these issues.
- The disparity between electricity rates in different states is large and resource allocation is an issue. For example, one has to pay 35 kyat per one unit usage for electricity in Yangon, compared to 470 kyat for one unit usage in Rakhine State. On the other hand, millions of cubic feet of natural gas is being pumped from Rakhine State into China. Rakhine State and Shan State as well as other areas outside of Naypyidaw and Yangon have to live in bad conditions, such as the lack of infrastructure, creating an unequal state though we all live under one flag.

PLENARY IV:

ASEAN PEOPLE SOLIDARITY: HOW AND WHAT NEXT?



Ms. Thida Khus, Executive Director of SILAKA and South East Asia Women's Caucus, Cambodia lead us in the discussion of the working plenary "ASEAN Peoples' Solidarity: How and What Next?" The plenary produced an outcome of extending the Regional Steering Committee's (one each from 10 ASEAN and a representative from Timor Leste + 4 from regional networks) mandate to follow up and monitor the respective recommendations.

A proposal to monitor the recommendation to ASEAN was developed by ten representatives from ten countries and 4 members representing the pillars (economic, political, socio-cultural and environment) and one youth in Jakarta, after an agreement was made in November 2013 to develop a working group. The proposal was first presented to the participants during the APF in Brunei in 2013. The APF accepted the need for a mechanism and this proposal was sent out to ASEANcats for discussion in the region. The final proposal incorporating comments from the region

was presented to the participants of the ACSC/APF 2014.

The proposal "The Working Group for Follow-up of ACSC/APF Recommendations (WFAR)" aimed for an institutionalized working group to monitor the recommendations made by the ACSC/APF. Participants pointed out the need for an open and flexible mechanism. A suggestion to continue the mandate of the Regional Steering Committee comprised of 15 members (one from each ASEAN country and Timor Leste and four from regional organizations) was proposed by a participant and adopted by the ACSC/APF 2014.

Ms. Thida Khus also gave a progress update on the interface to take place after the ACSC/APF in Naypyidaw, Burma at the ASEAN Summit in April, 2014. A letter was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, outlining the principles of the interface. The letter stressed the need for meaningful dialogue to advance advocacy and the opportunity to choose our own representative for the interface.

WORKSHOPS

A vast array of workshops took place throughout the second day of the conference, bringing participants together by clusters to create discussions and pose possible solutions to various issues throughout ASEAN region and further afield. Civil society organizations from across ASEAN and beyond organized 35 workshops under four clusters: peace, justice and human rights, development, and democratization. Each workshop produced a set of recommendations, which were included in the final statement.

The workshops represented diverse issues throughout ASEAN region ranging from: land rights, forced migration, strengthening women's voices, youth empowerment for peace building in ASEAN, challenges in ceasefire and peace process negotiations and LGBTIQ rights. Participants took the opportunity to learn, contribute, network, give recommendations, and have their voices heard. In addition, many grassroots organization spoke out about the reality of their situation in their countries, voicing their concern for their rivers, lands, and livelihoods. They spoke about the difficulties of peace building processes and the fight for transparency, justice and human rights in the face of oppression and violence. It was an opportunity to build solidarity and strength among human rights defenders from all parts of ASEAN with the common call for equality and non-discriminatory policies.

WORKSHOPS:

PEACE CLUSTER (P)

Title: "Strengthening Women's Voices: The Meaning of Political Participation for Women in Conflict and Post-Conflict in ASEAN"

Organizers: Women's Legal & Human Rights Bureau /Philwomen on ASEAN, womenslegalbureau@yahoo.com; Initiatives for International Dialogue, mltabios@gmail.com; WIN –PEACE, winpeace2013@gmail.com; Women Organizations Network, mishwelatt@gmail.com; Cherry Ohn/IID

Abstract:

A gathering of 100 women from Burma (with multi-ethnicities) and across Southeast Asia to surface issues of women towards democratizing spaces in politics, peace processes, constitution building, and decision-making -- in both private and public spheres. It will highlight the gender dimension in conflict and/post-conflict situations; and discuss how CEDAW including its GR 30; and the UNSCR 1325 can serve as platforms to push for genuine and substantive participation of women. It also seeks to strengthen solidarity and develop collaborative efforts among women in ASEAN, esp. Burma, Cambodia, East Timor, and Philippines, to promote women's active participation in their respective governments and in ASEAN.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN through its Member States such as Myanmar to provide enabling conditions for women to meaningfully participate in planning and decision-making processes in ASEAN and in the development of their communities.
- AICHR and ACWC must be able to reflect and address women's issues on the ground including those in conflict and post-conflict situations.
- ASEAN must urge Member States to organise and capacitate women especially those from the ground to be able to meaningfully participate in all decision-making levels both in public and private spheres.

Title: Empowerment for Peace-building in ASEAN”

Organizers: Youth Resource Development Program (YRDP-Cambodia); Thai Volunteer Service (TVS-Thailand); Cambodia Volunteers for Society (CVS-Cambodia); National Youth Congress of Myanmar (NYC-Myanmar); C/O Cheang Sokha, YRDP (Cambodia), director@yrdp.org; Phwe Yu Mon, National Youth Congress Myanmar, phwephwe1988@gmail.com

Abstract:

Southeast Asia region is rich in ethnic and cultural diversity, religions and beliefs, natural resources, watersheds and biodiversity. Even though the countries in the region have different political systems, they have some commonalities in culture, food and tradition.

Apart from this some countries have painful and unforgettable history and conflict which lead to ‘historical bias’, ‘political distrust’, ‘cultural prejudice’ and ‘absence of mutual understanding’ among ASEAN countries and their peoples. Many problems on labour migration, drug and human trafficking, cross-border conflict/issues, etc. result from not the same pace of development in term of social and economic, unstable political situation and no tight relationship/friendship among governments in Southeast Asia region. Some problems have hammered a sense of inferior and superior among countries in the region as well. These difficulties are compounded by the different political systems of the various member states, as well as the history of geopolitical conflict in the region.

In regional context, peace and security is not considered stable at the moment for instance violent conflict between Thailand and Cambodia over Phreah VI hear Temple and there are other conflicts and tensions going on between Vietnam, China, Indonesia, and Japan over Spratly Island. Those conflicts are still real challenges of ASEAN itself to move forward for harmonious ASEAN community. In many cases, the conflict along border between Cambodia-Thailand, Thailand-Myanmar, Cambodia-Vietnam, Malaysia-Indonesia etc. which has continued for years is created as political tool to divert attention of internal political problem or being used as political tactic. The nationalism is used to provoke hatred against neighbour countries. Some conflicts were created due to distorted history. Conflicts in the region pose a threat to ASEAN integration and present a



challenge to the ‘ASEAN Way’ of Non-Interference. Against this background, repeated pledges - among others in the strategic roadmap from 2009 - to closer cooperation and the recent decision to establish a joint ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation provide an opportunity for the association to play an important role in regional conflict resolution. For civil society, this presents an opportunity to gain greater influence through the different channels ASEAN provides (such as ACSC/APF etc.) and expand the network beyond national borders, even more so in 2014 when Myanmar is the chair.

Ethnic Relations and ASEAN Opportunities

Myanmar is not only rich in natural resources, geopolitical importance between two giant country China and India but also rich in ethnicity. There are officially 135 ethnics and a large number of ethnic armed groups in Myanmar especially in ethnic regions which take 60% of landscape of the country. Since Myanmar is rich in ethnic armed groups, it becomes a home of the world longest civil war running country. The armed conflict between ethnic armed groups and central government has been going on for the autonomy since 1948 and up to now. In addition, historically rooted sectarian violence flared up seriously in 2012 which has led hundreds of civilian death and thousands become internally displaced persons, refugees, and migrant workers. Moreover, Myanmar becomes a democratic country and starts practicing neoliberal market and capitalist investments from neighbouring countries. Such foreign investments have affected serious socioeconomic status of Myanmar citizens

and land-confiscation around the country. Due to the armed conflict, sectarian violence, land-confiscations, and human rights violations, thousands of Myanmar people have moved into the neighbouring countries legally and illegally such as Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore, as refugees, economic migrant workers, and social migrants. This phenomena becomes a threat for regional security and economic development. For example, Myanmar migrant workers in Malaysia were suffered more serious human rights violations after sectarian conflict between Buddhists and Muslims in Myanmar. Hundreds of migrant workers from Malaysia returned home.

As ASEAN economic community is approaching very soon, the regional political stability will become the most crucial issues to solve. Therefore, peacebuilding process in the region is very important.

Title: “Challenges in Ceasefire and Peace Process Negotiation in South East Asia Region: Experiences of Peace Practitioner”

Organizers: Salai Isaac Khen, Gender and Development Initiative-Myanmar, isckh.acts@gmail.com; Emma Leslie, Center for Peace and conflict Studies (CPCS), emmacambodia@gmail.com; Kamarulzaman Askandar, Research and Education for Peace, Universiti Sains Malaysia (REPUSM), zam@usm.my

Abstract:

To end armed conflict and to achieve sustainable peace in the country observing rights of the minorities is one of the challenging issues for countries in SEA region. Many countries in the region such as Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines are thriving for peace process. Recently, these countries are entering into peace negotiation with different non-state armed actors; however, peace is still far from being reached in these lands, especially in Myanmar, Deep South in Thailand, and some degrees have been reached in Mindanao in Philippines, and Aceh, etc. At the same time, it is very crucial for peace process to have civil societies' and public participation safely. It is very true to recognize that peace negotiation is not a business of politicians but should be of the people. There are challenges in ceasefire and peace process in those countries. The civil societies in Myanmar also recognize that it is important to promote safe participation of the women and men from conflict areas, ensuring their needs and grievances are adequately integrated in

Recommendations:

- The Governments of all ASEAN Member States must integrate peace education program both in formal and non-formal education systems at all levels as well as supporting peace initiative activities of youth and civil society organisations (CSOs).
- The ASEAN Governments must establish mechanisms for youth like volunteerism, interethnic dialogue and exchange to fully participate in peace dialogues.
- The ASEAN Governments must ensure the rights of freedom of expression and freedom of media to promote peace through mainstreaming peace in media and social media.

the peace talks. However, this is far from reaching its goal. Such situations are also relevant with many other countries from SEA countries. The workshop also aims to clarify the situation of peace processes in the region and role of different actors in a few countries especially in Myanmar, Philippines and Aceh. Finally, the workshop hopes to gather some of the old and new experiences of peace negotiation in ASEAN, and hope to be able to come up with the meaningful recommendation and direction for CSOs and local people to work further together.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN networking mechanism for peace and reconciliation in the region to take concrete action and responsive for neighbouring countries.
- Government should start planning on the women, peace and security.
- The role of CSOs should be more active and competence tear with strategy and the objective.

Title: “On the Current Peace and Human Security Situation in ASEAN - The Impact on Self-Determination Struggles, Tension and Territorial Disputes & the Need for a Dispute Prevention & Settlement Mechanism (DPSM)”

Organization: Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC-SEA); WIN-Peace Myanmar; Initiatives for International Dialogue (IID); Vietnam Committee for Asean-African-Latin-American Solidarity Cooperation; C/O Pham Van Chuong, phamvanchuong1@gmail.com; Ruby Rose L. Lora, ruby.lora.2012@gmail.com; Susana Hoe, kweg.director@gmail.com

Abstract:

The workshop will tackle the peace and human security issues currently besetting our region – from the situation of stateless peoples in the region (e.g. the plight of the Rohingyas in Rakhine State) to tension and cross border, territorial disputes involving some ASEAN member states and its giant neighbor/s, to sovereignty-related fracas such as what Timor Leste is currently facing with Australia.

Reflections on the responsiveness – or lack thereof - of ASEAN mechanisms to these realities will also be discussed.

The workshop will also aim to generate recommendations on how civil society can be involved and take an active role in addressing the above-mentioned issues.

Recommendations:

- UNSC 1325 lobby: Adopt a gender perspective that includes the special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.
- Call for the establishment of an Inter-Governmental Body in ASEAN addressing internal strife, intra-state wars and ethnic conflicts, e.g. AIPR.
- Popularise the application of Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) principles in conflict prevention strategies.
- Engage the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD)
- Call for ASEAN Charter review particularly its Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM).
- Lobby for Independent International Commission of Inquiries (IICI) into alleged crimes against humanity in the region.

Title: “Investment in Myanmar: Repetitive Experiences With Other ASEAN Countries? Challenging for Peace and Self-determination of Local Communities”

Organizers: Montree Chantawong, Foundation for Ecological Recovery (FER), Nokmontree@yahoo.com; Youk Senglong, Fishery Action Coalition Team, youksenglong@yahoo.com; U Aung Myint, Renewable Energy Association of Myanmar (REAM), am.ream@gmail.com; Chea lily, NGO Forum on Cambodia, lily@ngoforum.org.kh

Abstract:

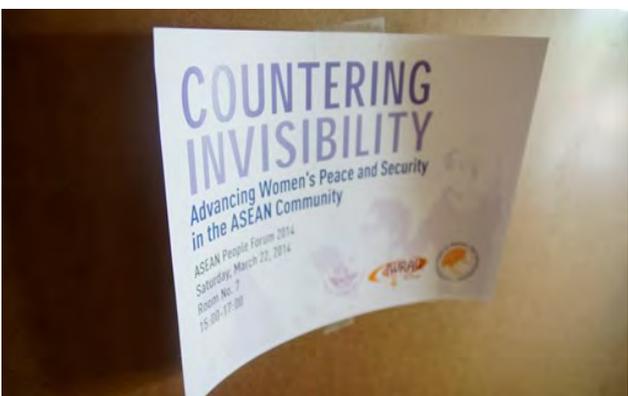
Being closed to the world for many decades, Myanmar becomes more attractive to foreign investors for its rich natural resources. To date, along with the new era of development and opening up with democracy regime, Myanmar has approved many large-scale development projects such as Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Dawei Deep Seaport Project, as well as oil and gas extraction projects including the nation’s largest extractive project, Shwe Gas Project. Many large scale projects are invested by the member of ASEAN countries and also the region’s close alliance. While Dawei Deep Seaport Project is

proposed by companies and government of Thailand, Shwe Gas project is an investment of South Korea and China.

This workshop reviews experiences from other ASEAN countries to put forward recommendations for Myanmar to take more caution on foreign investments, especially on the energy sector. It is expected to be a platform which provides some applicable recommendations for CSOs, local community people and also among ASEAN countries towards a better process and standard in their investment.

Recommendations:

- Laws and regulations on cross-border investment need to be established and enforced to provide accountability for social, environmental, and health impacts; conduct EIA and other impact assessments; monitor land



Title: "Countering Invisibility: Advancing Women's Peace and Security in the ASEAN Community"

Organizers: Asia Pacific Forum on Women Law and Development (APWLD); International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP-AP) Women'; Women's League of Burma (WLB)

Abstract:

The voices of women in conflict-affected communities across the ASEAN region are rarely heard. Her concerns and the important roles she plays in building peace in the community are not often recognized.

Amid all the diversity of the ASEAN region, we can find a number of common characteristics in the experience of conflict and insecurity that are shared among women across Southeast Asia. Conflicts in this regions are typically subnational conflicts, often involving identity politics, and are the result of deep-rooted historical and problems arising from decolonization, nation building and independence processes. Across ASEAN, we can see patterns of

concessions, forestry, energy and other projects; ensure the use of best practices; guarantee transparent and participatory decision-making processes; protect a free civil society; empower communities; and protect indigenous rights, including land use security to free prior and informed consent.

- ASEAN should provide a platform to raise common issues around extractive industries, energy projects, land and indigenous rights; provide a space for CSOs and NGOs to have direct, face-to-face meeting with ASEAN governments; and on behalf of Indigenous People Communities in Prome Commune advocating for the return of their land, the ASEAN governments should focus on the protection of indigenous rights in the region.
- Establish an Environmental Pillar in ASEAN to ensure an Independent regional monitoring mechanism, formulate rules on the transboundary utilisation and sharing of natural resources, protect indigenous rights and resolve cross border impacts.

asymmetrical power between a strong state at the national level and deeply marginalized minority communities in the country's peripheries. Here we also find multiple and intersecting discrimination faced by women. This is an acute problem across the ASEAN region and yet the concerns of women in conflict areas in ASEAN member states remain largely invisible.

The ASEAN community has made commitments to protect and promote the rights of women. There have been significant developments also in the architecture of international law to afford greater recognition to the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda¹. In order to optimize these frameworks and promote their potential to bring about meaningful change in the lives of women affected by conflict, it

is essential that civil societies and member states of ASEAN work together to ensure a strong connection between international laws, regional initiatives and national legislation in member states.

This workshop will seek to explore ways to reduce the invisibility of women in conflict-affected communities across ASEAN and highlight the importance of utilizing regional and international mechanisms to promote women's peace and security.

Hosted by established regional organizations of APWLD and IRAW-AP², it will provide a platform for women from conflict-affected communities in ASEAN nations to discuss their priority concerns. It will seek to provide a snapshot of the broader experience of women in conflict-affected communities. It will identify regional and international mechanisms that women can utilize to raise their concerns and promote women's human rights. It will make concrete recommendations to ASEAN leaders to promote the peace and security of women and communities across the region.

These recommendations will be drawn from participatory discussions at the workshop and are likely to address issues such as:

- The need for urgent attention to crises of women's rights and security in a number of conflict-affected communities in ASEAN and action to uphold women's human rights and security
- Priorities for action from the ASEAN Commission for Women and Children and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission for Human Rights to strengthen their role in promoting women's peace and security as a key concern for the ASEAN community

- Priorities to promote space for and recognition of women's role in promoting peace and security in ASEAN member states
- Critical opportunities for women's organizations and other civil society organizations to promote the accountability of governments in ASEAN states to international commitments for women's human rights, peace and security

Recommendations:

Create opportunities for substantive participation of civil society, including 50% representation of women, in all ASEAN mechanisms, initiatives and fora. In particular, the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint is lacking a substantive gender perspective and must recognise that women are disproportionately impacted by militarisation and conflict, and already play significant roles toward ASEAN's goal of comprehensive security. No peace process will be effective or sustainable without the substantive participation of a broad cross-section of women.

ASEAN will continue to fail women unless its commitments to promote comprehensive security, rule of law and human rights in ASEAN are given priority over the principle of non-intervention. We urge ASEAN Member States to commit to strengthening the protection mandate of AICHR and ACWC, and to end impunity for violations of women's human rights.

ASEAN Member States should demonstrate their commitment to comprehensive security as stated in the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint by cutting military spending, and ensuring accountable and transparent utilisation of state budgets for community development, including support for grassroots movements for women's rights, women's leadership, and community education to counter gender discrimination.

¹Kamala Chandrakirana, "Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Asia: Towards a Context-responsive Approach from the Bottom Up", 15 November 2013.

At the 14th ASEAN Summit on 28 February – 1 March 2009, the ASEAN Leaders adopted The Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on The Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (2009-2015) which includes the ASEAN Political Security Community (APSC) Blueprint and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint that reiterate the establishment of an ASEAN commission on the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children as an important measure to ensure equitable Development for women and children. (Terms of Reference, ACWC, p. 2) This includes UN Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security, as well as the important new General Recommendation No. 30 of Commission for the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

² APWLD is the Asia-Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, a regional feminist, membership driven network comprising 180 in 25 countries in the region. IRAW-AP is the International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific, an international women's human rights organisation working for progressive interpretation and realization of the human rights of women.

WORKSHOPS :

JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS CLUSTER (HR)

Title: "Strengthening Capacity of ASEAN Civil Society to Monitor Security Sector Reform in ASEAN Countries"

Organizers: Imparsial (Indonesia); Human Rights Working Group (Indonesia); IID (The Philippines); C/O Daniel Awigra (HRWG), awigra@gmail.com; Poengky Indarti (Imparsial), poengky@imparsial.org

Abstract:

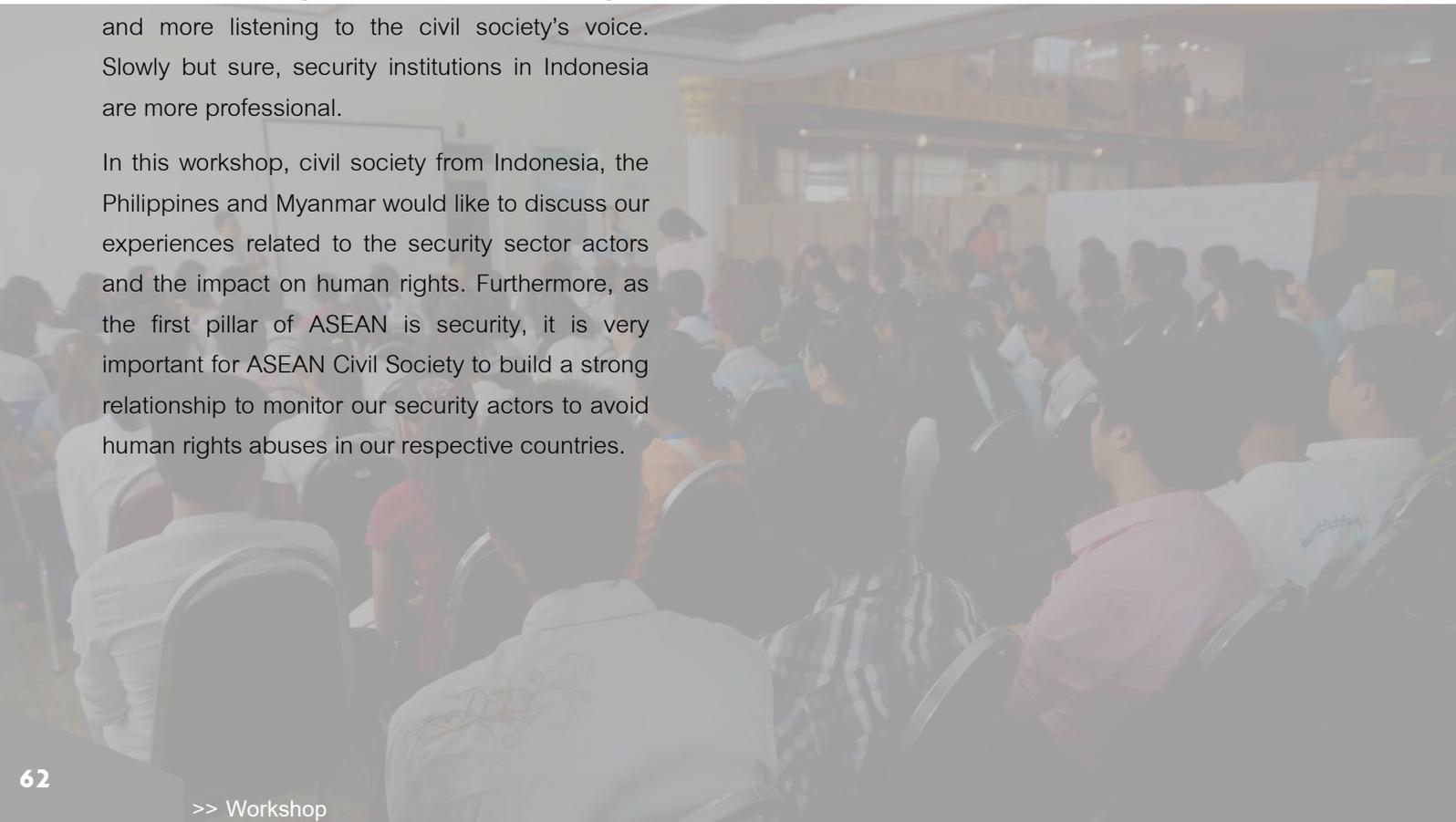
Indonesia Civil Society had started to monitor Security Actors in Indonesia after the step down of Soeharto in 1998, due to our experiences that the military, police and intelligence in Indonesia were held responsible for the past human rights abuses during Soeharto regime from 1966 to 1998.

The activities were organized simultaneously, from demanding a human rights court for the perpetrators of past human rights abuses and separation of the police from the military, monitoring security actors' misconduct, participating in the deliberation of the bills and regulations related to the security actors, as well as organizing human rights trainings for security actors. As impact of the participation of civil society to monitor security actors, people in Indonesia can see that the security institutions are reformed, including more respect on human rights and more listening to the civil society's voice. Slowly but sure, security institutions in Indonesia are more professional.

In this workshop, civil society from Indonesia, the Philippines and Myanmar would like to discuss our experiences related to the security sector actors and the impact on human rights. Furthermore, as the first pillar of ASEAN is security, it is very important for ASEAN Civil Society to build a strong relationship to monitor our security actors to avoid human rights abuses in our respective countries.

Recommendations:

- Urge security reform in all ASEAN governments to institutionalise civilian control over the military. This can be done through the setting up of a civil society dialogue platform with the ASEAN, on the political and security pillar, especially to ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).
- Civil society should have the capacity to monitor the security sector reform in ASEAN using human rights and women's rights perspectives. They should use this capacity to work with Parliament to legislate policies consistent with democratisation.
- Strengthen cooperation with the media and civil society networks, including regional and international community.





Title: “ASEAN Community Free From Violence against Women”

Organizers: Women’s Caucus on ASEAN; Foundation for Women, Thailand; AKSI/Indonesia; SILAKA/Cambodia; Gabriella/Philippines; Women’s League of Burma; C/O usaffw@gmail.com; sunee@apwld.org

Abstract:

ASEAN has adopted various declarations that directly and indirectly attempt to intervene in the rampant issue of violence against women. Some of them include 2004 Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women and recently adopted Declaration on the Elimination of violence against Women and Violence against Children. Despite ASEAN Leaders’ commitment to combat violence against women, there lacks convincing efforts to lead towards ASEAN community be free from violence against women. Monitoring and accountability mechanisms have been questioned, leading towards effectiveness of these instruments. It is now opportune that all efforts and attention should be in trying to utilize the existing mechanisms, instruments and standards to effectively eliminate the VAW. On this light, the workshop aims to assist ACWC by developing indicators. The Indicators could be the benchmark to monitor the progress made by ASEAN in implementation of the Declaration vis-a-vis in elimination of violence against women.

The workshop will have discussion on indicators obligatory state responses. The common indicators, discussed and agreed in the workshop, will be further finalized and will be advocated for commitment from ASEAN Member States to build ASEAN Community free from VAW that would be launched on 31 December 2015.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN adopt indicators developed by civil society and movements, and partner with civil society and also promote the role of civil society.
- Indicators should be extensive, ranging from national mechanisms and policies; dedicated budgets on VAW; access to ASEAN instruments, and documentations on VAW (translation, availability, distribution, etc.); curriculum development; periodic reporting, etc.
- ASEAN make regional and national level campaigns as a part of realising “ASEAN community free from violence against women”.

Title: “The Bottom of ASEAN”

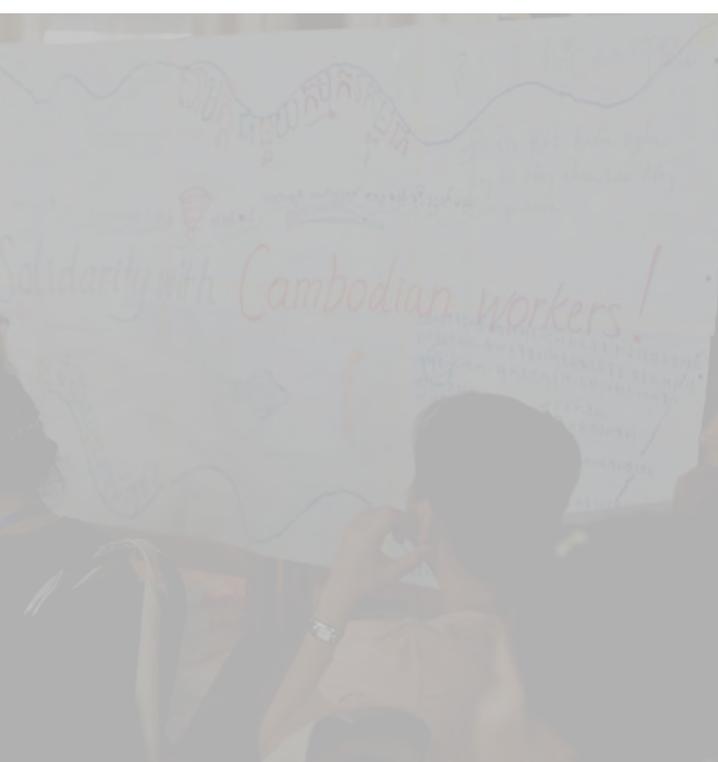
Organizers: Mekong Migration Network (MMN); Legal Support for Children and Women; Foundation for Education and Development; 88 Generation Peace and Open Society; Workers Hub for Change (WH4C), Malaysia C/O Hkun Sa Mun Htoi, MMN, mun@mekongmigration.org; Ms. Reiko Harima, MMN, reiko@mekongmigration.org; Pranom Somwong, MMN, p_somwong@yahoo.com

Abstract:

Burma/Myanmar, together with Cambodia and Laos, are all considered to have promising potential as Asian ‘frontier markets’. All are least developed countries, which have low per capita income but high growth rates, with growth predicted to accelerate over the next 5 years. Youthful population combined with low wages and unexploited resources makes these countries ever more attractive to the investors. However as each country competes for foreign direct investment, the result is that many workers are being exploited and underpaid, with extremely low minimum wages, poor working conditions and limited recourse for labour disputes. The risk is a continued downward trend in which the “bottom of ASEAN” will be the country with the least legal protection for workers and citizens, which pays the lowest wages, and has unprotected natural resources and weak governance. This workshop, organised by the Mekong Migration Network in collaboration with partner organisations from Burma/Myanmar, Cambodia and Thailand, intends to discuss challenges and threats to protecting and promoting workers’ rights as a result of changing foreign investment trends in the region following the opening of Burma/Myanmar, and develop strategies for workers across ASEAN to better protect their rights at the national and regional level.

Recommendations:

- We call upon the ASEAN Member States to immediately stop all forms of oppression against workers who exercise their right to freedom of expression and assembly, including their right to strike.
- We call upon the ASEAN Member States to ensure minimum wages are living wages and improve all working conditions for ASEAN countries. This includes abiding by the following: OHS regulations, 8-hour working day, 40 hours of work a week, paid maternity leave and regular long-term contracts.
- We call upon investors to abide by international labour standards and adhere to international standards on corporate respect for human rights (UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights) in addition to self-regulating codes of conducts and/or business/ethical principles.





Title: "Equality, Democracy and Justice in ASEAN = SOGIE inclusion in the ASIAN"

Organizers: Hla Myatt of Colours Rainbow Burma, minhtut.crb@gmail.com; Ging Cristobal of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), gcristobal@iglhrc.org; Srorn Srurn of CAM ASEAN of Cambodia, ssrom09@gmail.com; Vien Tanjung of HerLounge, vien.tanjung@gmail.com

Abstract:

The ASEAN has been both an opportunity and a hindrance in promoting and protecting the human rights of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) persons in Southeast Asia.

As evidenced in the two ASEAN human rights instruments, the AHRD and the ASEAN DEVAW/VAC, there is a deliberate exclusion and lack of respect of ASEAN member states regarding the issues of persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity and gender expression (SOGIE) in South East Asia.

Amidst this bleak scenario, LGBTIQ persons have continued the assertion for the inclusion of their human rights as we also realized that we do not live in a vacuum since the issues faced by other sectors in our society are also faced by LGBTIQ persons and thus, there is a need to educate mainstream LGBTIQ persons and mainstream civil society organizations and individuals about these issues.

Speakers from the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus (ASC) discussing the achievements LGBTIQ persons have gained despite the marginalization of ASEAN to LGBTIQ rights and to present the reality that in spite of these small victories, there is continuous and increasing discrimination and violence aimed towards LGBTIQ persons in ASEAN. The main question guiding the session is - "What is the impact of the exclusion of SOGIE to LGBT rights in your country?"

Recommendations:

- Immediately repeal laws that directly and indirectly criminalise SOGI, recognise LGBTIQ rights as human rights, and harmonise national laws, policies and practices with the United Nations Human Rights Treaties and the Yogyakarta Principles.
- Establish national level mechanisms and review existing regional human rights instruments (e.g. AICHR, ACWC) to include the promotion and protection of the equal rights of all people regardless of SOGI with the active engagement of the LGBTIQ community.
- Depathologise SOGI and promote psychosocial well-being of people of diverse SOGI in accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO) standards, and ensure equal access to health and social services.
- Integration of SOGIE in all rights based policy.



Title: "The AICHR's TOR Review: Towards an Effective Human Rights Body in ASEAN"

Session 1: Review of AICHR's TOR – Towards an Independent and Effective Human Rights Body"

Organizers: Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA); Equality Myanmar; People's Empowerment Foundations (PEF), Thailand; KontraS, Indonesia; Association of Human Rights Defenders and Promoters (HRDP), Myanmar; SAPA Task Force on ASEAN and Human Rights; C/O Atnike Nova Sigiuro, FORUM-ASIA, atnike@forum-asia.org

Session 2: The Review of Terms of Reference for AICHR – How CSOs Deal with this Opportunity?

Organizers: Indonesia's NGO Coalition for International Human Rights Advocacy (HRWG); SILAKA; Think Center; C/O Daniel Awigra, HRWG, awigra@gmail.com

Abstract:

This year will mark 5 years since ASEAN established its first human rights body, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in 2009, and the ASEAN Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) in 2010.

Article 9.6 of the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) provides that the body's TOR can be reviewed five years after its entry into force. The current TOR focuses the work of AICHR on the promotion, and less so on the protection of human rights. The review process, which will take place in 2014 under Myanmar's chairship, would be a good

opportunity to assess AICHR's work so far and identify challenges, opportunities and ways forward.

The review must be done "with a view to further enhancing the promotion and protection of human rights within ASEAN." Civil society organizations want to bring this issue to the attention of the ASEAN Summit 2014 in Myanmar through the ASEAN Civil Society Conference / ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014.

This workshop will serve as an opportunity for civil society to discuss key issues in the review of the AICHR's TOR and formulate recommendations on the issues to the ASEAN Summit.





Session 1: Recommendations:

- To include additional protection mandates in the TOR (including provisions that establish the review of the human rights record of ASEAN Member States; enable AICHR to conduct country/on-site visits; and allow AICHR to receive, investigate and address complaints on human rights issues and violations).
- To change/modify the principles of consensus rule and non-interference in AICHR that have resulted in its ineffectiveness. The TOR must allow for decision to be reached by a majority in situations where decision cannot be reached by consensus, especially to address or prevent serious human rights violations.
- To enable AICHR to establish independent experts (Special Procedures, including Special Rapporteurs) – similar to the Special Procedures mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council and other regional mechanisms. These experts shall be independent and not be bound by the consensus rule so that they can effectively implement actual human rights protection work.

Session 2: Recommendations:

- AICHR has failed to save life and address pressing human rights issues in the region such as personal security and right to life, death penalty, asylum seekers, refugees, rights of minorities, the rights of indigenous peoples, protection of human rights defenders, freedom of expression, freedom of opinion and freedom of association and freedom of religion or belief. We believe that now, more than before, AICHR's role to have precautionary measures to avoid serious and irreparable harm to human life and personal integrity and to establish an effective response to emergency situations and early warning systems are needed to uphold human rights.
- We welcome the process of reviewing the Terms of Reference (TOR) of AICHR in 2014 as one of the evolutionary approaches to make AICHR as a credible, independent and responsive human rights mechanism in the region. In this line, we strongly recommend that the "I" in the AICHR to be changed from "Inter-governmental" into "Independent. We also call for AICHR to involve civil society, victims and wider stakeholders in a series of genuine dialogues and consultations in assessing the work of AICHR, reviewing the TOR and formulating the amendment of the TOR.
- Four years in its existence, AICHR has suffered from lack of credibility due to lack of protection mandate, independency, and transparency. We are concerned that
- AICHR has less priority to implement the mandate 4.10 on "To obtain information from ASEAN Member States in the promotion and protection of human rights", and 4.11 on "To develop common approaches and positions on human rights matters of interests to ASEAN".

Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Children on the Move in ASEAN

ASEAN Civil Society Conference/
ASEAN People's Forum 2014

Organized by:



Title: “Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Children on the Move in ASEAN”

Organizers: Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia); Equality Myanmar; ProCOM Network; Anti-Child Trafficking (ACT); United Against Child Trafficking (United Act); C/O Melanie Ramos-Llana, CRC Asia, mlana@childrightscoalitionasia.org; Aung Myo Min, Equality Myanmar, myominburma@gmail.com; Dararai Ruksasiripong; Pro COM Thailand, dararai.ruksa@gmail.com

Abstract:

Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia), Equality Myanmar, Partner for the Rights of Children on the Move (ProCOM Thailand), Anti-Child Trafficking (ACT), and United Against Child Trafficking (United ACT) sponsor a thematic workshop on child rights at the ACSC/AP in Myanmar on March 22, 2014 . The workshop aims to educate participants on current child rights issues, particularly the situation of children on the move or COM (i.e., trafficked children, stateless children, internally displaced children, children of migrant workers, etc.) and the new Optional Protocol to the UNCRC on a Communications Procedure (OP3 CRC), and to discuss priority policy and program actions which ASEAN Member States should focus on to alleviate the plight of COM and improve the promotion and protection of children’s rights in the region.

Recommendations:

- Promote and protect the rights of “Children on the Move”, (such as children from indigenous peoples’ communities, refugee children, children of migrant parents, street children, stateless children, trafficked children), by ensuring non-

discrimination, gathering information to determine their situation, promoting their access to basic services and legal protection, provision of alternative care, and protection from all forms of abuses.

- For ASEAN Member States to sign and ratify important international conventions such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure (OP3 CRC), the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC) and The Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC) and ensure their effective implementation.
- For ASEAN Human Rights Institutions (e.g., AICHR, ACWC, ACMW) coordinate their efforts and work together for the promotion and protection of the rights of children in ASEAN.
- Urge Member States to increase public spending to realise children’s rights by ensuring that children are adequately provided with education, health, nutrition and protection from all forms of violence.

Title: “Sex Work & ASEAN”

Organizers: Empower Foundation Thailand; AMA Myanmar; SWiM Myanmar; C/O Chantawipa Apisuk, Empower Foundation Thailand, badgirls@empowerfoundation.org

Abstract:

Our governments say there are around 1.2 million sex workers in ASEAN. We work to provide a good life for our families. We provide income for our communities and our countries. We are leaders addressing social issues like HIV, access to justice and human rights.

At our workshop we will share how we understand ASEAN. Part of this sharing will be an interactive game where we all explore what it is to live and work as sex workers in ASEAN.

The main themes that arise will be collated into sex worker’s recommendations for the ACSC/APF to be incorporated into the Joint CSOs statement of ACSC/APF 2014.

Recommendations:

- Sex workers as equal rights bearers of ASEAN must be recognised for their economic contribution and share in the opportunities and benefits tourism brings to ASEAN. This includes but is not limited to equal protection under national labour law as applies to other workers

Title: “Without ASEAN Women, No Genuine ASEAN Community 2015”

Organizers AKSI, titi.soentoro@gmail.com; Women’s Caucus on ASEAN, sunee@apwld.org; Silaka, thidak@silaka.org; Gabriella, jmesalvador@gmail.com

Abstract:

ASEAN Community 2015 is already in the very near future. However, ASEAN vision and its ASEAN Communities are challenged by the realities of limitation of information to only related government entities and businesses, and lack of understanding of people in ASEAN particularly the women about those important developments for their lives. Moreover, many women and men in ASEAN are still facing realities of ignorance, non-fulfillment and violations of their rights particularly due to land grabbing, forced displacement, and environmental pollutions, and continuing commodification of migrant workers, and hence, their rights to work and protection from violence are neglected.

It is urgent that the ASEAN leaders start to pay attention to voices of ASEAN people, particularly women whose voices are usually unheard. This



workshop collates voices of ASEAN women about their hopes for ASEAN Community 2015 and concerns in regard to the three pillars of the ASEAN Community. It is a forum to update on the on-going implementations of ASEAN Community blueprints; provide assessment of those three pillars and its respective blueprints from the lens of women’s human rights. This collation would be submitted to the ASEAN leaders in its Summit in 2015 in Burma.



Recommendations:

- Recognise the diverse of ASEAN people and protect their rights including the ones who are vulnerable and marginalised, among others, people in informal sector, people with disability, domestic workers.
- Develop measures into that direction, among others, creation of labour laws that are not weaker than the ILO labour standards; peace with truth and reconciliation for post-conflict countries; develop ASEAN Periodic Review process like the one of UN Universal Periodic Review Reporting Process, not country based on issue based; ensure rights to reproduction; revise poverty line and minimum and living wage.
- People in ASEAN should be united to foster a development of ASEAN based on their needs and interests.

Title: “Ecological Child Rights (ECR) in Southeast Asia”

Organizers: The Secretariate of Our River, Our Life Campaign (OROL Secretariat); The Regional Working Group on Bio-diversity in Southeast Asia; Santi Sena (Cambodia); Indonesian Institute for Forest and Environment (RMI); Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN); Karen River Watch; Association for Community Development (Laos); Gitib Incorporated (Philippines); Forestry Association (Vietnam) C/O Naruedee Janthasing, OROL Regional Programme Coordinator, naruedee_j@hotmail.com

Abstract:

Children/youth are one of the most vulnerable groups of people affected by massive biodiversity destruction and ecological degradation. All children need to grow up in a high quality of surrounding environment where they are effectively supported, loved and nurtured. However, the immediate impact of the misuse of natural resources and ecology affects the lives of children in Southeast Asia adversely. For the high quality environment and livelihood of children, the children’s four basic rights of survival, protection, development and participation need to be promoted and protected and the ecological rights of children need to be embedded within these four basic rights. The rights of children to access to the unspoiled natural resources that enable survival, including land, shelter, food, clean drinking water

and clean air cannot be denied or violated and yet the ecological rights of children in the region, who are the first victims of ecological degradation, have not received much attention. Ecological child right should seriously be taken into account among ASEAN people and ASEAN countries.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN’s leaders should recognise the environment as a new pillar (Fourth pillar on environment) in addition to the three major pillars of ASEAN cooperation.
- The state of ASEAN countries should enforce all laws against the abuse of ecological child rights in the country.
- ASEAN and Member States should promote the children’s right to information and participation in decision-making, and freedom of opinion and expression on the issues of environment.

Title: “Envisioning an SRHR-Embracing ASEAN Community for Young People’s Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Information & Services for Adolescents and Youth”

Organizers: Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW)



Abstract:

Across South East Asia, young people face substantial barriers in accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services. ASEAN has been declaring its commitment to human rights through regional mechanisms and declarations and despite ASEAN Member States being signatories to international agreements that touch upon SRHR issues, the reality is that the region is falling short. Moreover, many countries still consider SRHR a highly controversial and sensitive moral issue. A key factor inhibiting young people’s access to SRHR services in Southeast Asia is the limited number of initiatives and programmes, particularly ones led by young people that provide access to CSE and youth-friendly services (YSF). This workshop will aim to address the glaring gaps in the realization of young people’s SRHR in South East Asia, and call for stronger commitments to improve the status of implementation of health information and services for young people, specifically through the provision of CSE and YSF.

Recommendations:

We call upon the ASEAN Member States to demonstrate stronger commitments to improving the status of all young people’s sexual and reproductive health through the provision of Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Youth Friendly Services. Young people in the ASEAN are diverse and thus information and services for their sexual and reproductive health and rights should accommodate the needs for all young people regardless of their age, gender, sexuality, geographical location, citizenship status, sexual orientation and gender identity, employment and economic status, religious and cultural beliefs, and other societal norms, physical and mental health status, political views, etc.



Title: “Labor Rights and Migrant Workers”

Organizers: Sinapan Samydorai, Task Force on ASEAN and Migrant Workers, samysd@yahoo.com; Khin Myo Thant, ETIP World Vision Myanmar, khin_myo_thant@wvi.org

Abstract:

In 2007, ASEAN made a leap to address the issues of migrant workers by adopting the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. A new deal is needed for all workers including migrant workers in ASEAN, in which the rights of workers are enforced, laws and policies are harmonized with international Core Labour Standards, and social protection assured for all workers and their families. ASEAN aims to evolve into an integrated economic community by 2015, but the challenge is to draft and agree to a legally binding ASEAN Framework Instrument on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers.

It is important that ASEAN welcomes and ensure the participation and representation of its people at all levels, processes and structures of ASEAN in order to live it up to its commitment to make a ‘people-centred ASEAN’ as stated in the ASEAN Charter. Civil society in Southeast Asia actively engages ASEAN Member States to protect and promote the rights of all migrant workers.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN Member States should recognise the right to organise trade unions and association under their national labour laws for all workers including migrant workers (particularly domestic workers must be recognised).
- The origin (sending) countries should deliver relevant comprehensive information to potential migrant workers on the working and living conditions, laws and procedures, rights and responsibilities of migrant workers. The government should also take steps to effectively promote safe migration including information on repatriation processes.
- ASEAN Member States should agree on cross border legal cooperation to allow migrant workers and their families to file cases for violation of rights in the country that the violation took place. The migrant workers should be given free legal aid and allowed to work pending disposal of the case or allowed to return to his/her country of origin and return as needed to participate in the legal proceedings.

Title: “Forced Migration in South East Asia”

Organizers: Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network

Abstract:

The South East Asian region has been the site of some of the most protracted refugee situations in the world. It is also the region that is host to almost quarter of all the refugees in the world. Additionally, the region is a key transit route for refugees seeking asylum in different parts of the world.

The majority of the refugees and asylum seekers in the region originate from within the ASEAN, with those from Myanmar (Burma) making the largest proportion. Only two member states of ASEAN are signatories to the 1951 convention on the status of refugees, these states are the Philippines and

Cambodia. The majority of refugees and asylum seekers in the region can be in countries that are non-signatories to the 1951 convention.

Refugees and asylum seekers in most countries in the region are treated as illegal aliens, facing arrest, detention and deportation. The lack of legal frameworks that protect those who are fleeing persecution is of critical importance. The rampant use of immigration detention, confining refugees to closed camps and deportations at once violates basic human rights and the principle of non-refoulement. In addition refugees lack access to basic services and often live in a legal limbo awaiting their recognition as a refugee by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Thousands of refugees and asylum seekers languish in refugee camps, with little or no hope. Hundreds more are arriving braving the seas, or walking through forests, escaping from persecution, hoping that they will be safe and rebuild their lives. Arrivals of the boat people in Thailand and Malaysia have also increased drastically over the last year. Discussions on the repatriation of Burmese refugees from the Thai side of the border have also begun and require a consolidated response from civil society.

It has been underscored by international bodies and civil society that durable solutions to refugee crisis in this region necessitates the need for the development of regional frameworks and solutions that are binding on member states.

Recognition of the status of stateless persons is even more limited than that of refugees. In the ASEAN region only the Philippines is party to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons or the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. This is in spite of the fact that more than three-quarters of the world's stateless persons currently reside in the Asia-Pacific region, according to current UNHCR statistics.

Causes of statelessness in the region include gaps or conflicts in nationality laws, arbitrary deprivation of nationality, discrimination against minority groups in legislation and a lack of effective birth registration procedures. Some ASEAN states, are currently taking practical steps towards the resolution of status for stateless persons in their territories. Unfortunately, however, addressing statelessness has not been a priority in some of the ASEAN states hosting the largest populations of stateless persons, with the result that these populations are often living in seriously protracted situations.

Stateless persons are generally excluded from political processes, cannot travel freely and lack access to publicly funded services such as education, health care and welfare support. Stateless persons are also vulnerable to exploitation and abuse due to their lack of status.



Recommendations:

- ASEAN should address the root causes of forced migration at countries of origin, which includes gross human violations and freedom of speech, association and expression.
- Repatriation of refugees should be voluntary, with dignity and done with the active participation and reflect the views of refugee communities.
- ASEAN should implement ASEAN Human Rights Declaration regarding the right to seek asylum and the right to nationality by enacting domestic laws.
- ASEAN Member States should develop mechanisms to protect refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, which are consistent with international law. Ensure, that no one is returned to a situation where they may face persecution.
- ASEAN should take immediate steps to expeditiously and completely end the detention of children and their families on the basis of their immigration status.
- ASEAN should explore and implement child-sensitive alternatives to detention for children and their families.



Title: “Freedom of Religion on Belief in ASEAN: The Role of Regional Human Rights Mechanisms and Civil Society”

Organization: Human Rights Working Group (Indonesia); Smile Foundation (Myanmar); PROHAM, Society for the Promotion of Human Rights in Malaysia. (Malaysia); Muhammad Hafiz, HRWG (Indonesia), hafizmuhammad85@gmail.com, hafiz@hrwg.org; Daniel Awigra, HRWG, awigra@gmail.com; Myo Win, Smile Foundation (Myanmar), starmywin@gmail.com

Abstract:

Southeast Asia features a multicultural community that is diverse both in terms of ethnicity and of religion or belief. It is noted that religions and beliefs have been a significant aspect of Southeast Asian society's life. Most ASEAN Member States have committed to guarantee freedom of religion or Belief (FoRB), normatively, in their constitutions and domestic legal frameworks. In the ASEAN context, member states have also stressed their commitment in guaranteeing FoRB through the ASEAN Declaration on Human Rights.

However, the picture of religious-based discrimination, intolerance, persecution and even violence has shed a doubtful light on Southeast Asian states' commitment to this particular issue. Restrictions have been imposed and applied which are not in accordance with international law and standards regarding FoRB. Several challenges have been identified in upholding the FoRB and protecting the human rights of religious minorities, including secular people, as well as vulnerable groups to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Unjustified restrictions to FoRB have only encouraged religious-based hatred and violence. Religious majorities need to be more sensitive to the minorities, create an atmosphere of tolerance and eliminate discrimination within society. Therefore we are kindly inviting you to attend our workshop “Promoting Freedom of Religion or Belief in ASEAN”.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN should give strong attention on protection of freedom of religion or belief in the region as stated on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration Article 22, including also to ensure that all of ASEAN's policies comply with the FoRB and the implementation of these rights at the national level

and take actions toward all form of discriminations, intolerances and violence based on religion or belief.

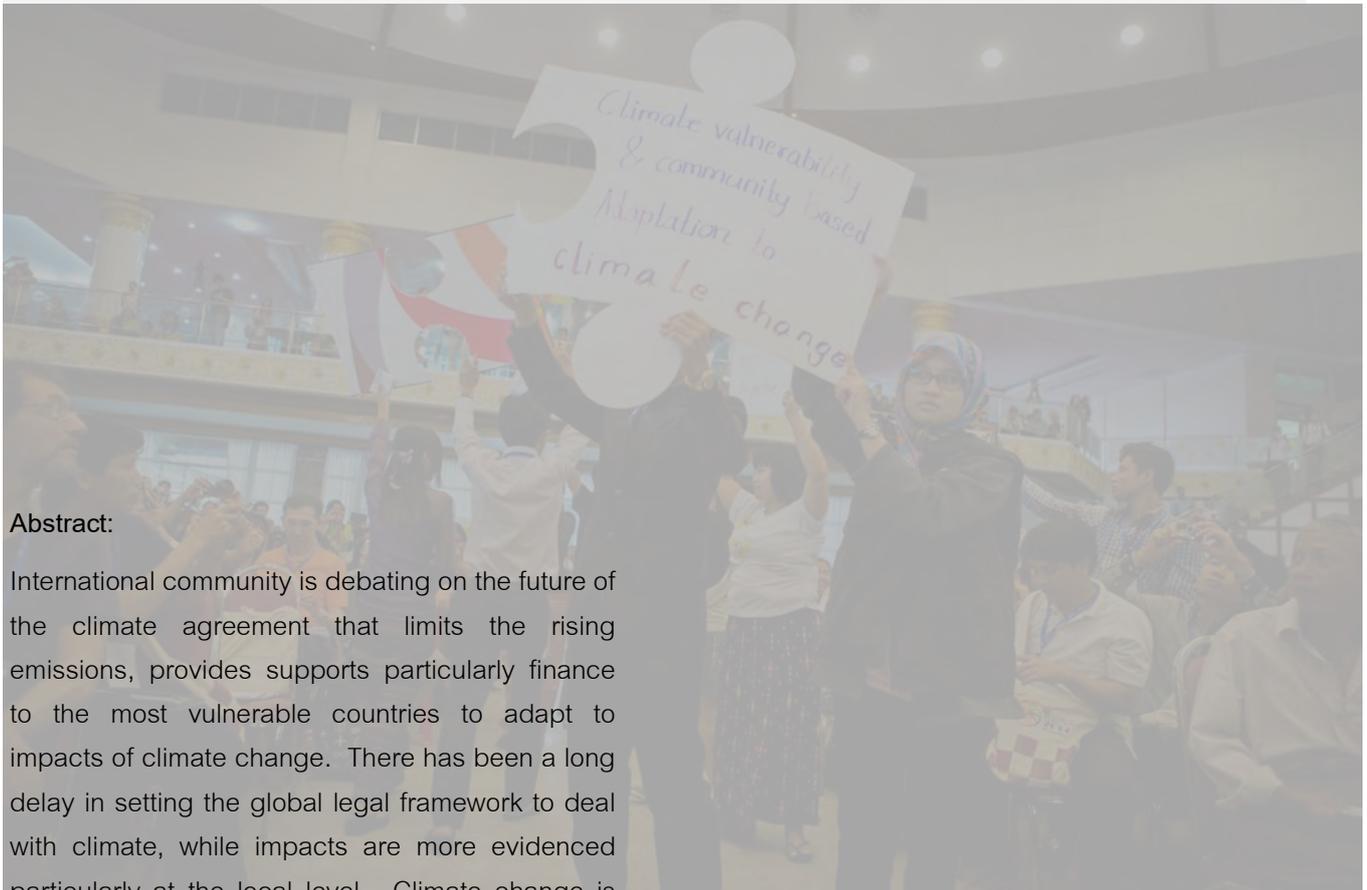
- ASEAN governments and societies, including NGOs, CSOs, media community, cleric/religious leaders, are encouraged to mainstream freedom of religion or belief to build a common perception of the importance of guaranteeing freedom of religion in ASEAN to create a more peaceful and just society and a more stable region.
- ASEAN Member States should recognise all of religious or belief groups in each country respectively, especially the minority groups, and guarantee the freedom every person to adopts, convert, and manifests of his/her religion or belief.
- ASEAN should encourage the Member States and cooperate with them to resolve all of the of human rights abuses which have impacted on enjoyment of freedom of religion or belief in each country, such as indigenous people, traditional groups, ethnic or racial minorities.
- Government whose laws restrict the rights to FoRB by requiring beliefs to choose among a list of government-organised and/or government-supervised religion, and/or by prohibiting religious belief or expression that the government regards as contrary to the public interest, should immediately repeal such law and release all of religious beliefs who are detained pursuant to them.
- Strengthening AICHR's role on protection of freedom of religion or belief in ASEAN and utilise its mandates/function to ensure the enjoyment of FoRB in ASEAN.
- AICHR is encouraged to create a focal point on FoRB to monitor and evaluate progress on the advancement of FoRB in all Member States relating to the implementation of ASEAN Human Rights Declaration Article 22.

DEVELOPMENT CLUSTER (DEV)

Title: “Climate Vulnerability and Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change: Cases from ASEAN Countries”

Organization: Win Myo Thu, EcoDev (Myanma), winmyothu@gmail.com;

Vannara Tek , NGO Forum on Cambodia and Cambodia Climate Change Network (Cambodia), vannara@ngoforum.org.kh and Nop Polin (nopo@dca.dk); Sakhon Songma, Climate Watch Thailand (Thailand), local_ngo@hotmail.com; Nguy Thi Khanh, GreenID (Vietnam), khanh@greenidvietnam.org.vn



Abstract:

International community is debating on the future of the climate agreement that limits the rising emissions, provides supports particularly finance to the most vulnerable countries to adapt to impacts of climate change. There has been a long delay in setting the global legal framework to deal with climate, while impacts are more evidenced particularly at the local level. Climate change is not only a political but a justice issue where developed countries have to be much more responsible for it. Local communities can well observe the impacts being felt severely as their livelihoods depend on the climate patterns. They have implemented a number of reactive and short term measures to adjust themselves to the changing climate. However, a long term adaptation strategy is significantly needed to maintain their sustainable livelihoods, where communities are involved in the planning and decision making process to ensure that measures are implemented in response to the needs and that mal-decisions and mal-adaptation are prevented. It will facilitate and strengthen the existing local practices and adaptive capacities.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN to establish a strategy and a strong position on climate change, both mitigation and adaptation, based on common but differentiated responsibilities, climate justice, gender balanced and meaningful and inclusive people's participation.
- ASEAN to establish a Climate Change Fund with more focus on adaptation.
- ASEAN to ensure the dialogues between governments and CSOs and communities on climate change issues.

Title: “Hydropower Dams in the Major Rivers of ASEAN: Experiences from Mekong to Salween”

Organizers: Premrudee Daoroung, Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliance (TERRA), premrudee@terraper.org; U Aung Myint, Renewable Energy Association of Myanmar (REAM) (Myanmar), am.ream@gmail.com; Tek Vannara, NGO Forum on Cambodia, vannara@ngoforum.org.kh; Lam Thi Thu Suu, Vietnam Rivers Network (VRN) (Vietnam), csrd@vnn.vn; Focus on the Global South; Mekong Energy and Ecology Network, Fishery Action Coalition Team (Cambodia); Green ID (Vietnam); Pan Nature (Vietnam)



Abstract:

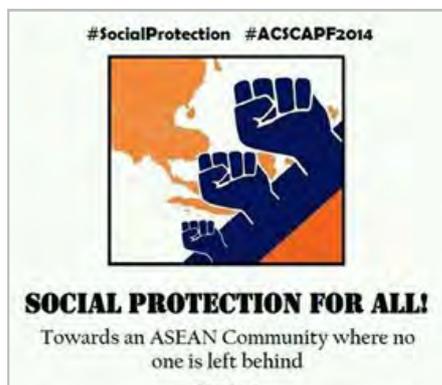
Mekong River is the world’s second-most diverse and the largest freshwater fishing area, but it is being threatened by large-scale hydropower projects both on the mainstream and tributaries. Apart from the proposed 13 large scale hydropower dams on the mainstream, in Lao PDR, almost every tributary of the Mekong River is either already dammed or is slated for a hydropower project. In Cambodia, the government is now pushing a proposal for the Lower Sesan 2 Dam on the Sesan River despite numerous unsolved issues and suffering of downstream Cambodian communities caused by existing dam in the upper part of the river in Vietnam.

The only major river in the region that remains free-flowing is the Salween (Thanlyin) River in Myanmar, which is now targeted by many trans-boundary hydropower investors, Asia Development Bank and Government of Thailand and China. Urgent action is needed to keep the Salween free of dams.

This workshop is proposed to be the venue to share experiences among different ASEAN countries on hydropower impacts, especially on the Mekong and Salween River. This workshop is also aimed to strengthen the campaign on the “ASEAN Forth Pillar on Environment” among CSOs and local groups in the region.

Recommendations:

- Establish an ASEAN Environmental Pillar to ensure the enforcement of environmental laws and regulations; create mechanisms for environmental and human rights issues to stop destructive hydropower development projects and oversee transboundary issues including international rivers like the Mekong and Salween Rivers and their tributaries such as the 3S Rivers; put into place decision-making frameworks that are based on equity, efficiency, participatory decision making, sustainability, accountability; ensure effective consultation and participatory decision-making processes; and support the promotion of renewable energy alternatives that are truly sustainable and the use of more public money for a diverse investment in renewable energy options, rather than prioritising large-scale development projects like hydropower dams.
- Call for the immediate stop to all the large-scale hydropower dams on the Mekong and Salween Rivers and other international rivers and their tributaries.
- Promote transboundary mechanisms and dialogue on energy projects, including the mechanism for all countries relying on Salween River and the required use of Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) and transboundary EIAs (TEIAs) that consider impacts to the entire river basin prior to the start of projects, and enforce the ASEAN Agreement of 1995 covering transboundary effects.



Abstract:

For civil society representing different vulnerable groups and workers' movement, to update on the situation of social protection, share ideas, experiences, good practices and discuss a way forward for advancing social protection in ASEAN countries, including involvement of the civil society sector.

The output will be a statement on social protection for all in ASEAN countries of the civil society participating in the ACSC/APF to be incorporated into the Joint CSOs statement of the ACSC/APF 2014.

Title: "Social Protection for All"

Organizers: HelpAge International; Asia Monitor Resource Center (AMRC); Homenet Southeast Asia (HNSEA); C/O Suntaree H. Saeng-ging, Homenet Thailand, ss.sunny@hotmail.com and sunnewomen@gmail.com

Recommendations:

- The ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection should be implemented by the member countries with the meaningful participation of civil society in the design, implementation and monitoring.
- Social protection should simultaneously address issues of economic, social, environmental and climate justice by setting up national and ASEAN mechanisms to build sustainable and resilient communities as well as to strengthen solidarity across ASEAN.
- ASEAN countries should prioritise the allocation of adequate financial resources, up to a certain percentage of GDP, for social protection and look at it as investment in people and not a burden.

Title: "Land Grabbing In ASEAN: Situation and Solutions of CSOs and Local Networks"

Organizers: Premrudee Daoroung , Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliance (TERRA), premrudee@terraper.org; Shalmali Guttal, Focus on the Global South, Equitable (Cambodia), s.guttal@focusweb.org; Touch Setha, NGO Forum on Cambodia, setha@ngoforum.org.kh; Wai Wai Lwin, Badei Dha Moe CSO, Myanmar, waiwailwin76@gmail.com; U Shwe Thein, The Land Core Group (Myanmar), usthein@gmail.com; Contract Farmers Network, Thailand Land and housing rights network (LAHRIN) (Cambodia)

Abstract:

Large-scale plantations and agribusiness are expanding across border in ASEAN. Their encroachment is jeopardizing local communities and natural resources.

Since 2007, Cambodian people have been protesting Thai sugar companies by submitting their complaints to the Thailand Human Rights Commission. "Blood Sugar Campaign" has escalated and become the subject of debate at the United Nations and particularly the European Union where Cambodian sugar is exported to.

In Myanmar, land grabbing seems to become more visible to the eye of public. The farmer

networks in Myanmar also recognize that it is important to protect themselves against land grabbing, which are increasing as the country opens up economically.

This workshop aims to discuss the importance of forest and land resources to local communities and national development. It also aims to clarify the situation of land grabbing and the role of different actors in the Mekong and other ASEAN countries. The workshop will provide a space to gather some of the old and new experiences of land grabbing in the ASEAN region and bring forward meaningful recommendations and directions for CSOs and local peoples to work further together.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN Member States must formulate laws and legal mechanisms that protect and support rights of small-scale agricultural producers, fisherfolk, local communities, etc.; and which will provide them with justiceable, effective remedy against impunity, manipulation of justice system and power abuses. Laws too that will limit land possession size (land ceiling): come up with local-national-regional processes for land governance. There should also be legal and institutional mechanisms that will hold investors (state and private) liable and accountable, punishable; there should be no impunity, no escape clause etc.; but affected communities have to be satisfied with soft law-voluntary mechanisms; even when laws protect them on paper, these laws are ignored/violated. In some countries, laws being changed to make land transfers legal and formalise customary land tenure, access to forest and fisheries to bring them into markets.
- AICHR should take immediate action on Human Rights violations on cross boundary investments. It should recognise and uphold the power of small scale producers and local communities to negotiate with contractors, investors, states; and right to access timely information; the right to manage lands, forests, eco-systems, to make decisions about land-forest-eco-system governance, the right to say "no".
- ASEAN Member States and ASEAN as body should regulate and discipline markets and market actors; including large companies, finance companies and also International Financial Institutions (IFIs).





Title: “Vision for Extractive Industries Governance for ASEAN”

Organizers: Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR) (Indonesia); PanNature (Vietnam); Action Economic Reform/Bantay Kita (Philippines); Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency (Cambodia); Luta Hamutuk (Timor Leste), MC4T (Myanmar); C/O Morentalisa Hutapea, Institute for Essential Services Reform, morentalisa@iesr.or.id; Natacha Kim, Cambodians for Resource Revenue Transparency (CRRT), crrtdirector@crrt-cambodia.org

Abstract:

Extractive industries are and will become an important engine for the economy of several Southeast Asian countries, as they become significant sources of national and sub-national revenue, as well as attract domestic and foreign investment, and supply raw materials for the region's industry. For ASEAN, that is aiming to become an economic community in 2015, extractive industries – particularly minerals, oil, gas and coal – are and will be key, strategic resources to support the objective of the ASEAN Economic Community: being a production base and competitive region.

However, despite its real and vast potential, we have observed that mineral and energy sources extraction are poorly governed and managed by governments. In the upstream, decision to extract the resources is often made without proper planning, lack of regulatory and fiscal framework, and very often concession for extraction is given to business groups that are close to the power establishments. During the extraction process, poor business practices have often resulted in social injustice illustrated by community's displacement, violation of indigenous and rural poor's rights, disintegration of traditional livelihood opportunities and, at times, armed conflict situations. Extractive activities also create environmental pollution and degradation in areas deemed to be environmentally critical biodiversity areas.

Recognizing the similarity of challenges throughout Southeast Asia, various civil society groups from the region believe that, in the pursuit to become the ASEAN Community in 2015, ASEAN member

countries, in particular resource-rich and resource-dependent economies, need to embrace and implement principles of transparency, accountability, fairness and equity as well as socially and environmentally responsible investment in the extractive industries' business practices and governance. ASEAN shall be able to undertake the “greening” of its supply chain, in particular the supply of raw materials and energy sources.

Recommendations:

We call on ASEAN to adopt an ASEAN Extractive Industries Governance Framework which should ensure that:

- The exploitation of extractive resources endowment in ASEAN Member States generate a just and equitable development for all ASEAN people, especially affected communities,
- Extractive industries respect human rights, nature and promote social and economic justice, and investment in human development,
- Mechanisms to guarantee fair contract, transparent and accountable revenues collection and spending for people exist, such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and other social accountability standards,
- Government and companies are accountable in the making of investment and trading of energy and mineral commodities.
- We also call for meaningful participation and engagement of civil society in the ASEAN cooperation related to energy and mining to support the vision of ASEAN in becoming a people-centered ASEAN.

Title: “Communities front and center: Exploring peaceful and effective remedies for human rights abuses by business”

Organizers: Debbie Stothard, Altsean-Burma, debbie.stot@gmail.com; Bobbie Sta. Maria, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (researcher based in Myanmar), stamaria@business-humanrights.org; Sor Rattanamanee Polkla, Community Resource Center



Abstract:

There has been considerable effort among civil society groups in Southeast Asia to organize and do active work around various forms of business and human rights work. But abuses and impunity continue, and communities are grappling for solutions.

The workshop seeks to address the need for increased attention to business and human rights in a manner that is community-focused and solutions-oriented. It aims to focus on ways by which communities harmed by corporate activity could directly seek accountability from both companies and governments. It also aims to promote among affected communities greater trust in peaceful solutions, while advancing reasonable expectations on their effectiveness and allowing a candid and constructive discussion on challenges that other communities have faced in this regard.

The discussion will build on experiences of communities in accessing justice through judicial and non-judicial means, as well as in using different campaign tools to complement these actions. These remedies include court cases, complaints before commissions and government agencies, and the use of international mechanisms. Complementary tools on the other hand include research, documentation, and reporting.

It is hoped that participants will be acquainted with a range of useful options and contacts, as well as ideas on how to make positive progress through them.

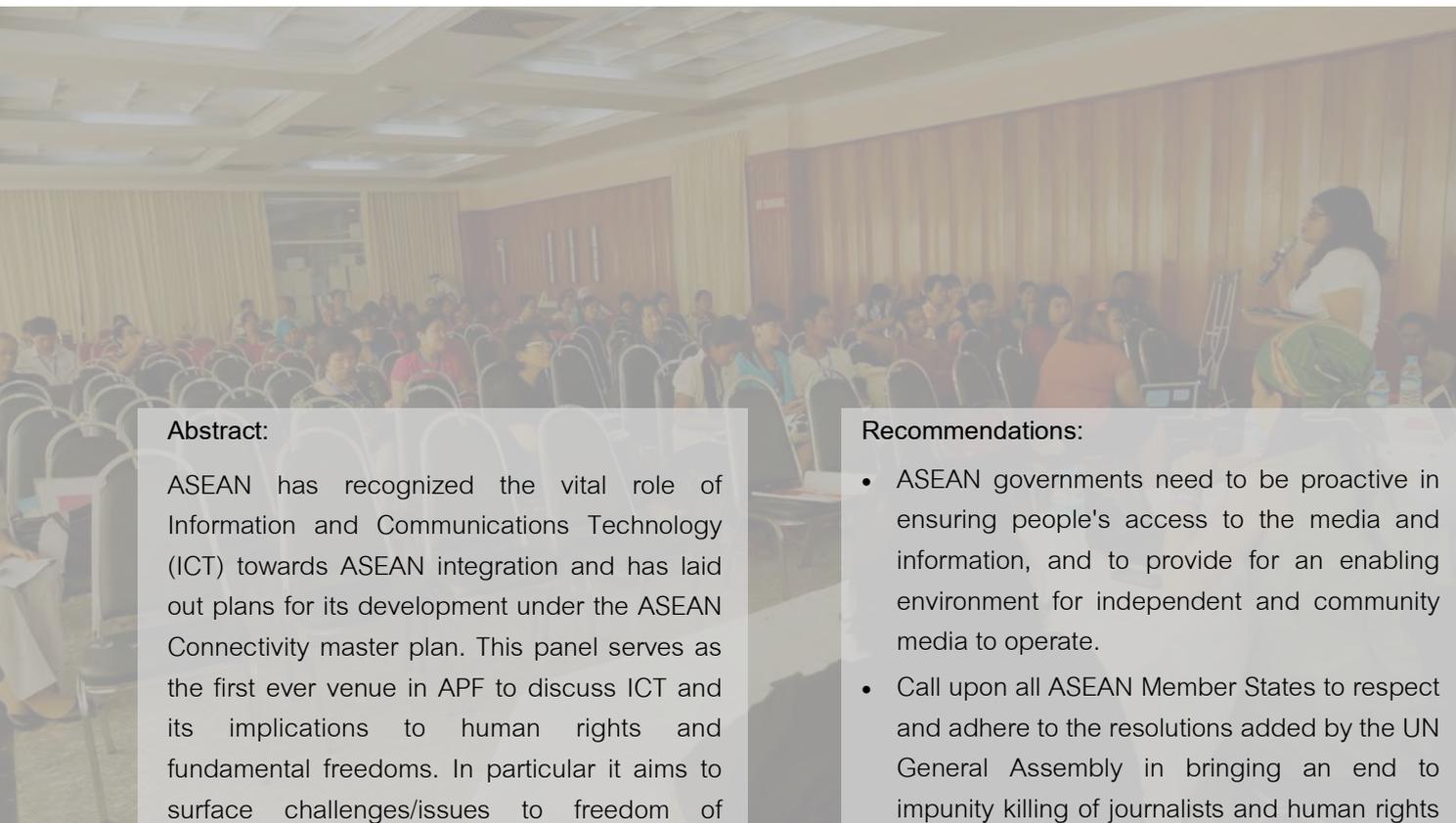
Recommendations:

- ASEAN governments should enact policies and laws to ensure that communities are informed and consulted on projects that affect them, and that they are able to participate in decision-making processes.
- All laws and policies that repress community action and participation in development projects should be abolished; business and government should stop resorting to harassment tactics such as defamation lawsuits and arbitrary arrests against communities that are peacefully trying to protect their rights.
- ASEAN governments and businesses should establish effective remedial mechanisms, whether judicial or non-judicial, to make sure that communities have access formal systems when they face human rights abuse. Efforts must be exerted to ensure that these mechanisms are implemented well. On a regional level, the AICHR should be strengthened to be able to concretely address human rights cases brought before it.
- ASEAN governments should encourage and not impede citizens' movements for human rights and environmental protection. Civil society, on the other hand, should continue their active work of seeking accountability, while continuing to explore – within their countries and regionally – alternative justice and accountability systems. An example is the current proposal in Myanmar to form citizens' juries for environmental cases to increase pressure on companies to operate responsibly.

DEMOCRATIZATION CLUSTER (DEM)

Title: “Locating Freedom of Expression, Privacy and Women’s Rights in Evolving Digital Information Societies”

Organizers Association for Progressive Communications chat@apcwomen.org; Foundation for Media Alternatives nicadumlao@yahoo.com; Myanmar ICT Development Organization phyuphyuthi@gmail.com; Southeast Asian Press Alliance gayathry@seapa.org; Women’s Legal and Human Rights Bureau womenslegalbureau@yahoo.com



Abstract:

ASEAN has recognized the vital role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) towards ASEAN integration and has laid out plans for its development under the ASEAN Connectivity master plan. This panel serves as the first ever venue in APF to discuss ICT and its implications to human rights and fundamental freedoms. In particular it aims to surface challenges/issues to freedom of expression, privacy and gender in the evolving ICT landscape. New technologies, such as the Internet, and satellite and, digital broadcasting have touched many aspects of people’s lives and of societies. ICT has affected rights particularly freedom of expression (including citizens’ right to know/information) privacy and women’s rights. New opportunities are emerging for greater freedom to exercise these rights. Internet for instance has provided many more ways in which individuals may exercise freedom of expression for self publication and interaction (blogs, social media, Twitter, etc.). Internet for instance has become a critical space for women’s expression and participation in public life. It is for this that policies in relation to ICT are kept within the net of democratic control and human rights standard.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN governments need to be proactive in ensuring people’s access to the media and information, and to provide for an enabling environment for independent and community media to operate.
- Call upon all ASEAN Member States to respect and adhere to the resolutions added by the UN General Assembly in bringing an end to impunity killing of journalists and human rights defenders.
- Call upon ASEAN Member States to ensure women’s access to justice including guarantee of protections to vulnerable groups in cyber space.
- Call upon ASEAN to involve individuals, communities and CSOs in the drafting and coming up with guidelines for implementation of the ASEAN Connectivity Plan.

Title: “The ASEAN Experience: Violence Against Women and Legal Reform”

Organizers: C/O Dr Kaythi Myint Thein, Gender Equality Network, gen.kaythi@gmail.com; May Sabe Phyu, Gender Equality Network, gen.phyuphyu@gmail.com



Abstract:

This workshop will consider the steps that ASEAN countries have taken to address the serious issue of violence against women, with a specific focus on legal reform and the role that civil society can play.

ASEAN countries have acknowledged that violence against women occurs at all stages of women's lives - in homes, schools, the workplace, and in public or private spaces as a result of gender bias, discriminatory and harmful traditional practices.

Civil society has an important role to play in the elimination, prevention and response to violence against women. If ASEAN is to become genuinely people-centered, it is imperative that civil society understands and has the capacity and resources to engage and to meaningfully respond to the issue of violence against women. It is also critical that women's voices from ASEAN countries are heard

and are influential on this issue.

Speakers from Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand will share their experiences of civil society engagement in advocacy, innovative practices, and legal reforms. The workshop will also make recommendations to ASEAN leaders, including the need to engage a diverse range of civil society actors in preventing violence and in supporting women and girls who experience violence.

Recommendations:

- Adopt, amend, and enforce national laws to address and punish all forms of violence against women and girls, in line with international human rights standards.
- Adopt, implement and resource multi-sectoral national plans of action that emphasise prevention.
- Carry out research, data collection and analysis on the nature and prevalence of various forms of violence against women and girls.
- national and/or local campaigns and engage a diverse range of civil society actors in preventing violence and in supporting women and girls who experience violence.
- Systematically address and protect women and girls from rape and sexual violence in conflict situations.

Title: “Situation of Indigenous Peoples in the ASEAN”

Organizers: Richard Gadit, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact, richard@aippnet.org; Salai Uk Za Ling, Chin Human Rights Organization; zauk@chro.ca, Naw Ei Ei Min, ei.eiei.min@gmail.com

Abstract:

Indigenous peoples in Southeast Asia comprise a large part of the population of the region, numbering an estimated 100 million. Despite this, ASEAN member countries have been remiss in their duties and obligations to promote and protect the rights of its indigenous peoples. Instead, indigenous peoples are made to bear the burden of national development goals by sacrificing their lands, territories and resources. ASEAN's current ambitious investment plan shows a severe imbalance between the duties of states to respect

and protect human rights and national development goals that do not ensure equity and justice. The differential impacts of the resource-extractive model of ASEAN member states' development violate the collective rights of indigenous peoples to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems in their own territories. This is clearly resulting in massive displacements, wide-scale destruction of sustainable livelihoods, food security, cultural

heritage, social cohesion and the ethnic identities of indigenous peoples. On the other hand, indigenous peoples continue to be highly marginalized and suffer from a lack of basic social services, compounded by the denial of citizenship in certain countries.



Recommendations:

- For ASEAN Member States to review their own national legal framework with a view of providing legal recognition to indigenous peoples and incorporating provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), especially to the right to lands, territories and resources, to self-governance, and cultural integrity, in their national instruments while at the same time repealing/ revising laws and policies that are not consistent with the UNDRIP.
- For ASEAN Member States to immediately implement the requirement for the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of indigenous communities in relation to any developments in their territories.
- For the AICHR to strengthen its mandate to include the establishment of special procedures that will pave the way for designation a focal person for indigenous issues in the AICHR towards the formation of a Working Group that would look into the issues and concerns of Indigenous Peoples.

Title: “Promoting Inclusive and Responsible Business: Experiences of Myanmar, Singapore and Across ASEAN”

Organizers: Maruah Singapore; Human Rights Resource Center, HRRC; Myanmar Center for Responsible Business, MCRB; C/O Hnin Wut Yee, hninwut.yee@myanmar-responsiblebusiness.org; Clara Feng clara.feng@gmail.com

Abstract:

Civil society plays a key role to hold businesses to account for their operations to improve positive impacts and avoid negative impacts. And they also play a crucial role in encouraging government to fulfill their duty to protect against human rights abuses by third parties including businesses. Across countries in ASEAN including Myanmar, face challenges in strengthening mechanisms to ensure positive impact of business and hence promoting inclusive and sustainable business.

This workshop offers the opportunity for civil societies in ASEAN to learn lessons from each other’s experience, particularly those further down the development road such as Singapore. Drawing on the experience and research findings of civil society from Singapore and across ASEAN,

this panel will seek to discuss the ‘lessons learned’ from other countries as to how to build a solid foundation for responsible business conduct in the region. What levers, including regulations and listing requirements, keep Singapore companies responsible, and do these provide a useful lever for influencing the behavior of Singapore investors elsewhere in ASEAN including Myanmar and enhancing its transparency? What are the experiences elsewhere in regulating the transnational dimension to investment and transnational access to remedies and what role the government, investors and civil society has played in holding them to account? To what extent are ASEAN governments already aligning the legal and regulatory environment within ASEAN with international standards for responsible business conduct, and what are the ‘best practice’ examples.



Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business

Recommendations:

- In line with the state duty to protect, as outlined in the 2011 UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and ratified international conventions, ASEAN Member States should take steps to prevent, investigate, punish and redress business-related human rights abuses through effective policies, legislation, regulations and adjudication, and promote international standards and best practices through a common framework.
- ASEAN Member States should develop and transparently implement regulatory frameworks on land and land tenancy, which are consistent with The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security to address the negative impacts of large-scale land acquisition for agricultural and extractive industries across the region. Development of such frameworks should be in close consultation with business enterprises and civil society specifically taking into account long-term impact on the communities concerned.
- In line with ASEAN Member States' obligations under the Convention against Corruption, Member States should redouble efforts to combat corruption at the national and ASEAN level, and engage both business and civil society in these efforts. This should include greater transparency of business contracts in land and extractives, providing a supportive environment of the media to pursue their essential role in exposing corruption, and prosecution of those involved in corrupt practices.

Title: “Building Cross-movement Alliances for Food Sovereignty, Ending Poverty and SRHR in the ASEAN”

Organizers: Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) based in Malaysia; Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) (Thailand); Asian Rural Women’s Coalition (Philippines); Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific (PAN AP) (Malaysia); C/O Malynd Ando, ARROW malynd@arrow.org.my; Erika Sales, ARROW erika@arrow.org.my

Abstract:

How is the right to food linked to sexual and reproductive rights? How is achieving food sovereignty related to achieving sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)? How can we work together to achieve both in the ASEAN? These are some of the questions we will explore in this workshop. Women’s human rights such as SRHR should not be dealt in isolation to other issues of poverty and food security. There are intrinsic links of SRHR to poverty and food security and intersectional analyses and cross-movement alliances are needed to address the issues of SRHR, poverty and food security in the ASEAN. This workshop aims to build cross-movement analyses, frameworks, alliances and action on the issues of food sovereignty/security, poverty and SRHR in the ASEAN. It is a participatory exercise that includes presentations and conversations to build understanding of key concepts of food sovereignty, SRHR and the interlinkages between these. It also presents voices of women in the Asian Women’s Travelling Journal Project, which highlights the link of SRHR to poverty and food security, as well as women’s leadership in strengthening movements, influencing policies and social change.

Recommendations:

- Given the status of uneven progress on SRHR in the ASEAN, governments must show political commitment and provide sustained financial investments to ensure SRHR for all, including women, young people, people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities, and gender expression, people with disabilities, migrants, displaced peoples, sex workers, indigenous peoples, and other marginalised groups. These include reviewing, amending and implementing laws and policies to uphold human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, and ensuring universal access to comprehensive,



affordable, quality, gender-sensitive health services at all stages and across all locations, to achieve the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health; services include contraception; safe abortion services; services to ensure maternal health and nutrition; diagnostic and treatment services for STIs, HIV, infertility and reproductive cancers; counselling; and comprehensive sexuality education (CSE).

- Pursue a common policy of food sovereignty, and increase investment in rural infrastructure, technology, research, education for small-scale farmers, including women. Review and rescind unjust free trade agreements; put an immediate stop to land grabbing; provide equitable access to and control of water and land; promote sustainable agricultural practices, regulate investments in agriculture and implement a truly just land reform and administration program to secure land rights and tenure of peasants, fishers and indigenous peoples. Develop cooperation among agriculture producers in the region and consumers; pursue sustainable agriculture to address resource degradation arising from monocropping and the impacts of climate change. Lastly, ensure the right to and access to adequate, culturally appropriate, nutritious and safe food for all.
- Support development of intersectional analyses and research on food sovereignty, poverty and SRHR. Ensure meaningful engagement of civil society in shaping the future of ASEAN, and create platforms for cross-movement alliance building.

Title: “ASEAN Democracy in Crisis”

Organizers: Chalida Tajaroensuk, People’s Empowerment Foundation (PEF) (Thailand), chalida.empowerment@gmail.com; Thida C. Khus, SILAKA & Cambodian Civil Society Working Group on ASEAN (CCWA) (Cambodia) thidak@silaka.org; Maria Chin Abdullha, Empower for Change (Malaysia)



Abstract:

ASEAN economic integration and security is facing a challenge in recent event as some of the members’ countries have faced many crises in recent election. Cambodia, Thailand, and Malaysia civil society working on the issue come together to share their experiences. The session has objectives to:

Objectives:

1. To understand politics in ASEAN countries
2. To analyze the existing democratic system and its challenges.
3. To discuss on impact of ASEAN ‘s democracy to “ASEAN Political and Security pillar”

Output of this session is to build on ASEAN people’s solidarity on taking action to help ease the situation and on what can be done to prevent one from happening in other countries.

Recommendations:

- Independent ASEAN Human Rights Court
- Independent ASEAN electoral Process Committee
- Human rights monitoring mechanisms
- Effort to democratise economic policy
- Efforts to insure press freedom

Title: “Human Rights Defenders’ Protection and Advocacy Strategies in ASEAN”

Organizers: Chhunly Chhay, Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR), chhunly.chhay@cchrcambodia.org; Aung Myo Min, Equality Myanmar, myominburma@gmail.com, Khin Ohmar, Burma Partnership, khinohmar@burmapartnership.org

Abstract:

This workshop consists of a panel of speakers with significant experience defending human rights at the grassroots level from Cambodia and Myanmar, while working in a restrictive environment. The panelists include Cambodian union leaders, community based land rights activists and defenders of the environment, who are often the primary targets of government and businesses’ repression. The workshop will present protection and advocacy strategies used by Cambodia’s delegation members to continue their human rights activities despite the threat of potential arrest, judicial harassment and other forms of restrictions, to find successful actions that can be duplicated in other ASEAN countries, particularly Myanmar. A representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) will present international and regional protection strategies and their application to the countries concerned.

The workshop is a unique opportunity for community leaders, human rights defenders and civil society organizations from Myanmar and the ASEAN region to learn from the lessons of Cambodia’s 20-year transition to democracy and on-going struggle to defend human rights and consider the broader regional and international context. This workshop strives to enhance mutual understanding, strengthen solidarity, build networks, empower communities, initiate collaboration, and provide space for civil society participation around issues of democratization, sustainable development and human rights in a people-oriented ASEAN.

Recommendations:

- Governments should establish more legal protections for HRDs – including ratifying all relevant international instruments – amend or repeal oppressive domestic laws, ensure proper legal enforcement and implementation of laws and establish an independent non-corrupt judiciary to ensure the rule of law; they should also establish independent and effective complaints mechanisms such as human rights national institutes including at the ASEAN level.
- Governments should ensure that businesses invest responsibly to improve peoples’ living conditions rather than abusing their rights, consult fully with affected communities, and ensure that no one is forcibly evicted and that adequate resettlement sites are provided – especially in the context of globalisation and increase corporate activities at the ASEAN level.
- Governments should ensure a safe and free space for civil society – including at the regional ASEAN level – so that trade unions, land rights activists and other human rights defenders can carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of harassment, arrest, imprisonment, killings and other forms of violence.

Title: “The Human Rights and Security Costs of ASEAN’s Economic Growth”

Organizers: Shalmali Guttal, Focus on the Global South, s.guttal@focusweb.org; Angkana Neelaphajit, Justice for Peace (Thailand) angkhana@justiceforpeace.org; Sovanna Sek Equitable Cambodia, sovanna.sek@gmail.com; Premrudee Daoroung, Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliance, premrudee@terrafer.org

Abstract:

Across Southeast Asia, the quest for rapid economic growth is shaping national development goals and approaches. Regardless of political leaning, governments in the region have sacrificed wealth redistribution, equity, human rights and the environment to the interests of capital, investors and high growth.

Southeast Asia’s fast growth is accompanied by increased inequality and concentration of wealth and assets in the higher income strata. It is also accompanied by increasing criminalization of dissent, and abuse and violations of human rights of citizens and migrant populations. Those who oppose investment or development projects, a law or policy, or stand in the way of state approved strategies for economic growth, are intimidated, arrested, deported, incarcerated, beaten, disappeared or killed. Host governments are enacting policies and laws to attract private capital flows and stem disquiet and dissent among their citizens. Freedom of expression, assembly and association, and political space for local people to question investment and development decisions, are narrowing.

The workshop will bring together human rights advocates from across the Mekong region to discuss the troubling links between development, economic growth and human rights, and explore collaborative approaches to promote human rights and genuine democratization.

Recommendations:

- ASEAN civil society must force all ASEAN Member States to protect the rights and security of people, in their own countries and also across the region; whether or not people have citizenship or legal papers, people are people and their lives must be valued.
- Legal and justice reforms:
- ASEAN countries must ratify and implement the UN Conventions on Enforced Disappearance and torture.
- The ASEAN Charter must be amended to make them compliant with HR standards and to make it meaningful for people of the regions.
- Martial law must be prohibited; national security should not undermine human security.
- AICHR must be reformed to become a body with legal teeth that investigates cases of rights abuses/violations, and takes decisive action against perpetrators; AICHR must become accessible to ordinary people as a place where they can get justice.
- All those affected by large investments – domestic and trans border, regardless of origin of investment – must have access to timely effective remedy.
- International Financial Institutions (IFIs), private financiers, corporations must legally adhere to high legal standards and be subject to national laws; they must be held legally responsible for violations of rights arising from or associated with projects, programmes, policies and investments that they are involved in.

Title: “ASEAN and Children in Sex Trafficking and Cybersex Tourism”

Organizers: Alliance of Child focused organisations; Association for the Rights of Children in SouthEast Asia; Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants; ATKI-Indonesia; Terre Des Homes SouthEast Asia; C/O salinlahi@alliancephilis@gmail.com

Abstract:

Globalization brought about increased migration due to poverty and lack of employment opportunities for most countries in Southeast Asia. Intra-regional migration in Southeast Asia is higher than migration outside of the sub-region. Aside from an increasing number of migrant workers, the Southeast Asian region is known for undocumented migrant workers working within and outside the region.

Women and children are often vulnerable to illegal migrations because of the growing trend of labour feminization in migration.

According to a study done by International Organization for Migration in 2000 entitled “Combating Trafficking in Southeast Asia,” Indonesian women have become more vulnerable to illegal and irregular forms of migration such as trafficking in other countries and commercial sexual exploitation within their country.

In the study “Child Trafficking in East and Southeast Asia: Reversing the Trend,” done in 2009 by the UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), “South-East Asia has long been noted as a veritable ‘hot spot’ for human trafficking, with its stark socio-economic and developmental disparities, long contiguous borders, historical intraregional migration patterns and existence of few legal migration alternatives – all considered key factors that enable trafficking and criminal exploiters to thrive.” Also according to the UNICEF EAPRO study, children who are left behind by parents who migrated for work are particularly at risk of being trafficked.

The deepening crisis exacerbated by such underdevelopment of countries especially those belonging to the third world leads to dire poverty.



Thus, many children fall prey to syndicates for sex trafficking and cybersex tourism.

Cybersex tourism flourished in the advent of technology such as the internet. Just last year, 2013, child rights group Terre des Homes created a computer generated image of a (ten) 10 year old girl called “Sweetie” and has become a way for them to identify 1,000 sex predators from 71 countries.

In 1999, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has created the ASEAN Plan of Action to Combat Transnational Crime in order to establish a cohesive regional strategy to prevent and control transnational crime through regional cooperation in prosecuting cross-border crimes. But still, numerous women and children are lured into sex trafficking and cybersex.

The need to raise awareness and push for stronger policies to punish perpetrators among ASEAN states and populace are much needed. Objectives:

The objectives of the two 2 hour thematic workshop are the following:

1. To share with Southeast Asian Civil Society Organizations situations of child sex trafficking and cybersex tourism in SEA countries.
2. To share responses and best practices in responding to child sex trafficking and cybersex tourism among the CSOs present.
3. To review state and ASEAN policies in addressing child sex trafficking and cybersex tourism in SEA.
4. To create a concrete plan of action in combatting child sex trafficking and cybersex tourism.

Title: "Youth Challenges in ASEAN including engagement in leadership and governance"

Organization: Cheang Sokha, Youth Resources Development Program and Working Group for Peace (Cambodia), director@yrdp.org; Pen Somony, Cambodian Volunteers for Society (Cambodia), pen.somony.cvs@gmail.com; Yong Yeath, Thai Volunteers Services (Thailand), yeathpvg@gmail.com; Supawadee Petrat, National Youth Congress (Myanmar), pkratae@gmail.com

Abstract:

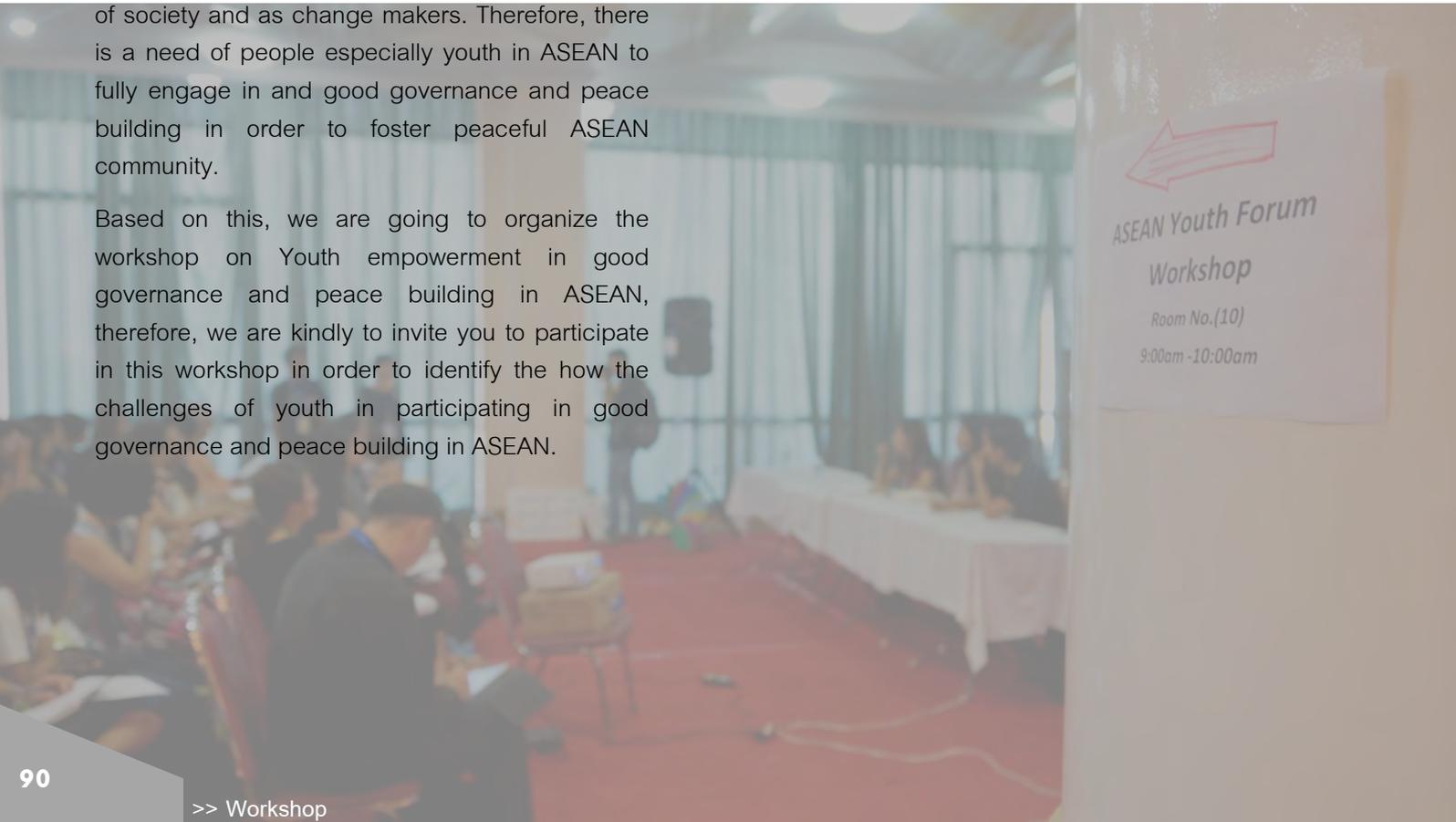
Since its existence in 1967, ASEAN now is in the critical juncture of living and working in a fast changing regional and international environment. ASEAN has built its reputation through inviting great and economic powers such as China, Japan, India and United States, to establish regional cooperation with ASEAN. More importantly, ASEAN needs to encourage people to be involved and engaged to participation in development process in meaningful ways. If ASEAN wants to be relevant, credible and trustworthy now and in the future, it is imperative that ASEAN should not left the people behind in particular youth group and youth's engagement with ASEAN is, actually not a new issue.

With regard to democratic governance, peace building citizens' rights and responsibilities, human rights and youth participation, with a special look at governance in the ASEAN community, we have seen that youth are often seen as powerless or inactive. But we believe in youth as an active part of society and as change makers. Therefore, there is a need of people especially youth in ASEAN to fully engage in and good governance and peace building in order to foster peaceful ASEAN community.

Based on this, we are going to organize the workshop on Youth empowerment in good governance and peace building in ASEAN, therefore, we are kindly to invite you to participate in this workshop in order to identify the how the challenges of youth in participating in good governance and peace building in ASEAN.

Recommendations:

- Strongly demand for the recognition and adoption of the Yangon Declaration (ASEAN Youth Statement 2014) in the development framework of the ASEAN Community; Review of the ASEAN Blueprint.
- Strongly demand for the meaningful and active participation of young people in all sectors and processes, with emphasis on young vulnerable groups (genuine democratic consultation, sufficient funding allocation and distribution, promotion and protection of their rights and freedoms).
- Strongly demand for the recognition of and support for an independent and autonomous ASEAN youth institution that will meaningfully monitor and work for a transparent, accountable, accessible, non-discriminating, people-centred, sexuality embracing, rights/ equality based regional community.



SIDE EVENTS



Community members from Mi Chaung Kan area fighting for their confiscated land

Throughout the three days, a number of solidarity activities were carried out by rights activists: an exhibition by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma) and the Former Political Prisoners League on the lives of political prisoners in Myanmar; an information booth by Thailand-Burma border based groups, artists in solidarity with civil society movements; an environmentally conscious café promoting the youth environmental network; demonstrations by people from Mi Chaung Kan, Latpadaung copper

mine, and other activists fighting for their confiscated land; environmental activists protesting against the Salween Dam; sex workers voicing their struggle for a protective law; student and youth activists campaigning against hate speech; and LGBTIQ community members championing their rights in a display of celebration and color, to name but a few. It was a triumph for freedom of assembly, association and expression in a country long known as a denier of these human rights.



Exhibition by Assistance Association for Political Prisoners and the Former Political Prisoners League



CLOSING CEREMONY

The three-day conference ended with a hand-over to the next host of the ACSC/APF in 2015, Malaysia. Dr. May May Pyone, Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee handed the gavel over to the Malaysian civil society delegates who will carry on the voices and the solidarity of ASEAN civil society and continue to work with the ASEAN governments in the spirit of partnership, ownership and self-determination to improve the quality of life and dignity of the ASEAN peoples.



Malaysia will Chair the next ACSC/APF in 2015, carrying on the voices and solidarity of the ASEAN peoples



CLOSING SPEECH

Ms. Premrudee Daoroung

Co-Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee



Distinguished guests, Excellencies, Ladies, Gentlemen, sisters, brothers and comrades of ASEAN countries and beyond,

I feel honored to be the one doing this closing. Before I 'close' this Conference officially, I would like to say a few words on behalf of the committees of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples Forum 2014, or in short ACSC/APF, and also on behalf of all of us who are sitting here and those who have attended our events but are not able to be here today.

First of all, to my delight and pride, I would like to announce that there are altogether over 3,000 participants to this ACSC/APF 2014 in Yangon, Myanmar. This is the biggest gathering for the ACSC/APF ever, since the first one in Malaysia in 2005. No less important, we are participants and witnesses to one of the most historic regional and international gathering of civil society and grassroots organizations, movements and networks that have ever happened in Burma/Myanmar in the past decades. Congratulations to us all for this strong solidarity and people to people cooperation!

Friends, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to go back to the first two objectives of the ACSC/APF, namely;

- To Strengthen diverse regional and national voices to advance ASEAN people's solidarity for sustainable peace, development, justice and democratization and;
- To support the role of Myanmar's civil society in the country's democratization, development, peace and national reconciliation

I believe we have reached both objectives in the level that we are highly satisfied about. As a key principle, we always wish to see the people and civil society of the host country join and benefit most from the ACSC/APF. For Myanmar, we see not only a very large number of participants, but the people who have come with high spirits and good will. For us, nothing can be more rewarding than this. The people of Myanmar have illustrated to us the hope and true spirit of people in the strongest manner that we can ever expect to see. Thank you very much for letting us in, and learn from you.

Essentially, we have together observed the meaningful and wonderful gathering of the people who represent all social groups. Our spirit was lifted up very highly at the very first moment by the welcoming performance of the ASEAN youth on the first day. This was followed by the supportive congratulatory message to the ASEAN Peoples from his Excellency Mr. U Thein Sein, the president of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the supporting speech of U Tin Oo, the Patron of the National League of Democracy, representing Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the encouraging speech of Deputy Secretary General of the ASEAN. I believe many of you agree with me that we started our first day listening to all the speakers in three plenaries with enthusiasm and excitement. The plenary of "Myanmar in Transition" especially fulfilled many of us who had wished to hear from our friends, sisters and brothers from Myanmar who had worked and fought very hard for true democracy, justice and a better future for the people of Myanmar.

Yesterday, I heard all the sounds of speeches, discussions, laughter and applause throughout the day from all 12 workshop rooms. The 14 Human rights workshops, 6 Peace workshops and 15 Development workshops, all these 35 workshops and side events were full of audience. And all went very well. Some workshops hosted more than 200 people. I think you would agree with me that nothing can be more wonderful than knowing that our messages were being listened to and discussed by such a solid number of people. Today, eventually, we wrapped up our event with statements and the hope for a better future for us all.

Friends, ladies and gentlemen, the so called “ASEAN Economic Community” is arriving soon, and we all know there will be more for us to work on, struggle and move forward. Hence, we will do it all together. We recognize that we have yet to fulfill the rest of our objectives of ACSC/APF in order to gain more space for the ASEAN people in the changing time of the ASEAN. We have yet to accelerate inclusive ASEAN people-to-people processes to achieve peace, security and economic, social, environmental and climate justices for all people – migrant workers, the stateless and those marginalized community. We still need to keep expanding the learning and understanding of the different processes and political developments of ASEAN and its members, including the struggles of people for their rights, dignity and self determination in Myanmar; and we still need to keep asserting civil society’s role in ASEAN community-building and key processes including the upcoming review of the ASEAN Charter and Community Blueprints and the TOR of the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the ASEAN Commission on Promotion and Protection of Women and Children (ACWC).

In the shorter term, we look forward to our next move during the ASEAN Summit that will happen in Nay Pyi Daw in May 2014, and see if there will be an opportunity to send the representatives of the ACSC/APF for the Interface meeting with the ASEAN leaders and deliver to them the key

messages and the Conference Statement from the ACSC/APF.

I would like to end this closing by saying this: As a person who has been working on regional issues for the last two decades, I have learned so much from the ACSC/APF 2014. I have gained what I call a ‘regional spirit’ in a significant way. I always believe that for the people, the so-called ‘regional spirit’ is always with us. What we need are channels and opportunities to get enough understanding about things that happen around us and chances to move things forward through working together with the people in solidarity, to battle the problems and obstacles in the interest of the ASEAN people, not only in the present- but also the future-generations. I believe this is what the ACSC/APF has always been serving over the years. We have had a successful ACSC/APF this year in Myanmar, and we will look forward to seeing you all at next year’s gathering in Malaysia in 2015.

I wish to see many of you there, and if I may, I would like to say that I also wish to see someone who would have been with us here in this ACSC/APF, but had no chance to be here. He is Mr. Sombath Somphone, a senior Laos CSO member who was taken away for over a year now. You can see his smile of hope at the back of you.

Once again, thank you very much for your participation, knowledge, wisdom and good spirit that you have shared throughout these three wonderful days.

Let us share our hope, our future. Let us make our hope come true.

Ladies, gentlemen, friends and comrades; I now announce the ‘close’ of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People’s Forum 2014 in Yangon, Myanmar.

INTERFACE MEETING

Principles

1. Meaningful Dialogue
2. Advancing People's Voices and Advocacy
3. Mutual Respect
4. Self-determination/ self-selection



Interface Meetings have been a way of engagement for civil societies with ASEAN leaders, but have taken different forms during the past 9 years depending on the level of engagement allowed by the governments. In some countries, the representatives of the ACSC/APF attend an Interface meeting with the ASEAN leaders and deliver key messages and the Statement of the ACSC/APF.

Learning from the past experiences, 4 principles for the Interface Meeting was agreed upon by the ACSC/APF 2014 as follows:

1. Meaningful Dialogue
2. Advancing People's Voices and Advocacy
3. Mutual Respect
4. Self-determination/ self-selection

On 24 March 2014, Regional Steering Committee sent a letter to Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs on behalf of the ACSC/APF 2014, requesting a meeting with the Minister. The request called for the interface to be based on the 4 principles adopted by the ACSC/APF 2014.

With much eagerness to mark a milestone on the 10th anniversary of the ACSC/APF, with concrete achievement through meaningful dialogue and engagement, the members of the Regional Steering

Committee of ACSC/APF 2014 met with ASEAN Affairs Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar in Naypyidaw on 8 April 2014. At this initial preparatory meeting, the delegates put forward the proposal for the Interface Meeting with the principles of Meaningful Dialogue, Advancing People's Voices and Advocacy, Mutual Respect and Self-determination/ Self-selection.

The initial discussion on Interface Meeting was positive, and both sides believed that mutual respect and dialogue was achievable. With this understanding, civil societies from each ASEAN member country undertook the process of selecting representatives and submitting the full list their to ASEAN Affairs Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar as well as to the respective governments in preparation for the Interface Meeting. The members of the Regional Steering Committee travelled to Naypyidaw for the second time on 30 April 2014 to meet with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and reaffirmed the principles before the Interface Meeting, scheduled on 11 May 2014.

In all preparatory meetings, the principles of interface were repeatedly brought up and mutually agreed upon. As countries began submitting their names to their respective governments, Cambodia,

Malaysia and Singapore governments rejected the proposed Interface Delegates from civil society. Following the non-approval of the proposed delegates from the three countries, it was confirmed that the governments had substituted them with their own selections.

Two urgent letters were sent to the ASEAN heads of government from the Regional Steering Committee expressing grave concern over the non-approval and the substitution of the selected CSO Interface from Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore, in clear breach of the ACSC/APF 2014 principles. The RSC communicated with the ASEAN Affairs Department of the Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs to negotiate the terms of the substitution but with no success. The decisions of the three countries led the RSC to finally conclude that the ACSC/APF 2014 principles have been violated. On 10 May 2014 the RSC upheld the principles as mandated by the Forum and withdrew from the Interface Meeting with ASEAN heads of government.

While the RSC and delegates were flexible with the governments and willing to accept that some delegates chosen by civil society could be rejected by governments, as long as the seats of those

rejected would remain vacant, it was not possible to accept that the governments concerned would replace the CSO delegates with their own selections. It is fully appreciated that Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam governments had agreed and approved the ACSC/APF Interface Delegates from their respective countries and held in highest regard the good faith of the host Myanmar authorities in trying to organize the Interface Meeting.

Despite the unexpected outcome of the Interface Meeting, the ACSC/APF 2014, attended by more than 3,000 participants from Myanmar and the region, was a great success. The main focus of the ACSC/APF 2014 was to work together as a people-centered regional civil society under the theme “Advancing ASEAN Peoples’ Solidarity toward Sustainable Peace, Development, Justice and Democratization” and this was demonstrated through the overwhelming regional solidarity and cooperation through the workshops and plenaries carried out throughout the conference.

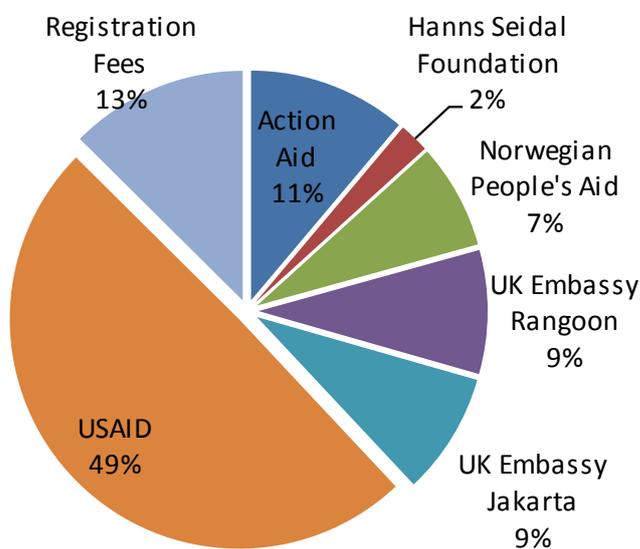


FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Principles: At the 2nd regional consultation meeting, the Steering Committee, on October 23rd, 2013, decided upon the principle of not receiving cash or donations of any kind from the private or business sectors for the conference. The Coordinating Committee made another decision regarding the issue of finance, that no individual person, organization or committee of the National Organizing Committee is allowed to receive or seek any separate donation from private and business sectors or from donor agencies for the ACSC/APF 2014.

Action Aid	USD 30,143
Hanns Seidel Foundation	USD 5,726
Norwegian People's Aid	USD 20,000
USAID/DAI	USD 1333,29
UK Embassy Jakarta	USD 32,150
UK Embassy Rangoon	USD 32,500
Registration Fee (Participants, Workshops and Side Events)	USD 33,943
Total	USD 269,791

Exchange Rate: USD 1 = MMK 970



The funding for the ACSC/APF 2014 held in Myanmar Convention Center, Yangon, Myanmar and the pre-conference preparation such as national and regional consultation meetings, as well as the post-conference follow-up activities such as Interface Meeting with the ASEAN leaders, conference publication and video documentary production were provided by generous grants from Action Aid Myanmar, Hanns Seidel Foundation, Norwegian People's Aid, USAID/DAI, UK Embassy Yangon and UK Embassy Jakarta as well as fundraising from registration fees, side events provided additional funding. We thanks all the funders and supporters for their contributions. For a detailed financial report, please visit: <http://aseanpeople.org/>

ANNEX

Agenda

DAY 1: Friday, March 21 Opening Ceremony and Plenary I, II, III	
6:00-8:00	Registration
09:00-10:00	Opening Ceremony
10:00-10:30	Break (Continue Registration 10:00-16:00)
10:30-12:30	Plenary I: ASEAN IN THE PRISM OF GLOBALIZATION AND A MULTIPOLAR WORLD
12:30-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:30	Plenary II: WHERE ARE THE PEOPLE IN ASEAN 2015 INTEGRATION AND BEYOND?
15:30-16:00	Break
16:00-17:30	Plenary III: MYANMAR IN TRANSITION
18:00-21:00	Solidarity Night and Dinner
Day 2: Saturday March 22, 2014 Workshops	
8:00-16:00	Continue Registration
9:00-11:00	Session 1
11:00-11:30	Break
11:30-13:00	Session 2
13:00-15:00	Lunch
15:00-17:00	Session 3
Day 3: Sunday March 23, 2014 Plenary IV, V and Closing Ceremony	
09:00-12:00	PLENARY IV: CONFERENCE DRAFT REVIEW
12:00-13:00	Lunch
13:00-15:00	PLENARY V: ASEAN PEOPLE SOLIDARITY: HOW AND WHAT NEXT? (WORKING PLENARY) STATEMENT ADOPTION
15:00-15:30	Hand-over to Next Host (Malaysia) of ACSC/APF 2015
15:30-16:00	Closing Ceremony

PRESS RELEASE

Press Release: 8 August 2013

Progress of Preparation for the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014

Members of National Organizing Committee of ACSC/APF 2014 and representatives of Myanmar civil society organizations (CSOs) met with representatives of regional and ASEAN national CSOs from Cambodia, Laos, Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and, Singapore on August 4 and 5 in Yangon to plan for the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF) during Myanmar's chair of ASEAN in 2014. While the two-day meeting, attended by as many as 90 Myanmar participants and 30 from the region, marks the first official Regional Consultation meeting on preparation of Myanmar's first ACSC/APF, it also had a special significance as it was held to coincide with the 46th anniversary of founding of ASEAN and 25th anniversary of 8.8.88 democracy uprising in Myanmar.

This regional consultation meeting is part of a process that began in June, when 66 Myanmar civil society organizations formed the National Organizing Committee (NOC) comprised of non-governmental organizations, mass organizations, social movement organizations, border-based organizations, ethnic organizations and networks that are working on a wide variety of issues.

Several matters were discussed during the regional consultation meeting including the need to ensure independence, transparency and inclusiveness of the process of ACSC/APF 2014 in Myanmar. The meeting approved formation of several committees with participation of other ASEAN countries' and regional CSOs, as well as their structures and mandates to help organize the conference and laid out the conference objectives, theme and issues and a draft program based on the set objectives of ACSC/APF. It was also decided that the next year ACSC/APF will be held on 20-23 March 2014 in Yangon.

The ACSC/APF has been the independent space and process of traditional gathering of civil societies in ASEAN since 2005, when the host country of Malaysia hosted the first people's forum in parallel to the ASEAN Summits. This people's forum aims to provide a venue for the grassroots people and independent CSOs from across the region to raise their voice concerning issues affecting their life and livelihood and consolidate their collective calls and recommendations to the leaders of ASEAN, which will be then carried to the ASEAN leaders attending the Summits to remind them of the problems peoples are facing on the ground.

The second Regional Consultation meeting will be held on 20-21 October 2013, in which the CSOs representatives from other ASEAN countries and regional networks will join the Steering, Program, Media and Drafting Committees. Meanwhile, the NOC will continue to hold its regular preparation meetings.

END

Civil Society Prepare for Open and Inclusive ASEAN Civil Society Conference

[Yangon, Myanmar] – Civil society organizations called for open and inclusive ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC) / ASEAN Peoples' Forum (APF) to be held next year ahead of the Summit, and presented their action plan for organizing the conference.

“Myanmar has now taken up its responsibility as the chair of ASEAN. We hope that this will include providing the space for civil society from Myanmar to come together with civil society groups and networks from the region to discuss issues that matter to us and make recommendations to the ASEAN governments,” said U Aung Myo Min, Executive Director of Equality Myanmar and one of 5 members of the Steering Committee that represents the ACSC/APF.

National and regional civil society organizations concluded the second regional consultation and planning meeting for the ACSC/APF today. The meeting was attended by 68 representatives from Myanmar and 34 representatives from the region.

“The National Organizing Committee is so far comprised of 73 member organizations from Myanmar civil society. We are working together with our regional friends to organize an inclusive ACSC/APF that will cover a wide range of themes including peace, development, justice and democratizations,” said Dr. May May Pyone, Executive Director of NGO Gender Group and a member of the Steering Committee.

“Every year, the ACSC/APF is the most important forum for civil society in our region,” said Corinna Lopa, Coordinator of the South East Asian Committee for Advocacy (SEACA) and a member of the Steering Committee. “It is crucial that the conference be organized by civil society for civil society, upholding principles of cooperation, transparency and democracy.”

The National Organizing Committee composed with Myanmar CSOs and representatives from regional and national organizations throughout ASEAN come together in 8 committees to organize the conference, including the Coordinating, Steering, Program, Information and Media, Logistics, Finance and Drafting Committees. The Secretariat carries out the daily coordination for the ACSC/APF organizing process.

“We must strive to work together for a successful ACSC/APF,” said Premrudee Daoroung from the Foundation for Ecological Recovery and a Thai member of the Steering Committee. “Our strength comes from our ability to come together to share experiences, show solidarity with each others' struggles and raise our collective regional voice on important issues. This is our ultimate goal.”

END

ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT FOR INDEPENDENT PEOPLES' FORUM AT 4TH REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING

Participants of the 4th Regional Consultation Meeting reinforced their commitment to maintain inclusiveness and independence of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014. The ACSC/APF, which will be held in Yangon on March 21-23, could be the largest regional civil society conference held in Myanmar in contemporary history.

The Meeting was attended by 22 representatives from ASEAN member countries and 55 Myanmar civil society representatives. During the two-day preparatory meeting, participants finalized many aspects of the program and agreed on how to move forward in solidarity.

"There are good regulations and principles to ensure the ASEAN Peoples' Forum is accessible, independent and inclusive. We hope we can uphold these values until the final day without obstacles. Last year, President U Thein Sein acknowledged the important role of civil society for national transition, so we hope the authorities will give us their full support and cooperation for this event, and to welcome our regional friends. This event is an important milestone for Myanmar's transition and for the ASEAN Community 2015," said Dr. May May Pyone, Executive Director of NGO Gender Group and chair of the Steering Committee of the ACSC/APF.

This year, organizers are expecting as many as 1,200 participants from different levels of Civil Society from across the ASEAN region. Most of the participants are expected to come from grassroots Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

"This is my first time participating in a Regional Consultation Meeting and I am very happy that I am able to take part in this process. I have learnt a lot and I am very excited about the forum and hope many Myanmar grassroots organizations are able to attend the ASEAN People's Forum," said Liz Hlaing, a member of the National Organizing Committee.

ACSC/APF events have always been regional events and Myanmar's National Organizing Committee has prioritized regional solidarity and participation.

"I am very pleased with what we have accomplished so far to maintain the regional identity of the ACSC/APF and I would like to give credit to our Myanmar friends for upholding this value to a high degree. Myanmar has been an important focus of ASEAN civil society since the first ACSC in 2005, so this event is extra special to us all," said Premrudee Daoroung, Co-Chair of the ACSC/APF Steering Committee.

ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum is an ASEAN civil society event first held in Malaysia in 2005 and has been carried on since. Its sole purpose is to channel voices of the grassroots civil societies of different backgrounds from across the ASEAN region.

Since Myanmar has the 2014 ASEAN chair, the responsibility of hosting the ACSC/APF has fallen onto the shoulders of the Myanmar civil society.

END

IT'S "ALL SYSTEMS GO" FOR LARGEST ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE IN MYANMAR

It's "all systems go" for the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014, which will be held in Yangon on March 21-23. The conference, expected to attract 1,200 participants from diverse grassroots, national and regional organizations, could be the largest regional civil society conference held in Myanmar in recent years.

This week, members of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee will brief media, diplomats and officials in Jakarta (3-4 March) and Bangkok (5 March), in the lead-up to the conference.

Dr. May May Pyone, Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee, who is leading the Jakarta advocacy delegation, will brief media on 6 March upon her return to Yangon, with fellow delegate Mr. Aung Zin, an organizer of the ASEAN Youth Forum.

Ms Premrudee Daoroung, Co-Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee, will provide a briefing at 10am, 5 March, at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand, along with ASEAN Youth Forum organizer, Mr. Joel Barredo.

Under the theme "Advancing ASEAN Peoples' Solidarity toward Sustainable Peace, Development, Justice and Democratization", the ACSC/APF will feature 4 plenary sessions and 27 workshops on 4 thematic clusters i.e. Peace, Justice and Human Rights, Development, and Democratization.

Last week in Yangon, organizers at the 4th Regional Consultation prepared for the conference and decided to reinforce their commitment to maintain inclusiveness and independence of the (ACSC/APF). Participants finalized many aspects of the program and agreed on how to move forward in solidarity. This included the adoption of regulations and principles to ensure the event is accessible, independent and inclusive.

Dr. May May Pyone, Executive Director of NGO Gender Group and chair of the Steering Committee of the ACSC/APF 2014, appreciated the current support of the Myanmar authorities and requested visa-on-arrival facilities for participants. "This event is an important milestone for Myanmar's transition and for the ASEAN Community 2015," she emphasized.

Premrudee Daoroung, Co-Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee, expressed appreciation for national organizers' commitment to regionalism. "Myanmar has been an important focus of ASEAN civil society since the first ACSC in 2005, so this event is extra special to us all," she explained.

END

OVER 3,000 PARTICIPANTS AT LARGEST EVER ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE / ASEAN PEOPLES' FORUM

Over 3,000 individuals and delegates from civil society organizations (CSOs), peoples' and grassroots organizations representing the ASEAN region as well as Timor Leste and beyond, joined together in solidarity in Yangon, Myanmar from March 21 – 23, 2014 for what became the largest ever gathering of ASEAN Civil Society Conference and ASEAN peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) since its inception in 2005. The record-breaking regional conference, held at the Myanmar Convention Center in Yangon, was also the largest of its kind in Myanmar's recent history.

The conference, comprising 5 plenaries and 35 workshops, produced a statement which will be distributed amongst civil society in the region and beyond, and forwarded to leaders attending the ASEAN Summit in May in Nay Pyi Taw. The statement called on all governments to recognise the diversity of ASEAN people and develop mechanisms for protection of all human rights irrespective of religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, including intersex persons, ethnicity, race, occupation, political ideology and citizenship.

"This ACSC/APF is a perfect opportunity to set a positive benchmark for the future of ASEAN civil society. Now is not a time for mistrust and fear, but a time for trust building and positivity, for allowing people space to express their concerns and their hopes, and to propose their own recommendations and solutions to ASEAN issues," said Dr. May May Pyone, the Chair of the ACSC/APF 2014 Steering Committee in her opening speech on Friday.

The plenaries related to the theme of "Advancing ASEAN People's Solidarity Toward Sustainable Peace, Development, Justice and Democratization". Panelists discussed ASEAN related issues on globalization and its challenges, ASEAN integration in 2015 and Myanmar in transition.

In a landmark keynote speech at the opening session, U Tin Oo, Patron of the National League for Democracy, called for honesty as a prerequisite for genuine reconciliation: "Admitting one's errors is painful, but it is an important step for reconciliation. We cannot let our ego overtake the welfare of future generations. We should be brave enough to face the past with honesty, so that we can work together to solve the urgent problems of this country. I hope that you will continue to encourage all sides to work towards a genuine national reconciliation that is necessary for sustainable peace." He was appearing on behalf of party leader and Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Delegates participated in 35 workshops under 4 clusters: Peace, Development, Justice and Human Rights, and Democratization.. Side events held by local and regional organizations created an open space for solidarity among educational and environmental sectors, political prisoners, labour rights, solidarity groups and many more.

In the final plenary, the draft of the statement was presented to the audience on a large screen to allow delegates to recommend edits before the final adoption, as part of an inclusive and transparent process. The statement can be downloaded from www.aseanpeople.org and from the conference Facebook page.

A letter requesting a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar was sent today by the Regional Steering Committee on behalf of the ACSC/APF 2014. The request will call for the interface to be based on principles adopted by conference organizers: meaningful dialogue, advancing peoples' voices and advocacy, mutual respect and self-determination/ self-selection.

END

ASEAN Peoples' Forum 2014 Representatives Meet with ASEAN Affairs Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar to Prepare for an Interface Meeting with ASEAN Leaders

Members of Steering Committee of ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014, yesterday, met with ASEAN Affairs Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar at Naypyidaw to hold an initial discussion on interface meeting between ASEAN Civil Society representatives and leaders of ASEAN countries.

The 6-member delegate led by Dr. May May Pyone, Chair of the Steering Committee of ACSC/APF 2014, was received by U Aung Lin, Director General, and U Aung Htoo, Deputy Director General of the ASEAN Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The reception was followed by a 45-minute discussion regarding the process and prospect of organizing an interface meeting between leaders of ASEAN Governments and representatives of Civil Societies from respective ASEAN countries who are yet to be elected.

During the discussion, the delegate put forward the proposal for the much anticipated interface meeting set to be held on May 11 with the principles of Meaningful dialogue, Advancing People's Voices and Advocacy, Mutual Respect and Self-selection. The Director General expressed his appreciation for the effort of the Civil Societies in organizing the largest ACSC/APF in history in Myanmar and welcomed the proposal for interface meeting. He continued to encourage the delegates to make the interface meeting successful noting that representatives to the interface meeting are recommended to be agreeable to the governments. The meeting was very positive overall and both sides believe a meaningful dialogue is achievable.

After this initial meeting, civil societies are to undertake a process of elections to choose one representative for each ASEAN member countries and submit the full list of representatives to the governments as soon as possible.

Interface meetings have been a way of engagement for civil societies but have taken different forms during the past 9 years depending on the level of engagement allowed by the governments. Civil Societies in ASEAN are eager to mark a milestone on the 10th anniversary of ACSC/APF with a concrete achievement through a meaningful dialogue and engagement.

ACSC/APF, initiated by Malaysia in 2005, is a forum held every year in prior to the ASEAN Summits as a platform for civil societies across ASEAN and beyond to come together to discuss a wide range of issues encountered within ASEAN. The forum is usually followed by an interface meeting where representatives from the forum meet with ASEAN leaders to submit the forum outcomes.

END

**STATEMENT: ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE/ ASEAN PEOPLES' FORUM WITHDRAWS FROM
INTERFACE WITH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT**

We, the Regional Steering Committee and Interface Delegates of ACSC/APF 2014, after consultations on 9 -10 May in Yangon, unanimously decided to withdraw from the Interface Meeting with ASEAN Heads of Government. The 30-minute interface was scheduled to be held at 3pm on Sunday, May 11, during the 24th ASEAN Summit in Naypyidaw. We are sad that we have to cancel our participation in the Interface meeting as the collective representatives of ACSC/APF 2014.

The main reason we reluctantly withdraw from this Interface is that three ASEAN member states are poised to substitute 3 delegates of civil society with their own nominees, in clear breach of the principles that we have frequently reiterated. A delegation of the Regional Steering Committee traveled to Naypyidaw twice, on 8 and 30 April, where they emphasized the 4 principles: Meaningful dialogue, Advancing People's Voices and Advocacy, Mutual Respect and Self-selection, as they met with the ASEAN Affairs Department of the Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The delegation felt encouraged and positive during the trips despite earlier reservations. We therefore continued our discussions with the Department and cooperated to have a meaningful interface meeting. However, as of today, our discussions have led us to a conclusion that our principles have been violated.

We were willing to be flexible with our governments. We were willing to accept that some delegates chosen by civil society could be rejected by governments, as long as the seats of those rejected will be vacant. However we are not willing to accept that the governments concerned have apparently decided to replace our rejected delegates with their own nominees.

We fully appreciate the commitment of the ASEAN Member Countries who have agreed and approved the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN Peoples' Forum Interface Delegates from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. However, it is very troubling for us that Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore have rejected our representatives from their countries and arranged to substitute them with their own nominees. We regret that these governments have undermined the good faith of the host Myanmar authorities in trying to organize the interface meeting.

We therefore officially withdraw as regional civil society from the Interface and regret that Cambodia, Malaysia and Singapore have failed to uphold their commitment to a people-centered ASEAN. We understand that individual delegates may have to be present for the interface as individuals and not representatives of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN Peoples' Forum.

We still regard the ACSC/APF 2014, held at the Myanmar Convention Centre in Yangon on March 21-23, attended by more than 3,000 participants from Myanmar and the region, to be a success. Our main focus is to work together as a people-centered regional civil society under the theme "Advancing ASEAN Peoples' Solidarity toward Sustainable Peace, Development, Justice and Democratization." We are very proud of the regional solidarity and cooperation at the conference which had 4 plenary sessions and 35 workshops on 4 themes of Peace, Justice and Human Rights, Development, and Democratization. While we are sorry that it was not possible for ASEAN governments to interface with us according to four basic principles, this has not been the ultimate focus of the conference.

END

AGREED PRINCIPLES TO UPHOLD

Universality of Human Rights

Human rights are rights that apply to all human beings; they are universal and inalienable. All human beings are entitled to human rights, independent of what they do, of their race, religion, citizenship, and the community to which they belong. They apply to all equally, and all have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Every individual has legitimate claims upon his or her society for defined freedoms and benefits set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The ACSC/APF will uphold the universality of human rights in all aspects of the ACSC/APF 2014

Finance

At the 2nd regional consultation meeting, the Steering Committee decided upon the principle of not receiving cash or donations of any kind from the private or business sectors for the conference during its meeting on October 23rd, 2013. The Coordinating Committee made another decision regarding the issue of finance, that no individual person, organization or committee of the National Organizing Committee is allowed to receive or seek any separate donation from private and business sectors or from donor agencies.

Inclusiveness

In order to ensure inclusiveness, the National Organizing Committee stated that the following types of organizations should be included in the National Organizing Committee.

- NGOs
- Mass Organizations
- Social Movement Organizations
- Border-based Groups
- Ethnicity-based Organizations
- Networks
- Women, youth and people with special needs groups as cross-cutting

Interface

The criteria for the interface meeting is agreed as follows:

1. Meaningful Dialogue
2. Advancing People's Voices and Advocacy
3. Mutual Respect
4. Self-determination/ self-selection

We extend our thank to all the funders who made the ACSC/APF 2014 possible.

Action Aid Myanmar



Hanns Seidel



Norwegian People's Aid



UK Embassy Jakarta



UK Embassy Rangoon



USAID

