

FORUM-ASIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2014



Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development

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Annual Report
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Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development

FORUM-ASIA was founded in 1991 to promote and protect all human rights, including the right to development, through collaboration and cooperation among human rights organizations and defenders in Asia.

In Memoriam



Sunila

Sri Lankan human rights defender, Sunila Abeysekera, passed away on 9 September 2013 aged 61. In 1990, Sunila co-founded INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre, a Colombo-based human rights organisation and FORUM-ASIA member. FORUM-ASIA learned a great deal from Sunila's work for peace and justice and women's rights in particular that brought real change to communities on the ground. The special moments shared among those who had the privilege of working with Sunila and who dedicate their lives to the struggle for human rights and to humanity will be treasured. Sunila's spirit will live with us for as long as we continue to fight for that dream and aspiration of human rights and dignity for all.



Farid

Mohammad Farid, a child rights advocate in Indonesia passed away on 28 February 2015. Farid was the founder of Yayasan Sekretariat Anak Merdeka Indonesia (SAMIN), a FORUM-ASIA member and Indonesian NGO that promotes and protects the rights of children. He served as member of the Executive Committee of FORUM-ASIA from 2005-2007. Farid also served as Chairperson of Asia ACTs, a regional network for children's rights. FORUM-ASIA fondly remembers Farid for his infectious fighting spirit and dedication to the cause of human rights. Civil society in Indonesia and the region has lost a great comrade. But his contributions will live on forever in the hearts of those whom he had served.

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I. Message from the Chairperson and Executive Director

My warmest wishes of solidarity and greetings from the FORUM-ASIA Secretariat.

It gives me immense pleasure and joy to present the first FORUM-ASIA Annual Report. The report is an account of the initiatives undertaken by FORUM-ASIA in the wake of mounting human rights challenges in the region during 2014. The challenges faced and shared by all of us as human rights defenders has only contributed to the rise of a burgeoning civil society that has grown in solidarity and strengthened the pledge to protect our fundamental rights. The actions of societies in Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, India and others will continue to inspire us in the years ahead to constantly struggle for democracy, free elections and resistance to authoritarianism and protection of our own civil society space. FORUM-ASIA has evolved as a unique organisation in Asia by endeavoring to present a unified response to human rights violations by recognising that the circumstances and environment that have facilitated them are common across the region marked by great cultural, linguistic and religious diversity.

As the challenges of HRDs mount and we all are targeted in myriad ways for being defenders, my hope is that FORUM-ASIA continues to grow as a symbol of the Asian community of rights activists. Our collective efforts across the region and solidarity with each other will continue to strengthen us in our missions. I would like to applaud and thank all my colleagues in the Executive Committee, our dedicated secretariat staff and vibrant members of FORUM-ASIA for their advocacy efforts, not least over the course of 2014 that are reflected in the first annual report. I hope this publication is useful for you to understand the human rights situation in the region and efforts undertaken by FORUM-ASIA.

Henri Tiphagne
Chairperson



My warmest greetings from Bangkok!

We are happy to share with you this report of our activities for the past year. It will give you a glimpse of what we have been doing and what we aspire to do in the future as a regional network of human rights organisations and one of the key NGO players in the field of human rights in Asia and elsewhere.

In 2016 FORUM-ASIA enters its 25th year of its existence and as we look back to the past and take stock of the present, the challenges in the future look daunting and unimaginable.

As we continue to strive to strengthen our work for human rights, democracy and development, we will need a new level of solidarity and support. While we celebrate on the gains that we have achieved, we recognise that we need to do more not only to respond to situations but also to proactively be involved in more preventive and long-lasting measures to address human rights violations and their root causes.

We look forward to developing vibrant partnerships with all human right advocates towards a peaceful, just, equitable and ecologically sustainable community of peoples and societies in Asia, where the human rights of all individuals, groups and peoples – in particular, the poor, marginalised and discriminated against – are fully respected and realised.

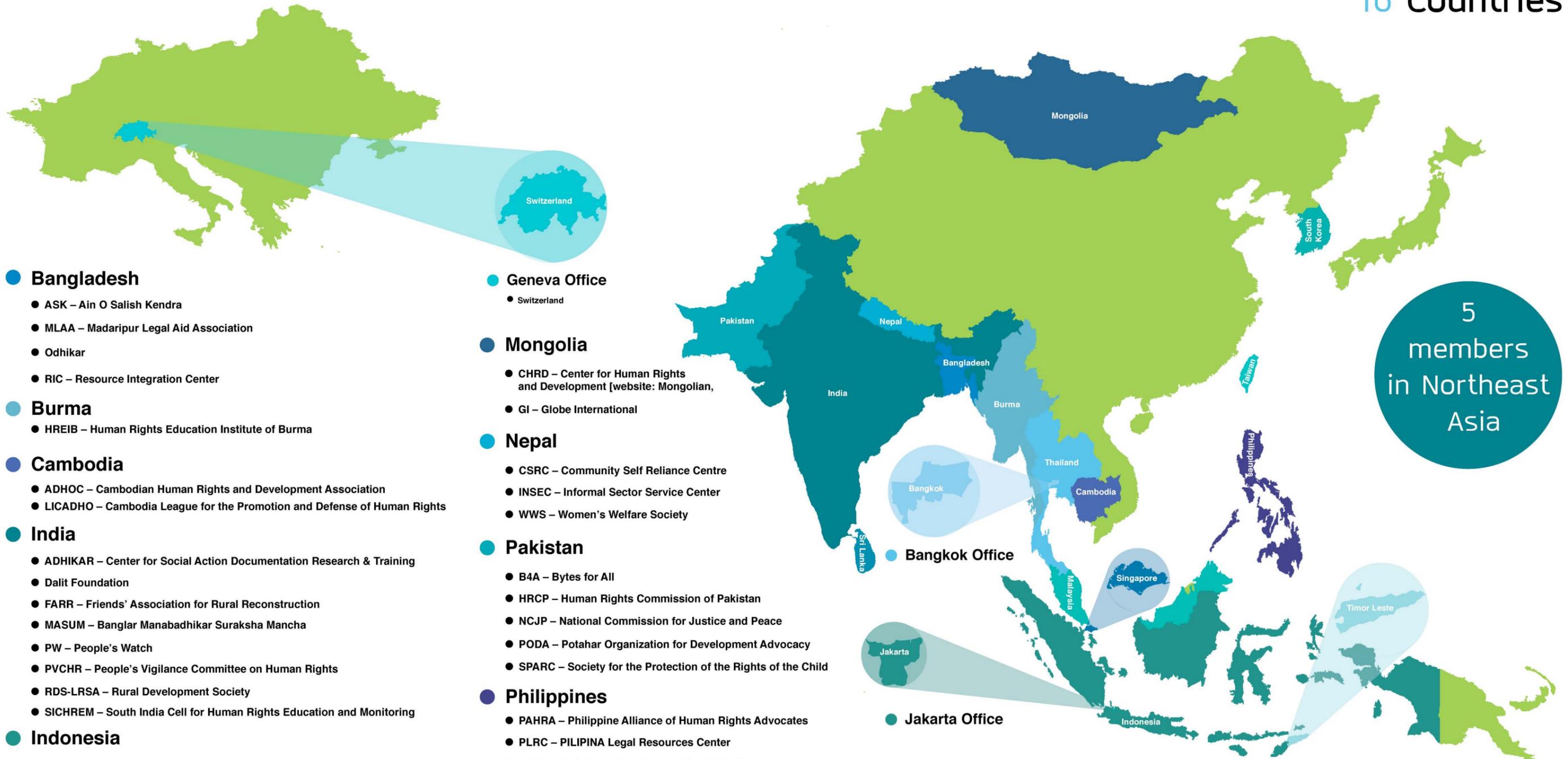
MABUHAY!

Evelyn Balais-Serrano
Executive Director

II. Who we are/Where we are

47 Members

16 Countries



Bangladesh

- ASK – Ain O Salish Kendra
- MLAA – Madaripur Legal Aid Association
- Odhikar
- RIC – Resource Integration Center

Burma

- HREIB – Human Rights Education Institute of Burma

Cambodia

- ADHOC – Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association
- LICADHO – Cambodia League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights

India

- ADHIKAR – Center for Social Action Documentation Research & Training
- Dalit Foundation
- FARR – Friends’ Association for Rural Reconstruction
- MASUM – Banglar Manabdhikar Suraksha Mancha
- PW – People’s Watch
- PVCHR – People’s Vigilance Committee on Human Rights
- RDS-LRSA – Rural Development Society
- SICHREM – South India Cell for Human Rights Education and Monitoring

Indonesia

- AJI – The Alliance of Independent Journalists Indonesia
- HRWG – Indonesia’s NGO Coalition for International Human Rights Advocacy – Human Rights Working Group
- IMPARSIAL – Inisiatif Masyarakat Partisipatif untuk Transisi Berkeadilan
- KontraS – The Federation of Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence
- PBHI – Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Rights Association
- SAMIN – Yayasan Sekretariat Anak Merdeka Indonesia
- YLBHI – Indonesia Legal Aid Foundation

Malaysia

- ERA Consumers – Education and Research Association for Consumers
- SUARAM – Suara Rakyat Malaysia

Geneva Office

- Switzerland

Mongolia

- CHRD – Center for Human Rights and Development [website: Mongolian,
- GI – Globe International

Nepal

- CSRC – Community Self Reliance Centre
- INSEC – Informal Sector Service Center
- WWS – Women’s Welfare Society

Pakistan

- B4A – Bytes for All
- HRCP – Human Rights Commission of Pakistan
- NCJP – National Commission for Justice and Peace
- PODA – Potahar Organization for Development Advocacy
- SPARC – Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child

Philippines

- PAHRA – Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates
- PLRC – PILIPINA Legal Resources Center
- TFDP – Task Force Detainees of the Philippine
- Tanggol-Kalikasan – Public Interest Environmental Law Office

Singapore

- Think Centre

South Korea

- KHIS – Korean House for International Solidarity
- PSPD – People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy

Sri Lanka

- INFORM – Information Monitor
- LST – Law and Society Trust

5 members in Northeast Asia

22 members in South Asia

20 members in Southeast Asia

Bangkok Office

Jakarta Office

Taiwan

- TAHR – Taiwan Association for Human Rights

Thailand

- People’s Empowerment Foundation

Timor Leste

- HAK Association – Perkumpulan Hukum, Hak Asasi dan Keadilan (Law, Basic Rights, and Justice Foundation)
- JSMP – Judicial System Monitoring Programme

III. What we do/ Why we do it

Connecting Human Rights Movements across the Region

Over the years, FORUM-ASIA has positioned itself as a leading and credible human rights organisation in the region. Its strength lies in the expertise of its 47 member organisations across 16 countries who are leading actors on a wide range of human rights issues. FORUM-ASIA connects its members to regional and international forums by providing a platform in which to advocate; build capacity and foster strategic partnerships with civil society organisations and movements in the region and elsewhere.

“The direction and future of the human rights movement will be greatly influenced by the Asia region”

Navigating the region

In the 16 countries that FORUM-ASIA is represented almost all have ratified the principle human rights treaties. Nevertheless the record of human rights protection and promotion in the region leaves much to be desired. Given that 60% of the global population resides within its borders and its growing economic and political influence, the direction and future of the human rights movement will be greatly influenced by the Asia region.

Regional Challenges

While the countries that FORUM-ASIA is represented are marked by great diversity, the contextual challenges that pervade are common

Illiberal democracies - Many of the countries in Asia claim to be democratic, but barring a few exceptions, implementation of the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights are significantly lacking. Civil society participation in policy processes in supposedly stable democracies such as India, South Korea and Taiwan is limited. Freedom of speech and expression and freedom of assembly and association are routinely violated in the name of internal security and law and order, particularly in Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore and Sri Lanka. Worse still, gender and sexual based violence is all too prevalent throughout the region.

Authoritarian resurgence - The relapse of Thailand into military dictatorship in May 2014 is a stark reminder of the vulnerability of democratic institutions in the region. Burma will have little incentive to speed up its frustratingly slow democratisation process when its influential neighbor has institutionalized its authoritarian rule with little condemnation. Laos will have a new ally to help justify its curb on basic freedoms and liberties. Even Indonesia, on

a relatively promising path to liberal democracy, will have an excuse for inaction. Thailand's situation will thus have grave repercussions for the promotion and protection of human rights for Southeast Asian States.

Impunity - Impunity cuts across the region. Whether it is conflict-related violence, as in the case of Nepal and Sri-Lanka, or non-conflict related extrajudicial killings and torture in Cambodia, custodial deaths in Malaysia and killings by death squads in the Philippines, those responsible are rarely if never investigated and held to account. The call for accountability and reparations for past and current rights-violations are routinely ignored in the name of peace and stability.

Weak national and regional protection - National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) are responsible for investigating rights-violations, including those the national judiciary have failed to address. In reality however, NHRIs are often inhibited by a lack of independence or capacity to effectively monitor and document human rights violations. The ASEAN human rights mechanisms also struggle to offer any meaningful protection at the regional level due to a limited mandate and lack of independence from its Member States. South Asia conversely lags behind all other regions of the world with the absence of any regional protection.



FORUM-ASIA Priorities

In light of these contextual challenges, FORUM-ASIA has identified the following priorities that are of particular concern to its membership

Promoting and protecting freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly- Increasingly under threat through the use of draconian legislation that threatens the existence of civil society in the region by controlling registration and funding or which seek to limit the ability of communities and people's movements in Asia to defend their basic rights or who seek to challenge the abuse of power by States.

Developing effective and independent accountability mechanisms - At the national level, in particular national human rights institutions as a potential ally for civil society in promoting and protecting human rights in Asia. This also includes other accountability mechanisms that foster an environment for accountability and an end to impunity.

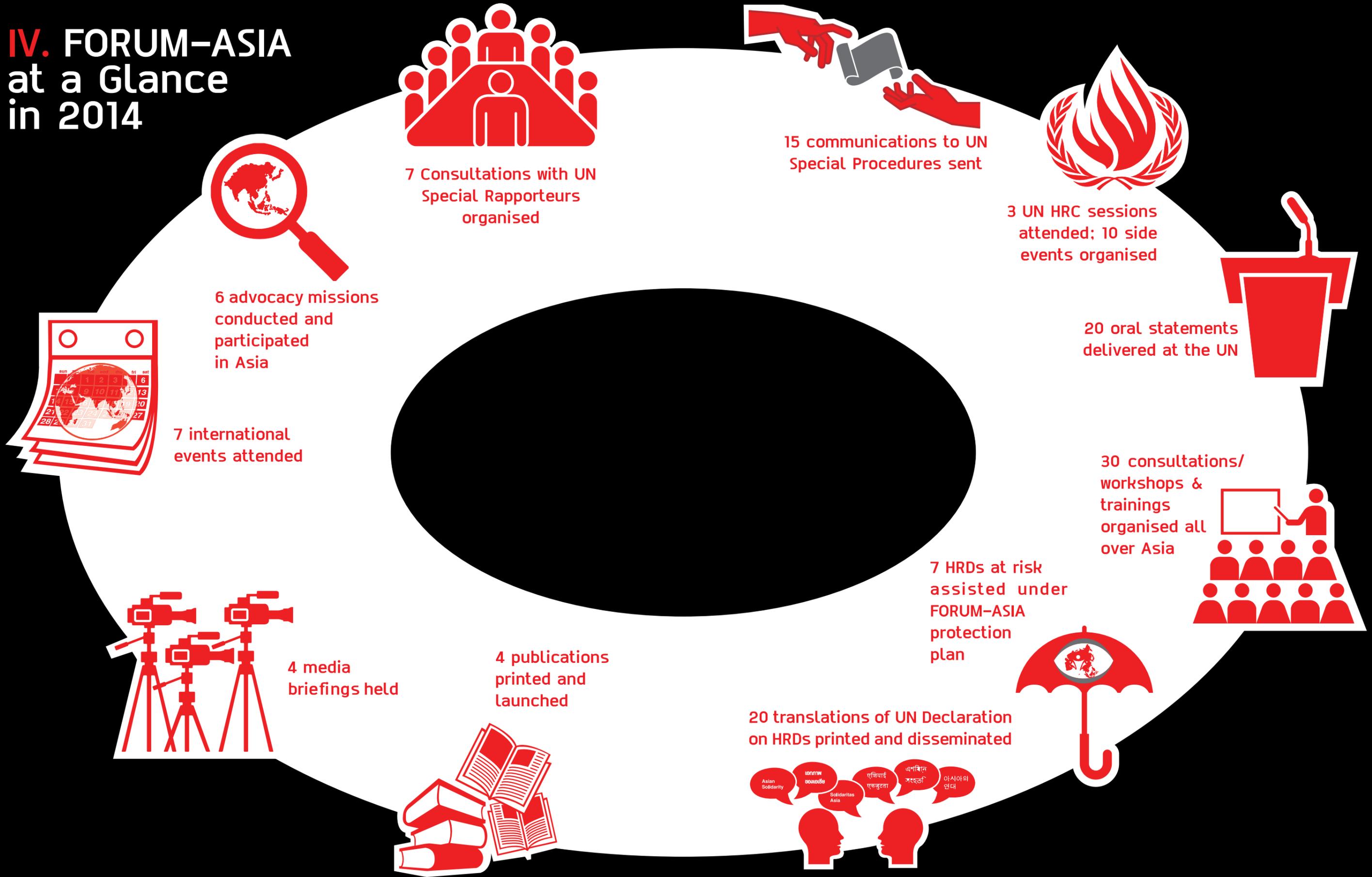
Protection of human rights defenders (HRDs) - Responding to the increased persecution by state and non-state actors of defenders supporting victims and communities affected by human rights violations is a recurring theme throughout FORUM-ASIA's work.

Developing and strengthening regional human rights mechanisms in Asia - While the establishment of the ASEAN human rights mechanisms was a welcome development, its lack of independence and effectiveness since its establishment in 2009 has

necessitated oversight by civil society actors. Conversely discussions amongst civil society actors in South Asia have galvanised a call for a regional mechanism that would address human rights challenges across the sub-continent.

Utilising UN Human Rights mechanisms and other forum - The UN Human Rights Council (HRC) and its mechanisms are crucial tools in the promotion and protection of human rights. The UN HRC and the mandate of the Special Rapporteurs in particular, is an important platform for civil society to engage with States on human rights issues pertaining to Asia and influence Asian diplomacy on human rights. At the same time, FORUM-ASIA utilises cross-regional groupings such as ASEAN, SAARC, the Non-Aligned Movement and the OIC, who are increasingly asserting their influence on the diplomatic position of Asian States at both the UN and beyond.

IV. FORUM-ASIA at a Glance in 2014



V. Freedom of Expression, Assembly and Association

Recent years have seen increased efforts by governments in the region to curtail FoE/FoAA. Some examples of this include the use of vague and restrictive laws to prohibit or limit free speech and peaceful protest, as well as to restrict foreign funding of civil society organisations.

Across the region, HRDs, journalists, workers, and other activists are increasingly facing severe and arbitrary limitations on FoAA and FoE. Violations of these rights are particularly heightened in the context of elections. In Malaysia in 2013 and Cambodia in 2014 for example, post-election protests against alleged electoral irregularities were banned or criminalised.



Walk for Peace and Freedom - October, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

A Snapshot of 2014

In 2014 this worrying and disturbing trend has been confirmed by the excessive use of force by several regimes to disperse peaceful protests and halt any type of expression of dissent. This was the case in a number of incidents relating to the exercise of labour, land and other economic, social and cultural rights.

The disproportionate use of force during strikes and demonstrations in **Cambodia** in January against garment workers demanding increased wages resulted in dozens injured and the deaths of 4 individuals, in addition to the disappearance of 16 year old Khem Sompath. During the violent crackdowns, the army arrested 23 activists as well as factory workers, who were then secretly transferred to a remote prison outside of Phnom Penh. The 23 arrested in January were finally released in May, following conviction and suspended prison sentences and heavy fines for some of them.



The year also saw continued attempts by the Cambodian government to introduce restrictive laws, including the Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organisations (LANGO) and laws on cybercrime, telecommunications and trade unions, which will stifle the work of HRDs and threaten free speech and FoAA. FORUM-ASIA together with its member organisations in Cambodia continued its advocacy for these **laws to conform with human rights standards**. The Government of Cambodia suspended the introduction of the cybercrime law in December 2014.

In **open letters** to the Prime Minister of **Cambodia** and during the **HRC's 26th Regular Session** FORUM-ASIA and Cambodian members, ADHOC and LICADHO expressed concern over the violent crackdown of the January protest and the disappearance of Khem Sompath as well as the conviction of the workers and activists arbitrarily arrested during the crackdowns. FORUM-ASIA participated in October in an international mission to Cambodia co-organised with ADN, Beyond 2015, CIVICUS, GCAP, IFP and SEACA. The **mission aimed at putting pressure** on the Cambodian government to halt the adoption of repressive laws.

The government of **Malaysia** continued its post-2013 elections crackdown on opposition leaders, HRDs and critics in 2014 by widening its dragnet. The crackdown against FoE/FoAA, which began with the criminalisation of post-election speeches, particularly against those who alleged electoral irregularities, continued and further intensified in 2014, with numerous cases of arrests, investigations and charges of individuals under the draconian Sedition Act and other legislation, including against former deputy Prime Minister and opposition leader, **Anwar Ibrahim**.

In **Taiwan**, peaceful demonstrations were held in 2014 over the potential impact of the government's Cross-Straits Service Trade Agreement with China. These demonstrations were met with excessive police force, including the deployment of water cannons. Police also reportedly beat and injured peaceful protestors and journalists.



Students in Taiwan marching during the "Sunflower Revolution"

Artemas Liu, Flickr

Since October 2013, the government of the **Republic of Korea** has denied the right to FoAA of environmental rights defenders and residents of Miryang, Gyeongsangnam-do Province, who have been affected by the construction of high-voltage power transmission towers. In June 2014, around 2000 law enforcement personnel deployed excessive force against less than a 100 elderly citizens who were exercising their right to FoAA. Protestors were forcefully dragged and their encampments destroyed, resulting in 20 people requiring medical attention.

Open letters by FORUM-ASIA were sent to the President of the **Republic of Korea** and of the **Republic of China (Taiwan)**, urging the authorities to ensure that law enforcement personnel comply with international human rights norms and standards and calling the governments to hold to account all security personnel involved in the crackdowns.



Miryang's residents protesting in the Republic of Korea

The situation of right to FoE/FoAA also continued to deteriorate in the South Asia region. In **Bangladesh**, for example, garment factory workers have seen their FoAA repeatedly violated by the government. In one such incident in August, Bangladeshi security forces violently dispersed a hunger strike by over a 1000 workers of the Tuba group of factories. During the crackdown, workers were attacked with batons, water cannons, tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets. The factory workers were on hunger strike since July 2014 protesting the non-payment of 3 months wages and overtime dues. **FORUM-ASIA highlighted the need** for proper regulations and oversight of security forces in Bangladesh, urging the government to protect the rights of workers.



In **the Maldives**, the Freedom of Peaceful Assembly Act, continued to be a major concern for its far-reaching restrictions on the right to FoAA. Civil society and the international community have raised numerous concerns with the restrictive provisions of the Act. FORUM-ASIA conducted a fact-finding mission in 2013 and a follow-up advocacy mission in August 2014 to specifically address the Act. A comprehensive list of recommended amendments were drafted in consultation with civil society and legal experts in the Maldives during the advocacy mission. The mission also engaged with Parliamentarians, the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives and the Police Integrity Commission to push for these changes.

Advocating for the Repeal of Repressive Legislation in Malaysia

Under the vague and overly-broad provisions of the **Sedition Act** almost any kind of speech may be criminalised in Malaysia, leaving it open to abuse. The legislation, originally enacted in 1948 under British rule, was used to suppress dissent during colonial rule. 57 years after independence, the Sedition Act not only remains in place, but is actively used by the government to stifle democratic space. This includes using it against HRDs, political activists, journalists and opposition leaders.



Working with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association



The UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, Maina Kiai, plays a crucial role in addressing the abuses mentioned. Key to that role is the expertise of civil society actors. Over the course of 2014, FORUM-ASIA brought that expertise to the fore through a series of dialogues with the Special Rapporteur.

Academic Visit to Cambodia (Cambodia, February)

FORUM-ASIA together with Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights (LICADHO) and Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) facilitated an academic visit by the Special Rapporteur to address the violent crackdown on post-election public assemblies and the subsequent blanket ban that was imposed on all public assemblies in Phnom Penh, as well as the government's plans to introduce a number of new restrictive laws. During the visit, the Special Rapporteur met with various groups of HRDs, workers' unions and community groups, as well as the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Regional Consultation on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association (Nepal, September)

FORUM-ASIA and the Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) convened a gathering in Kathmandu bringing together the Special Rapporteur and approximately 70 HRDs from across Asia. The consultation allowed participants to exchange lessons learned and take stock of the situation of the right to FoAA in the region.



Regional Consultation on Freedom of Assembly and Association, Kathmandu, Nepal

Dialogue with Indian HRDs (Nepal, September)

In 2014 there were increasing attacks on protests relating to mining and extractive industries and use of legislation that restricted freedom of assembly and legitimate protest, such as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. Against this backdrop, FORUM-ASIA together with Peoples Watch Tamil Nadu and the Working Group on Human Rights facilitated a dialogue between the Special Rapporteur and HRDs from India in September, enabling him to develop a network of national contacts and understand the context and constraints in which Indian HRDs operate.

Academic Visit to Bangladesh (Bangladesh, September)

Together with Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) and Odhikar, FORUM-ASIA facilitated in September the first-ever academic visit of the Special Rapporteur to Bangladesh. The visit was organised against the backdrop of allegations of FoAA violations, and allowed the Special Rapporteur to introduce his mandate to a broader audience during a public lecture, hosted by the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh.

Asia Consultation on Business vs. Non-profit associations (Thailand, December)

The unequal treatment between non-profit associations and business entities will be the subject of the Special Rapporteur's upcoming thematic report to the UN General Assembly in 2015. To inform and assist the Special Rapporteur in framing his analysis on this issue, the World Movement for Democracy and FORUM-ASIA jointly organised a consultation of civil society actors from Asia to reflect on the differing approaches on legal frameworks and government practices towards business entities and non-profit associations.

Freedom of Expression, Assembly and Association in the Context of Elections

Free and fair elections are the hallmark of a democracy. Nevertheless human rights are prone to attack when the political elite seek to retain or obtain power at all costs. In this respect, elections in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, the Maldives, Malaysia and Nepal over the course of 2013-14 were marred by various levels of violence or silencing of the opposition and other groups, including through the use of repressive legislation.

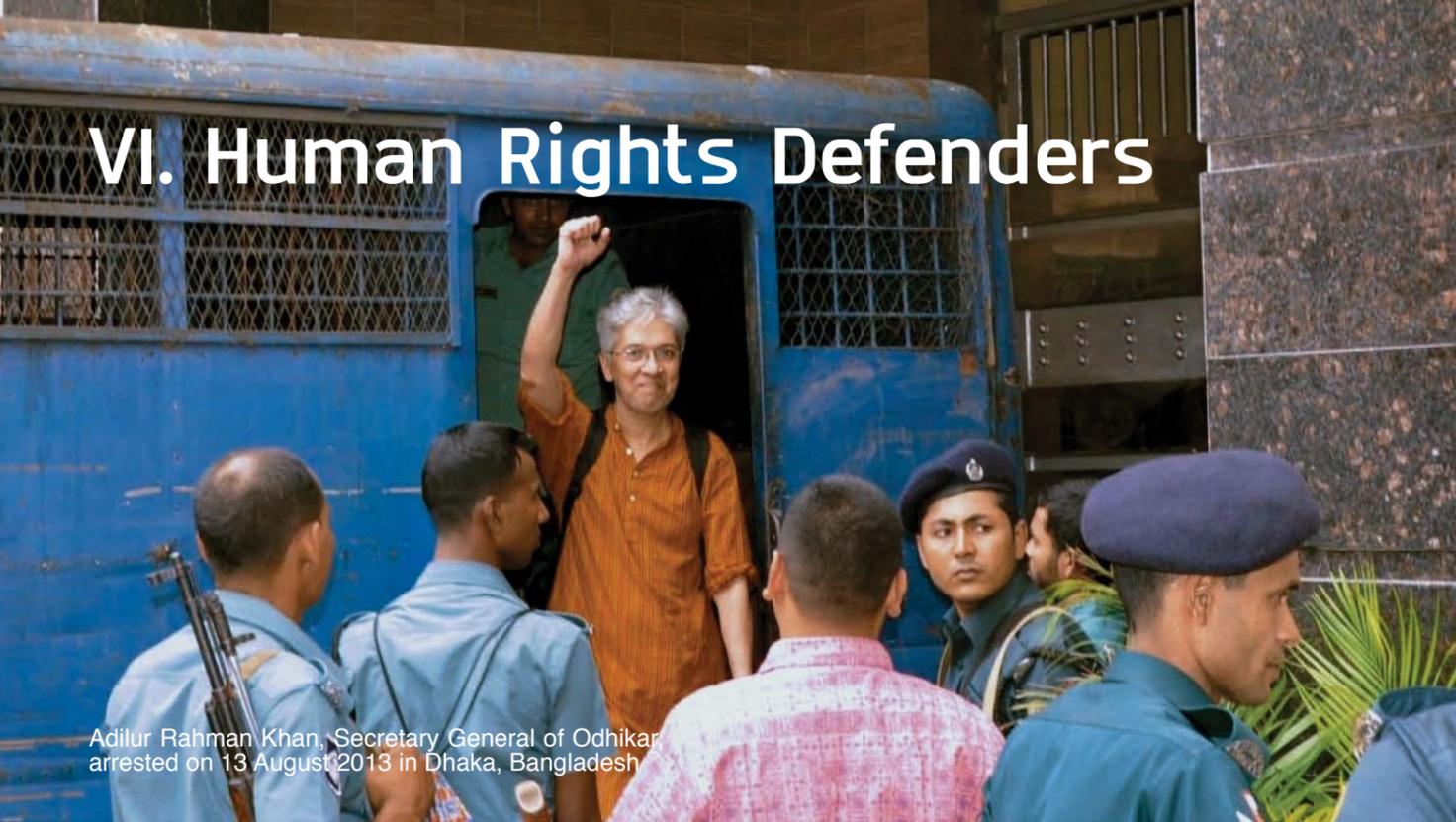
In light of the recent 2013 Constituent Assembly elections in Nepal and the 2014 Presidential elections in Indonesia, FORUM-ASIA convened 2 national workshops in Jakarta and Kathmandu to assess the impact on human rights and security, highlighting the importance of upholding international standards for free and fair elections. The workshops were co-organised with the Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA), and Inisiatif Masyarakat Partisipatif untuk Transisi Berkeadilan (IMPARSIAL) in Jakarta; and with the Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) in Kathmandu.

Furthering the discourse on FoE and FoAA in the context of elections at international fora

At the 26th Session of the UN HRC in June, FORUM-ASIA made an oral statement during the interactive dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on FoE, Frank La Rue, and the UN Special Rapporteur on FoAA, Maina Kiai. FORUM-ASIA's statement highlighted the heightened curtailment of the rights to FoE and FoAA in the context of elections and further emphasised the importance of independent and effective accountability and redress mechanisms.

At a side event organised by FORUM-ASIA during the 26th Session, a panel comprising the Special Rapporteur on FoAA, together with other speakers from SEAPA and FORUM-ASIA members, People's Watch and KontraS discussed the issue of FoE and FoAA in the context of elections in Asia. The side-event identified gaps in and ways to follow-up on recommendations of the reports of the Special Rapporteur on FoAA and Special Rapporteur on FoE.

VI. Human Rights Defenders



Adilur Rahman Khan, Secretary General of Odhikar arrested on 13 August 2013 in Dhaka, Bangladesh

In her final report to the Human Rights Council in December 2013 (A/HRC/25/55), Margaret Sekaggya, the former UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of HRDs observed that the space for civil society and (HRD) space had visibly shrunk in certain regions. Asia is no exception and HRDs on the frontline in the promotion and protection of human rights are often the target of threats and intimidation by state and non-state actors. FORUM-ASIA seeks to protect the rights and promote the role of HRDs by providing urgent assistance and protection to those at risk, advocating for an enabling environment for HRDs to conduct their work freely; as well as training to strengthen their capacity to conduct effective campaigning and advocacy at the national, regional and international levels.

Protection Plan For HRDs at Risk

FORUM-ASIA has developed a "Protection Plan for Human Rights Defenders at Risk", which responds to urgent cases of HRDs in need of assistance by facilitating and providing safety measures, such as temporary relocation, trial monitoring for those brought before judicial institutions and other types of urgent assistance. Through the Protection Plan, FORUM-ASIA is able to provide quick, concrete and appropriate assistance to those at risk.

Promoting International Standards

In an effort to popularise the UN Declaration on HRDs, FORUM-ASIA has translated the UN Declaration on HRDs into various Asian languages. As of 2014, FORUM-ASIA had translated the Declaration into 20 Asian languages which are used in the various trainings undertaken for grassroots defenders.

Linking Human Rights with Development – 2nd Glo-cal Advocacy Leadership in Asia Academy (GALAA)

FORUM-ASIA co-organised with the Asia Democracy Network (ADN) and Asia Development Alliance (ADA) the second edition of a training program designed to enhance the capacity and shared understanding of the next generation of HRDs in Asia. In the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, 30 participants from 13 countries across the region gathered in Bangkok to develop strategic global and local or "glocal" actions on key human rights, development and democracy issues as well as related regional and international processes.



Participants of 2nd GALAA

Regional Consultation on Model Law

Sixteen years after the adoption of the 1998 UN Declaration on HRDs, Asian States have yet to incorporate it into domestic law. As a result, HRDs across the region continue to face severe repression and are deprived of the protection laid out in the Declaration.

In April, FORUM-ASIA and the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) brought together over 20 HRDs from across the region, as well as regional and international observers to address this gap in protection and exchange national experiences.

Building Platforms – 6th Asian Regional Human Rights Defenders Forum

In December, FORUM-ASIA together with the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) and the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA) held the 6th Asian Regional Human Rights Defenders Forum (AHRDF6) in Manila, Philippines.

Since 2001, FORUM-ASIA has been organising this platform for HRDs to share their experiences, providing a safe venue for testimonials on human rights abuses and briefings on national situations.

At its heart, the Forum aspires to build solidarity and collaboration among HRDs to act on common issues and struggles. 169 HRDs (half of whom are women) from 22 countries in the region gathered to discuss protection initiatives and the challenges related to their implementation and the establishment of national HRD networks and platforms.

In the presence and full participation of the newly appointed UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, who also opened the event, the AHRDF6 facilitated several discussions, including on WHRDs, that resulted in the adoption of a declaration outlining the steps that national, regional and international actors should take to strengthen protection of HRDs.

Protecting HRDs with online tools

Launched in December at the AHRDF6, the Asian HRD Portal is an online tool highlighting the challenges and risks faced by HRDs in Asia. The Portal also provides online campaign tools, a database and map of cases detailing threats and violence against HRDs, and resource materials for the general public as well as for HRDs.



AHRD
Asian Human Rights Defenders
asianhrds.forum-asia.org

Women Human Rights Defenders – Integrating a Gender Perspective in the Work of the UN Human Rights Council

In the global North and South alike, women HRDs (WHRDs) are murdered, kidnapped, tortured, raped, and harassed because of the work they do, but are at particular risk because of their gender.

As the HRC strengthens its work on gender related issues, FORUM-ASIA together with 12 other member organisations of the International Coalition of Women Human Rights Defenders, made a joint statement at the **27th Session of the HRC** September 2014 to emphasise the critical need to integrate analysis and reporting on WHRDs, who demand protection, respect and fulfilment of all human rights.

Go to [FORUM-ASIA's website](#) for a snap shot of WHRDs in Asia in 2014.

STOP
FORCED
CONVERSION

2nd Anniversary of Sombath's Disappearance

2014 marked the second anniversary of Sombath Somphone's disappearance. A Laotian civil society leader, Sombath pushed tirelessly for greater civil society space and the right of the rural poor and youth to have a voice in the development of society and governance. Despite the Lao Government's pledge to investigate his disappearance, the authorities' probe has proved inadequate and unproductive.



Remembering Munir

On 7 September 2004, Munir Said Thalib, was found dead on a flight from Jakarta to Amsterdam having been poisoned with arsenic.

While 3 people were convicted for Munir's murder, the Indonesian Government has yet to conduct a thorough, impartial and effective investigation to bring to justice those who actually planned and ordered the murder.

On 12 September 2014, FORUM-ASIA co-signed an **open letter** along with KontraS and international NGOs FLDs, ICJ and FIDH, to the President of Indonesia Joko Widodo. The letter urged the Indonesian President to publish the 2006 Fact-Finding Team's report on the investigation into Munir's assassination and conduct a credible, thorough, and impartial investigation.

In solidarity with Irom and the people of Manipur

Irom Sharmila Chanu, an activist poet, and recipient of several human rights awards, including the 2007 Gwanju Prize, has for the last 14 years been on a hunger strike demanding the Indian government repeal the Armed Forces (Special Power) Act 1958 (AFSPA) in Manipur.

The draconian AFSPA effectively grants the security services immunity from prosecution and extensive and wide reaching powers to arrest and search anyone with the use of force. Irom began her hunger strike in 2000 following the killing of 10 people by a paramilitary force in Imphal. Shortly after she was arrested and charged with attempting to commit suicide, a criminal offence under an outdated provision of the Indian Penal Code. Irom has been arrested and released every year since.

In November, FORUM-ASIA together with the May 18 Memorial Foundation and the Just Peace Foundation jointly organised an international solidarity mission with Sharmila's fellow laureates of the Gwangju Prize for Human Rights, to meet with Irom and communities living in Manipur, which has been rendered a military state under the AFSPA.





VII. National Human Rights Institutions

ANNI Delegation in Taipei, Taiwan

2014 marked the 20th anniversary of the Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (Paris Principles). The Paris Principles, set out the minimum standards and normative framework for the effective work and functioning of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and are considered to be the benchmark on which to determine a NHRI's credibility and legitimacy. Nevertheless, the Paris Principles are increasingly at risk of losing their relevance and role in the national protection system with NHRIs continuously being exposed to threats that erode their independence, credibility and public legitimacy.

While the establishment of NHRIs suggests States are willing to subject themselves to scrutiny and accountability, several key and recurring practices exist that negate institutional compliance with the Paris Principles in law and practice. Executive overreach and interference; inadequate resourcing, and limitations to jurisdiction, slow response to urgent situations of human rights violations; and a lack of timely interventions have significantly undermined the mandate and competence of NHRIs in the region to fulfil their roles.

FORUM-ASIA has been advocating for the strengthening of the independence and effectiveness of NHRIs in Asia, including through its role as Secretariat of the Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI). In August, ANNI published its **2014 Report on the Performance and Establishment of National Human Rights Institutions in Asia**. This annual assessment of NHRIs in Asia serves as an advocacy tool to enhance the work and functioning of NHRIs, compiling contributions from organisations representing 14 countries and analysing national level developments over the course of 2013 and significant events in the first quarter of 2014. In particular, the Report focuses on issues of independence and effectiveness of NHRIs and their engagement with other stakeholders, especially civil society organisations (CSOs). ANNI formally launched its report in September in New Delhi, during the ANNI Regional Conference, where a series of panels sought to identify challenges and obstacles affecting the work and functioning of Asian NHRIs in the fulfilment of their mandate.

Another main thrust of FORUM-ASIA and ANNI's work is advocating for the establishment of independent and effective NHRIs in countries where such institutions do not yet exist. This is particularly significant where other domestic protection and accountability mechanisms remain weak or inadequate.

Unity of purpose through ANNI

Formed in 2006, The Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI) brings together thirty-one organisations from 18 States across Asia. Its annual reports are the only assessment of its kind analysing the performance of national human rights institutions and the challenges they face as per their mandate.



National Advocacy Campaigns

Countries without NHRIs/Taiwan

In April, ANNI held its annual Regional Consultation with members and partners in Taipei. The location was a strategic choice, capitalising on the recent Sunflower Revolution and in a bid to **galvanise local efforts** to establish an independent NHRI in Taiwan.

NHRIs/in crisis: the Maldives

The summons and subsequent charges filed against members of the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM) in October and following the submission of its independent assessment to the HRC of the country's human rights situation is a glaring and worrying example of government overreach. **ANNI expressed its condemnation** in an open letter to the President of the Republic of the Maldives. The Government was urged to withdraw all criminal charges against members of the HRCM and ensure the Commission is able to operate in an environment free from government interference, threats, intimidation, harassment and reprisals.



Members of the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM)

Public Accountability - Burma and Bangladesh

In September, ANNI together with Burma Partnership and Equality Myanmar **launched** the national report on the performance of the Myanmar Human Rights Commission (MHRC) before members of the media and civil society in Yangon. A similar launch and public dialogue to stoke engagement and interest, while also ensuring sustained and public scrutiny was conducted in Bangladesh with the Chairperson of the NHRC, Dr. Mizanur Rahman.

VIII. Regional Human Rights Mechanisms

Regional Protection in Southeast Asia

Strengthening the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanisms

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established in 1967 with the common goal of accelerating economic, social and cultural development, promoting regional peace and stability and to promote greater cooperation and mutual assistance among Southeast Asian States. Since 1993 human rights has been a point of discussion for ASEAN and in 2009, the sub-regional body established the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR). This was followed in 2010 by the establishment of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC). The terms of reference for the AICHR clarify that its mandate is to be primarily promotional and advisory in nature and does not capacitate it to receive individual complaints or conduct investigations. This coupled with the practice of non-interference and consensus in ASEAN has rendered it to be an ineffectual regional human rights mechanism.

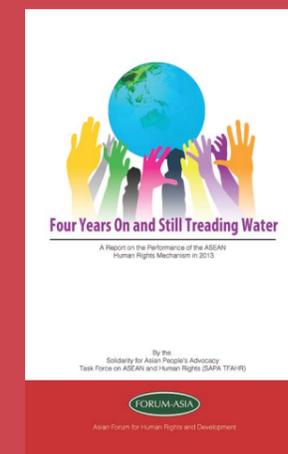
This is clearly illustrated by the continuing failure of AICHR to address the case of Sombath Somphone, a Laotian HRD who was disappeared more than 2 years ago and its failure to condemn mass-rights violations committed in Burma, including reports of widespread and systematic sexual and gender-based violence in Kachin and Northern Shan States and against the Rohingya.

In 2014, AICHR initiated an assessment of its performance as the basis of an ASEAN review of AICHR's terms of reference. In order to push for an effective review of the terms of reference, FORUM-ASIA joined the call with other CSOs for a substantial, participatory and transparent review that would give the AICHR a broader mandate as well as more independence.

FORUM-ASIA conducted several activities, to complement this call, including addressing the **26th Regular Session** of the HRC in an oral intervention and also initiated and co-signed an open letter addressed to the **47th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting** in August, along with 48 other organisations. FORUM-ASIA also participated and provided input on the review of the terms of reference during AICHR's regional consultation and workshops.

The Regional Consultation on ASEAN and Human Rights is a civil society initiative led by FORUM-ASIA and SAPA TFAHR. The Regional Consultation serves as a platform for strengthening engagement with the ASEAN Human Rights Mechanisms and for discussing the human rights situation in the ASEAN region. The First Regional Consultation on ASEAN and Human Rights was held on 26-28 August 2007 in Kuala Lumpur and resulted in the creation of the SAPA TFAHR.

In November, FORUM-ASIA and KontraS, organised the **7th Regional Consultation on ASEAN and Human Rights in Jakarta**. The Consultation provided a platform for dialogue and solidarity as well as coordination among civil society actors in the ASEAN region to discuss and rate AICHR's and the ACWC's performance on the promotion of human rights. It also saw the launch of a report on the same by FORUM-ASIA and the Solidarity of Asian People's Advocacy – Task Force on ASEAN and Human Rights (SAPA – TFAHR). This 4th report entitled **"Four Years On and Still Treading Water"**, critiqued AICHR's performance record and offers recommendations on how this might be improved. The report finds continuous gaps within the work of the AICHR and the ACWC in implementing their mandates and work plan, such as limited engagement with CSOs, and constant silence on the human rights situation in the region.



VIII. Regional Human Rights Mechanisms

Regional Initiative for a South Asia Human Rights Mechanism

Regional Initiative for a South Asia Human Rights Mechanism

At the national and regional level throughout Asia there exists varying degrees of protection against human rights abuses. Where such rights have been violated, recourse at a national level through judicial mechanisms are invariably the starting point for human rights protection.

Given the gravity of the challenges faced by South Asia, domestic institutions single-handedly are not in a position to guarantee the protection of human rights as enshrined in national constitutions, domestic legislation and international law. Africa, Europe, the Americas and Southeast Asia, all benefit from an additional layer of protection and promotion of human rights at the regional level. South Asia conversely, from Afghanistan to the Maldives, lags behind other regions in offering its people further protection through a mechanism that would be capable of addressing human rights where national mechanisms have failed or are incapable of doing so.

In light of these realities, FORUM-ASIA has sought to rally civil society in the region around a call for the establishment of a South Asian Human Rights Mechanism (SAHRM) through the activities of the Regional Initiative for South Asian Human Rights Mechanism (RI-SAHRM), where FORUM-ASIA acts as secretariat. The RI-SAHRM was created subsequent to a sub-regional platform held in Nepal in 2010 and 2011 with the mission to advocate for, and help create an environment conducive for the establishment of a South Asian Human Rights Mechanism.

FORUM-ASIA together with its members and a Task Force consisting of eminent personalities from the region, convened several consultations at the national and regional level bringing together NGOs, rights-activists, academics, NHRIs and parliamentarians to address challenges and obstacles to the protection of human rights at the national and international level. These forums enabled like-minded groups and individuals to come together with a view to creating unity of purpose and partnerships across the region, often in territories where such unity has not existed at a governmental level.

Four such consultations were organised in 2014, in Kabul, Afghanistan; Lahore, Pakistan; New Delhi, India; and Dhaka, Bangladesh. Similar consultations are planned for 2015 in Bhutan – the Maldives – and Sri Lanka. FORUM-ASIA also partnered with INSEC and the Asian Democracy Network (ADN) in utilising the People's SAARC gathering in November to galvanise support for a regional mechanism.

Task Force for the Regional Initiative for a South Asia Human Rights Mechanism

The Task Force was created in 2012 during the RI-SAHRM National Consultation (3-4 December 2012) in Bangladesh, to provide leadership and strategy. It is comprised of seven eminent persons from the region: Dr. Sima Simar (Afghanistan); Dr. Mizanur Rahman (Bangladesh); Dr. Rinchen Chopel (Bhutan); Mr. Miloon Kothari (India); Mr. Subodh Raj Pakyurel (Nepal); Ms Hina Jilani (Pakistan) and Mr. Ibrahim Ismail (the Maldives).

Advocating for a Regional Human Rights Mechanism at People's SAARC

The People's SAARC (South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation) is a forum where non-government voices come together in the SAARC region and foster cooperation and solidarity at the people-to-people level.

FORUM-ASIA co-organised with its member organisation INSEC and partners ADN and RI-SAHRM a side event called "Regional Human Rights Mechanism: Inter-regional Dialogue on ASEAN and SAARC (Experience from ASEAN and Efforts from SAARC)" that involved a comparative study of the ASEAN human rights mechanisms with efforts to establish a mechanism in South Asia.

People's SAARC parade in Kathmandu, Nepal



IX. United Nations Advocacy

FORUM-ASIA uses the UN human rights mechanisms to pressure national authorities to improve their performance on fundamental freedoms and human rights in the region. It acts as a bridge between official and geopolitical discussions at the HRC and ground realities by connecting its members and partners in Asia to diplomats, UN officials and civil society groups in Geneva.

Focus on Sri Lanka

Despite the end of Sri Lanka's civil war in 2009, justice and accountability for its victims remain elusive. The final months of the war were marked by mass human rights and humanitarian law abuses allegedly committed by the Sri Lankan armed forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Rather than abating, the human rights situation has continued to deteriorate. In 2014 HRDs and the press were intimidated and silenced while attacks on religious minorities spiraled and the militarisation of the north and east of the country, where ethnic Tamils live as a majority, has surged. As President Rajapakse who oversaw the last stages of the war entrenched himself and his family in the economic and political structures of the country, national institutions and the judiciary lost their independence as the democratic credentials of the country disintegrated.

Immediately after the end of the war the HRC passed a resolution that congratulated the country and overlooked wartime abuses. This was considered one of the lowest points in the Council's history. It took many years of intense advocacy by civil society groups inside and outside the country including FORUM-ASIA and its partners to convince the body to scrutinise the country. It was only in 2012 that the HRC passed its first resolution seeking accountability in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan government has consistently opposed all calls for international measures towards accountability in the country and refused to cooperate with the UN in this regard.

In this context FORUM-ASIA advocated for accountability during the March session of the HRC and worked with other civil society groups in the global South in developing a joint statement aimed at HRC Member States from

the global South. FORUM-ASIA welcomed the resolution that established a comprehensive investigation in to gross and systematic human rights abuses committed during and after the civil war. However that with the exception of South Korea, all the Asian Members of the HRC either voted against or abstained from voting on the resolution.

That the investigation was met with a lack of cooperation by the government of Sri Lanka, including by restricting access to victims and witnesses and threats to those who might cooperate with the investigation was of deep concern to FORUM-ASIA.

In October FORUM-ASIA together with the ISHR submitted a report to the UN Human Rights Committee in the context of its review of Sri Lanka in October. The report documents over 20 cases where HRDs have been attacked by State and non-State actors in connection with their work to promote human rights and pursue investigations and accountability for gross and systematic human rights abuses. FORUM-ASIA, together with global human rights organisations also called on the Sri Lankan government and Members of the HRC to address and condemn such instances of intimidation.

Ruki Fernando and Father Praveen



Poignant examples of reprisals against Sri Lankan HRDs include, Balendran Jeyakumari, a prominent campaigner against enforced disappearances, who was detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA); and the detention of activists, Rukshan Fernando and Father Praveen, also under the PTA, when attempting to investigate Ms. Jeyakumari's arrest.

Focus on Cambodia

While the political environment might have changed in Cambodia, the fundamentals of governance and human rights protection not. These were the concluding remarks of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation on human rights in Cambodia, Prof. Surya Subedi, while presenting the final report of his 5-year term at the HRC's 27th session. For FORUM-ASIA, the lack of substantive response from the Cambodian government to any of its numerous communications over the past year is worrisome.

FORUM-ASIA, together with members, AD-HOC and LICADHO, appealed to the HRC not to lose sight of the human rights situation in Cambodia and urged the Cambodian government to show serious commitment to implement recommendations put forward by

the UN Special Rapporteur through several oral statements and open letters.

FORUM-ASIA also joined other organisations, including the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT), the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and World Alliance for Citizen Participation (CIVICUS), in organising a side event during the 27th session of the HRC, to brief UN Member States and civil society organisations on the situation of HRDs in Cambodia. Land rights activist Chan Puthisak was part of the panel and spoke of attacks and threats against grassroots defenders by security forces, companies and the judiciary. Chan was himself arrested and beaten when he joined a peaceful protest in January 2014 for an increase in minimum wages.

Focus on Burma

In March, FORUM-ASIA and Burma Partnership jointly produced a briefing paper on the situation of human rights in Burma, distributed ahead of the 25th regular session of the UNHRC. The paper highlighted the significant backsliding and lack of progress on various human rights issues, such as criminalisation of HRDs; use of repressive laws; systematic discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities, and human rights violations related to development and business investments.

The paper was part of a comprehensive advocacy strategy that FORUM-ASIA led together with other national and international civil society groups to be fed into the HRC's consideration of the human rights situation in

Burma. Prior to the 25th session, FORUM-ASIA with Burma Partnership and 43 other Burmese civil society organisations circulated an open letter to the Member States of the HRC urging it to continue monitoring the situation of human rights in Burma in order to provide the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of human rights in Burma a full monitoring mandate. A second call was also made in an oral statement delivered by FORUM-ASIA at the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur, where FORUM-ASIA stressed the need for the Council's attention as serious human rights violations persist and remain unaddressed.



Supporting Civil Society during the Universal Periodic Review

FORUM-ASIA supported Maldivian and Mongolian CSOs during workshops organised in Malé and Ulaanbaatar for preparation of their stakeholder report for the second-cycle of the UPR. Mongolia and the Maldives will be assessed under the second-cycle of the United UPR in 2015. During both activities CSOs were able to identify challenges,

recommendations and lessons learnt from the first-cycle of the UPR and to formulate new advocacy strategies and follow-up tools for the second-cycle, with a view to ensure effective implementation of the recommendations.

Asian Perspectives on International Human Rights: Understanding the role of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in human rights'

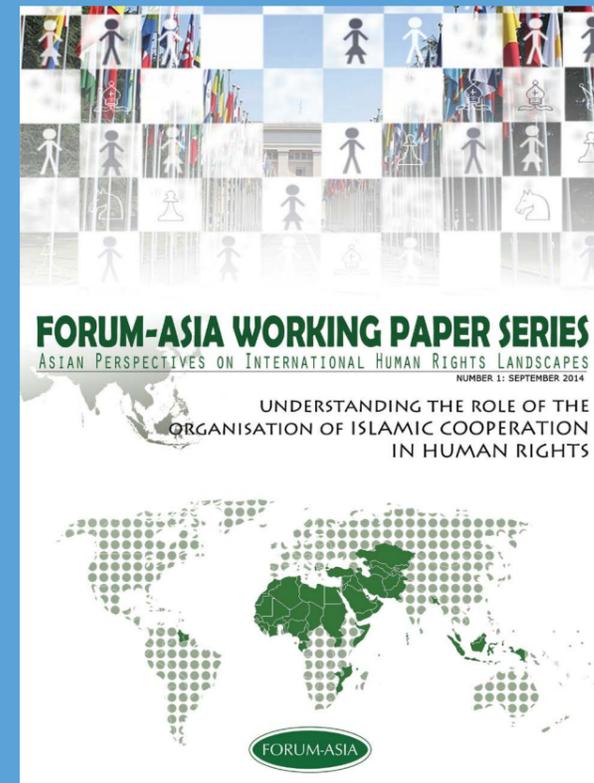
FORUM-ASIA launched its first paper in its new Working Paper Series. The series addresses Asian views on international human rights. Papers under this series are research and analysis based resources that

explore issues relevant to Asia in the international human rights context and open new vistas for debates, advocacy and further research.

The first paper in the series looks at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In recent years, the OIC has begun to take greater interest in human rights than during its early decades. It has also moved to create its own regional human rights body, the Intergovernmental Permanent Human Rights Commission. However at the same time it still maintains its relatively negative positions on human rights at international venues.

The OIC's entry into the human rights arena has the potential for significant impact on human rights issues that concern the global South, including in Asia where many countries are OIC members.

In this context, FORUM-ASIA's working paper attempts to cater to the increasing need for civil society, particularly in Asia, to understand OIC's working mechanisms, underlying norms and particularly the OIC's focus on human rights.



Strengthening Civil Society Capacity

UN Advocacy Training and Study Session for Asian HRDs (UNATS) VI

In December, FORUM-ASIA organised in Bangkok its 6th UNATS, a continuation of its ongoing training programme on UN mechanisms for Asian HRDs with little or no exposure to UN mechanisms. 18 Participants of the UNATS, drawn mainly from FORUM-ASIA members and partners focused on how they can use the UN mechanisms to

support their advocacy as well as support the advocacy of their counterparts in other Asian countries. During the 5-day training the trainees had the opportunity to participate at a regional consultation with the UN Special Rapporteur on FoAA.

Workshop on Human Rights and Diplomacy in Asia: Bringing the international to the national

In November, FORUM-ASIA launched a new initiative aimed at bridging the gap between international human rights decision making, foreign policy and national advocacy. The workshop on Human Rights and Diplomacy in Jakarta brought together 25 participants from Asia, Africa and South America to explore ways of working together on democratising in the global South.

Participants discussed how to strengthen civil society role in national foreign policy decision-making; and mapped regional and international groupings that can be the target of advocacy and a push for change, such as the OIC, SAARC, ASEAN and the Commonwealth of Nations. Specific country situations that warrant greater attention, namely Burma, Cambodia, North Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand were also discussed in their geopolitical contexts.

The Workshop resulted in the formulation of strategies to democratise foreign policy-making at the domestic level and on advocating at the national level for human rights based international diplomacy on key crucial country and thematic situations.

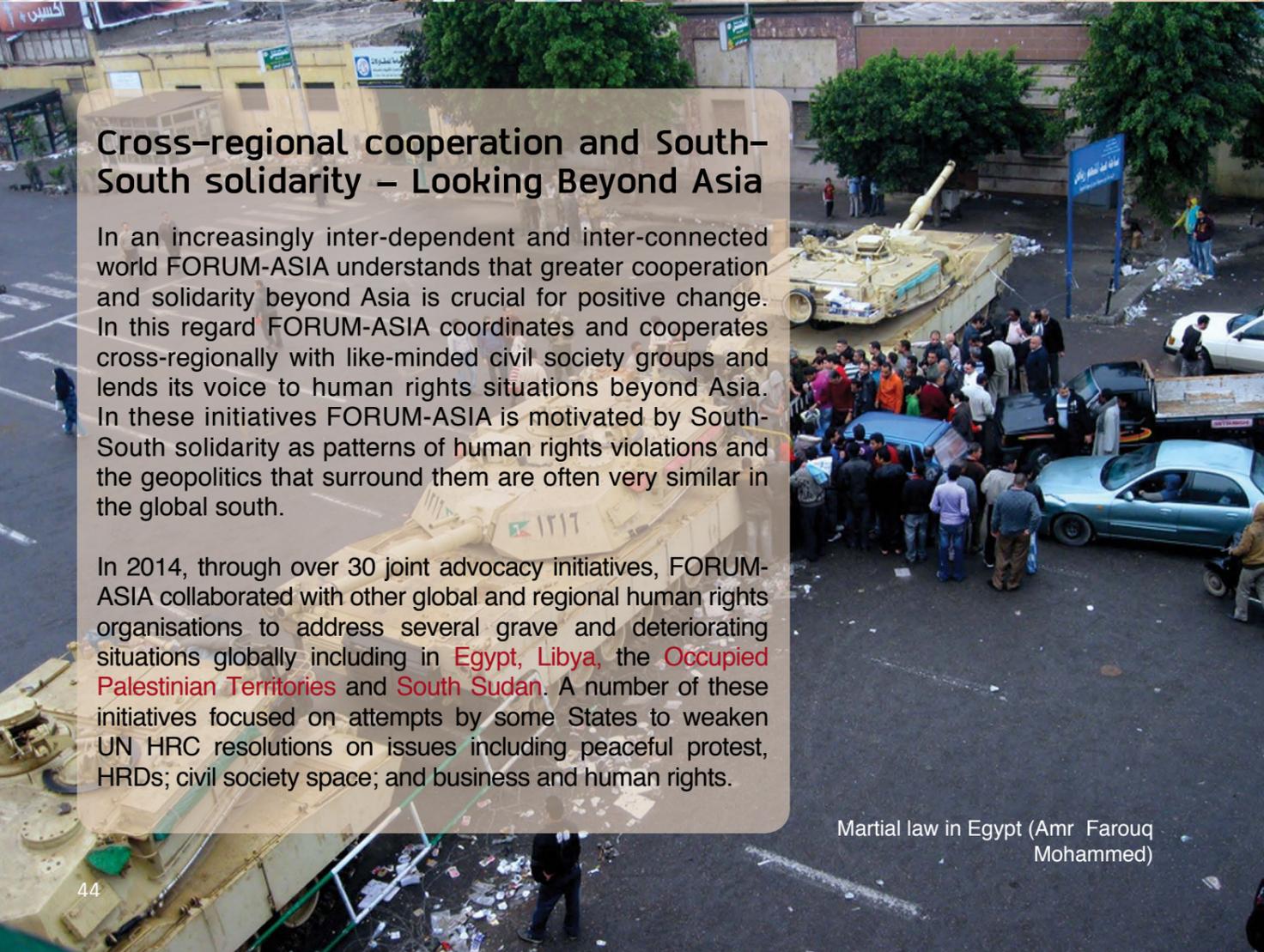




Lybian refugees in a camp in Tunisia



Internally Displaced People in a camp in South Sudan (UNHCR)



Martial law in Egypt (Amr Farouq Mohammed)

Cross-regional cooperation and South-South solidarity – Looking Beyond Asia

In an increasingly inter-dependent and inter-connected world FORUM-ASIA understands that greater cooperation and solidarity beyond Asia is crucial for positive change. In this regard FORUM-ASIA coordinates and cooperates cross-regionally with like-minded civil society groups and lends its voice to human rights situations beyond Asia. In these initiatives FORUM-ASIA is motivated by South-South solidarity as patterns of human rights violations and the geopolitics that surround them are often very similar in the global south.

In 2014, through over 30 joint advocacy initiatives, FORUM-ASIA collaborated with other global and regional human rights organisations to address several grave and deteriorating situations globally including in **Egypt**, **Libya**, the **Occupied Palestinian Territories** and **South Sudan**. A number of these initiatives focused on attempts by some States to weaken UN HRC resolutions on issues including peaceful protest, HRDs; civil society space; and business and human rights.

Palestinian man during Operation Protective Edge in Gaza (Basel Yazuri)



X. ACRONYMS

ACWC	ASEAN COMMISSION ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN
ADA	ASIA DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE
ADHOC	CAMBODIAN HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
AHRDF6	6TH ASIAN REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS FORUM
AICHR	ASEAN INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
ADN	ASIA DEMOCRACY NETWORK
ANFREL	ASIAN NETWORK FOR FREE ELECTIONS
ANNI	ASIAN NGOS NETWORK ON NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS
ASEAN	ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
CSOs	CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS
CIVICUS	WORLD ALLIANCE FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION
FIDH	INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
FLDs	FRONT LINE DEFENDERS
FoAA	RIGHTS TO FREEDOM OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY AND OF ASSOCIATION
FoE	RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF OPINION AND EXPRESSION
GCAP	GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION AGAINST POVERTY
HRDs	HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER(S)
IFP	INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF NATIONAL NGO PLATFORM
IMPARSIAL	INISIATIF MASAYARAKAT PARTISIPATIF UNTUK TRANSISI BERKEADILAN

INSEC	INFORMAL SECTOR SERVICE CENTER
ISHR	INTERNATIONAL SERVICE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
KONTRAS	THE FEDERATION OF COMMISSION FOR THE DISAPPEARED AND VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE
LICADHO	CAMBODIA LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
NHRIs	NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS
NAM	NON-ALLIGNED MOVEMENT
OMCT	WORLD ORGANISATION AGAINST TORTURE
OIC	ORGANISATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION
PAHRA	PHILIPINE ALLIANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES
RI-SAHRM	REGIONAL INITIATIVE FOR A SOUTH ASIA HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISM
SAPA – TFAHR	SOLIDARITY OF ASIAN PEOPLE’S ADVOCACY TASK FORCE ON ASEAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS
SEACA	SOUTH EAST ASIAN COMMITTEE FOR ADVOCACY
SEAPA	SOUTHEAST ASIAN PRESS ALLIANCE
SAARC	SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION
TFDP	TASK FORCE DETAINEES OF THE PHILIPPINES
UNATS	UN ADVOCACY TRAINING AND STUDY SESSION FOR ASIAN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS
UN HRC	UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
UPR	UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW
WHRD	WOMENS HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER

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XII. Donors

FORUM-ASIA would like to thank the following donors
for their generous support in 2014:



This publication has been made possible
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Vision

To build a peaceful, just, equitable and ecologically sustainable community of peoples and societies in Asia; where the human rights of all individuals, groups and peoples – in particular, the poor, marginalised and discriminated – are fully respected and realised in accordance with internationally accepted human rights norms and standards.



Mission

To promote and protect all human rights, including the right to development, through collaboration and cooperation among human rights organisations and defenders in Asia.



Objective

To strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy in Asia and beyond by consolidating Asian human rights movements through effective collaboration with members and partners on international solidarity action as well as engagement with states and other stakeholders at national, regional and international levels.



Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development