



**32nd Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 2: Oral Update by the High Commissioner – General Debate**

**Oral Statement Delivered by Rosanna Ocampo
On behalf of the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)**

Tuesday, 14 June 2016

Mr President, FORUM-ASIA welcomes the High Commissioner's update. We share his concerns on human rights situations in several Asian countries.

We reiterate the High Commissioner's concern at the drastic increase in targeted killings of writers, bloggers, social media activists and religious as well as sexual minorities in Bangladesh. Noting recent reports of arrests made in connection with these murders, we urge the government of Bangladesh to ensure that transparent and credible investigations are carried out in line with international human rights standards.

We echo the High Commissioner's concerns about shrinking democratic space in Cambodia and Maldives. In Cambodia, the enactment of the Law on Associations and Non-Governmental Organisations (LANGO) has imposed severe restrictions on the work of civil society. The continued detention of four senior staff of ADHOC a prominent human rights NGO on trumped up charges adds to our concerns. We call on the government of Cambodia to repeal LANGO and take measures to create a conducive environment for credible elections in 2017 and 2018.

Civic space in Maldives is being increasingly curtailed. The government has been consistently suppressing assemblies that express dissent. Recent examples include a crackdown on peaceful protests by journalists demanding media freedom and the banning of a public rally organised to mark the International Labour Day. This situation has been further compounded by the judiciary's increasing failure to follow due process in a number of recent cases. We call on the government of Maldives to protect fundamental human rights of all its citizens.

We endorse the High Commissioner's concern at the use of sedition charges and detention against those who critique Thailand's draft constitution. We call on the Thai government to: repeal sections of the Referendum Act that prohibit public discussion of the draft constitution; allow inclusive and open debate ahead of the referendum; and ensure that all voices are heard without fear of reprisals.

Lastly, we join the High Commissioner in reminding the incoming President of Philippines of his obligations under international human rights law to protect and promote human rights of all including journalists, civil society and human rights defenders.

Thank You