



Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development
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34th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 4: Human rights situations that require the Council's attention – General Debate

Oral Statement Delivered by John Samuel on behalf of
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
Tuesday, 14 March 2017

Mr President, FORUM-ASIA draws the Council's attention to several deteriorating human rights situations in Asia and calls for the Council's urgent attention.

In the Philippines, over 7,000 people have been killed in the so-called 'war on drugs'. We call on the Philippine government to conduct a credible and independent investigation into extrajudicial killings and bring perpetrators to justice. We further call of the government to cooperate with UN and international experts to this end.

Recent amendments to the Law on Political Parties in Cambodia risks severely curtailing democratic political space prior to upcoming elections. Arbitrary detention of five human rights defenders Ny Sokha, Nay Vanda, Yi Soksan, Lim Mony, and Ny Chakrya and the judicial harassment of land rights activist Tep Vanny continue. We reiterate our calls for the release of detained HRDs and the amendment of all regressive laws.

In India, HRDs, civil society, journalists and dissidents are targeted by both State and non-State actors. This is often legitimised through a dangerous discourse that often brands them as being "anti-national".¹ Broad provisions of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 2010 (FCRA) are deployed against NGOs critical of the government. These restrictions are further exacerbated by the increasing use of criminal defamation or sedition provisions of the Indian Penal Code against dissenters.²

Lastly in Bangladesh, increased targeted attacks and killings of writers, bloggers, journalists and minorities has added a chilling effect to the already oppressive environment in the country. Extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearance, torture and deaths in custody continue to take place. The newly enacted Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Bill 2016³ adds to a raft of existing legislation systematically used restrict the work of HRDs.⁴

Thank You

¹ A/HRC/34/NGO/157, Written statement submitted by FORUM-ASIA to the 34th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council <https://www.forum-asia.org/uploads/wp/2017/02/HRC34-FA-Written-Statement.pdf>

² A/HRC/34/NGO/157

³ FORUM-ASIA (27 October 2016) Bangladesh: Repeal Foreign Donations Regulation Bill and ensure enabling environment for civil society <https://www.forum-asia.org/?p=21769>

⁴ Joint NGO alternative report to the UN Human Rights Committee on Bangladesh https://www.forum-asia.org/uploads/wp/2017/03/Bangladesh_Joint-Report-to-UN-CCPR.pdf