



**A public lecture with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression**

State of Freedoms of Assembly, Association, Expression and Religion on the Internet in Asia

7:00pm, Friday Thursday 6 October 2017

Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand

Free Admission & Food will be served before and after the lecture

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Join the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Prof. David Kaye, for an informative overview on the current status of freedom of expression in Asia, particularly online.

The freedoms of assembly, association, expression and religion are rights that are both interrelated and interconnected. Increasingly, people are using the Internet to exercise these rights. Backlash to this has come in the form of restrictions placed on these fundamental freedoms by States and outright attacks by non-state actors.

In Asia, evidence of these trends is seen in: the introduction of new legislation governing online spaces; the application of existing legislation on blasphemy or religious sentiments to censor online content; arrests and violence against dissenters; and much more. As the desire of people to use online spaces to express themselves and come together with like-minded peers grows, so will attempts by others to limit, curtail or outright prohibit it. A combination which provides for an unstable and dangerous dynamic.

Which is why from 4-6 October 2017, the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), Bytes for All, Pakistan (B4All), and Global Partners Digital are organising a regional consultation in Bangkok on the State of Freedoms of Assembly, Association, Expression and Religion on the Internet in Asia. The Special Rapporteur will be one of the key speakers. During the press-briefing on 6 October the Special Rapporteur will explore his views on the freedom of expression online in Asia.

**Media contacts in Bangkok:**

- For more information or if you want to set up an interview with the Special Rapporteur, please contact Marte Hellema, Programme Manager Communication and Media for FORUM-ASIA at [marte@forum-asia.org](mailto:marte@forum-asia.org), [communication@forum-asia.org](mailto:communication@forum-asia.org) or 0999 46 1108.

**About the Special Rapporteur:**

David Kaye was appointed UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression in August 2014. He is a clinical professor of law at the University of California, Irvine, School of Law. He teaches international human rights law and international humanitarian law and directs a clinic in international justice. His research and writing focus on accountability for serious human rights abuses and the law governing use of force. He has

collaborated with local and national governments, major international NGOs as well as those at the grassroots, international organizations, and academic institutions around the world.

For a full overview of his background, please click [here](#).

#### **About the organisers:**

**The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)** is a network of human rights organisations across Asia. FORUM-ASIA works to promote and protect human rights, including the right to development, through collaboration and cooperation among human rights organisations and defenders in Asia and beyond. [www.forum-asia.org](http://www.forum-asia.org)

**The Association for Progressive Communications (APC)** is an international network of organizations that was founded in 1990 to provide communication infrastructure, including Internet-based applications, to groups and individuals who work for peace, human rights, protection of the environment, and sustainability. Pioneering the use of ICTs for civil society, especially in developing countries, APC was often the first provider of Internet in countries where it has members. [www.apc.org](http://www.apc.org)

**Bytes for All (B4A), Pakistan** is a research and advocacy organisation working at the intersection of human rights and information and communication technologies. B4A conducts research for evidence-based policy advocacy and capacity building of civil society organisation and individuals on Internet rights and governance, including their digital/ online safety and privacy. Bytes for All, Pakistan is a member of FORUM-ASIA. <http://content.bytesforall.pk/>

**Global Partners Digital (GPD)** is a social purpose company dedicated to fostering a digital environment underpinned by human rights and democratic values. It does this by making policy spaces and processes more open, inclusive and transparent, and by facilitating strategic, informed and coordinated engagement in these processes by public interest actors. [www.gp-digital.org](http://www.gp-digital.org)