

# DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

## WHO ARE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS?



Human rights defenders (HRDs) are **INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS** taking action to protect and promote human rights through peaceful means



HRDs can **ADDRESS ANY HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IN VARIOUS WAYS**. This can include reporting on violations, providing support to victims, or any other form of action that promotes and protects human rights



### IN DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS, HRDs MUST:



adopt **PEACEFUL MEANS** – they cannot use any form of violence to achieve their goals

accept the **UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS** – all rights are inherent and indivisible, meaning HRDs should not discriminate against certain rights

## WHO CAN BE HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS?

Regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion/belief, ethnicity, or any other social category

**ANYONE  
CAN BE A  
HRD!**

Whatever one's profession is – whether a person is working for a human rights organisation, or is a volunteer, a student, a street vendor, farmer, community member, mother – that person can be a HRD

The most important factor in defining a HRD is **THE ACTION TAKEN** in promoting and protecting human rights

## WHY SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS?

HRDs are often seen negatively for relentlessly demanding both state and non-state actors to respect and protect human rights. This exposes them to various forms of abuses.

HRDs **PLAY A VITAL ROLE** in fighting against human rights violations, central for **ELIMINATING DISCRIMINATION AND INJUSTICE**.

FORUM-ASIA recognises the need to address the on-going violations against, and criminalisation of, HRDs, who play a key role in ensuring that everyone's human rights are protected and fulfilled. To this end, on the 20th year anniversary of the Declaration on HRDs, FORUM-ASIA is producing visual materials that emphasise the importance of HRDs and their contributions, the rights they have, and the responsibilities of others towards HRDs, under the Declaration.

