

CONCLUDING STATEMENT
15th Annual Meeting
of
South East Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF)
13 - 14 September 2018
Bangkok, Thailand

The South East Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF) consisting of the National Human Rights Commission of Indonesia (Komnas HAM), the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC), the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHRP), the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT), and the Provedoria dos Direitos Humanos e Justica (PDHJ), convened its 15th Annual Meeting which was hosted by the NHRCT in Bangkok, Thailand, on 13 - 14 September 2018.

The main outcomes of the Meeting were as follows:

SEANF Special Event to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1. SEANF members welcomed the special event to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the panel discussion on “Human Rights as an Enabling Factor to Achieving the SDGs” organized by the NHRCT in cooperation with the Regional Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for Southeast Asia in the morning of 13 September 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand. The special event was attended by all SEANF members and representatives of Thai concerned ministries, foreign embassies, international organizations and civil society organizations.

Adoption of the Agenda

2. The agenda of the 15th Annual Meeting was adopted without amendment.

Adoption of the Report of the 2nd TWG Meeting in 2018

3. SEANF members adopted the report of the 2nd Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting held on 12 - 13 July 2018 in Nonthaburi, Thailand, as amended by MNHRC and CHRP.

Sharing of Updates of Developments and Activities after the 14th Annual Meeting

4. SEANF members shared major developments and activities undertaken since the 14th Annual Meeting on a wide range of issues, including protection of the rights of stateless persons, indigenous peoples, children and LGBTI, abolishment of the death penalty, promotion of human rights education and public awareness raising, advocacy activities relating to business and human rights, fair trial and prison reform, accreditation review and capacity assessment.

Establishment of the SEANF Permanent Secretariat

5. SEANF members took note of the efforts taken by Komnas HAM towards the establishment of the SEANF permanent secretariat. They expressed their appreciation to Komnas HAM for such efforts and requested Komnas HAM to further pursue the matter with concerned Indonesian agencies.

6. SEANF members agreed that in the meantime, SEANF would continue the current practice whereby the member institution assuming SEANF chairmanship takes the responsibility for coordinating joint SEANF activities and hosting SEANF meetings.

Action Plan to Implement the SEANF Strategic Plan (2017 - 2021)

7. SEANF members took note of the Action Plan as revised by the 2nd Technical Working Group Meeting and the amendments made by the CHRP. They then proceeded to adopt the Action Plan as amended.

Global Compact on Migration (GCM)

8. SEANF members welcomed and appreciated the presentation made by the CHRP on the result of inter-governmental negotiations of the GCM and the outcome document which is to be adopted at the GCM Summit in Morocco in December 2018. SEANF members took note of the relevant roles of NHRIs in the implementation of the GCM.

9. The CHRP informed the meeting that it would participate at the GCM Summit and would brief the SEANF members of its outcome. SEANF members agreed to have further discussion on possible development of a sub-regional mechanism dealing with migration issues.

Rights of Older Persons

10. SEANF members expressed appreciation to the CHRP for the presentation on the outcome of the 9th Working Session of the UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing.

11. The CHRP presented the revised Baseline Paper on the Rights of Older Persons in Southeast Asia which had incorporated all additional inputs from SEANF members. SEANF members then proceeded to adopt the Baseline Paper and agreed with the proposal made by the CHRP that it be published as a SEANF document.

Joint Activities with RWI and APT

12. The NHRCT and CHRP briefed the meeting on the outcome of the Consultative Workshop on Human Rights Violations and its Cross-border Effects, organized in cooperation with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute (RWI) on 16 - 17 August 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand. SEANF members agreed to discuss possible cooperation on dealing with cross-border human rights violations among SEANF at the next SEANF meeting upon circulation of the final report of the Workshop.

13. SEANF members took note of the update made by the NHRCT on cooperation between SEANF and the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) in the development of a SEANF regional guideline on torture prevention. SEANF members agreed to meet with the APT, at the latter's request, to have further discussion on the matter during GANHRI General Meeting in Geneva in early 2019.

SEANF Statement on Human Rights and SDGs

14. SEANF members discussed the draft SEANF Statement on Human Rights and SDGs, which had been prepared by the NHRCT and circulated to all SEANF members prior to the meeting. They then proceeded to adopt the draft Statement as amended.

Other Matters

16. No issue was raised under this agenda item.

Handing over of SEANF Chairmanship from NHRCT to PDHJ

15. On the principle of rotation, the SEANF chairmanship was handed over from the NHRCT to the PDHJ at the conclusion of the 15th Annual Meeting.

SEANF members commended the NHRCT and its staff for the excellent arrangement of the 15th Annual Meeting and expressed appreciation for the hospitality extended to all participants by the NHRCT.

Bangkok, 14 September 2018

National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT)