

CONCLUDING STATEMENT
First Technical Working Group Meeting for 2017 of the
South East Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF)
La Breza Hotel, Quezon City, Philippines
27-28 April 2017

The South East Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF) held the first Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting for 2017, which was hosted by the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines (CHRP) as the Chair of SEANF, in Quezon City, Philippines on 27-28 April, 2017. The Members of the SEANF – 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 Provedoria for Human Rights and Justice of Timor Leste (PDHJ), and the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand (NHRCT) attended the TWG meeting.

The main outcomes of the TWG meeting are as follows:

1.0 Adoption of the Agenda

- 1.1 The Agenda for the first TWG Meeting was adopted with minor amendments as to the sequence of each agenda.
- 1.2 the agenda for the first day of the TWG Meeting focused on administrative, executive and institutional matters: recap of the 13th annual meeting in 2016; assessment of activities on the rights of older persons; economic, social and cultural rights, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the SEANF Secretariat, SEANF strategic plan of 2017-2021, business and human rights, migration and human rights and upcoming SEANF meetings and ASEAN and AICHR engagement.

2.0 Sharing of SEANF's experiences after the 13th Annual Meeting of the SEANF Updates on the Rights of Older Persons

- 2.1 MNHRC shared conclusions from the Annual Meeting and session on older persons. Copy of the Concluding Statement of the 2016 meeting and statement on the rights of older persons were shared by the CHRP to the SEANF members on 28 April 2017.
- 2.2 NHRCT, PDHJ and Komnas HAM shared updates from their respective countries on legislation or activities on older persons.
- 2.3 CHRP discussed its experiences in promoting the rights of older persons in the Philippines as well as its engagements with the GANHRI Working Group on Ageing. CHRP also mentioned the direct participation of NHRIs

in the UN Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (UNOEWGA), which was granted in December 2016. NHRC Korea represents GANHRI in the working group. NHRIs around the world are also welcome to attend UNOEWGA sessions. The 8th session of the UNOEWGA will take place from 5-7 July 2017 in New York.

- 2.4 SEANF members discussed its possible participation to the event focusing on the right of older persons to be hosted by NHRC Korea on 18 – 21 September 2017, in Seoul.
- 2.5 CHRP committed to give SEANF members necessary updates particularly on the Commission's actions for the promotion of the rights of older persons and developments at the international level towards a potential UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons.
- 2.6 CHRP expressed that it will keep sharing information on UNOEWGA and similar sessions.
- 2.7 CHRP shared to the SEANF members the circular from the National Human Rights Commission of Korea (NHRK) entitled 'Call for Application to the Program for NHRI Human Rights Officers', inviting NHRI staffs in all regions to submit applications for the Partnership Program for NHRI Human Rights Officers which will take place from 29 May to 2 June.
- 2.8 SEANF members agreed to create a system or mechanism within the SEANF to keep every member updated not only on developments regarding the rights of older persons but also to other issues and developments.
- 2.9 SEANF members agreed to put together a collective position paper on the rights older persons in South East Asia, and this will be issued during the 14th annual meeting. CHRP will coordinate with the members for their inputs to the paper.

3.0 The role of SEANF in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

3.1 SEANF members discussed their experiences in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in their respective countries.

3.2 SEANF members acknowledged efforts by the NHRCT in assisting its state party in its plan to make extensive research on the SDGs and develop a manual for monitoring economic, social and cultural rights in accordance with the Opera Framework.

3.2.3 NHRCT shared that it has already organized an in-house training session to disseminate knowledge gained during a training course among the Commissioner in charge and relevant officers. NHRCT likewise shared its

[plan to develop a manual for monitoring the ESCR by incorporating the OPERA framework into the manual.](#)

- 3-33.4** On the second TWG meeting on June 2016 in Myanmar, CHRP agreed in principle to hold a sub-regional training program on monitoring SDGs and ESCR. CHRP then updated the members on the APF facilitated “Blended Learning Course on Monitoring Economic, Social and Cultural Rights-Training for NHRIs.” The training was held in Manila on 23-27 January 2017, organized by APF and in cooperation with the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR).
- 3-43.5** In this training, participants were trained to use the OPERA Framework to measure the fulfillment of economic, social and cultural rights. The training aimed to enrich the methods used by NHRIs in monitoring the fulfillment of ESC rights in their countries.
- 3-53.6** SEANF members discussed the need for sufficient training and capacity building on implementing SDGs and ESCR that is specific to the needs of the NHRI staff in South East Asia. They agreed on engaging the APF to further provide SEANF members with training seminars relevant thereto.
- 3-63.7** CHRP expressed that it will continue to engage the APF to conduct trainings seminars and workshops to effectively follow through on its ESCR-related activities and engagements.
- 3-73.8** SEANF members welcomed the proposal of the CHRP to hold a 2nd APF seminar at a future date.
- 3-83.9** Komnas HAM committed to consider the inclusion of ESCR programs in its 2018 National Workplan and to conduct more research and studies on the SDGs following its development of web-based tools for the monitoring of SDGs and human rights.

4.0 SEANF Permanent Secretariat

- 4.1** SEANF members strongly supports the commitment of Komnas HAM to undertake necessary preparations for the creation of a permanent secretariat. The Commission declared its intention to prepare a comprehensive academic paper which will serve as a justification for the enactment of a law, by virtue of a presidential decree, which will vest legal status to the SEANF permanent secretariat. The academic paper will be shared to the SEANF members once it is prepared.
- 4.2** The SEANF Rules of Procedure should be amendment, and will be an attachment to the academic paper.
- 4.3** There were also discussions on membership fees, and how it will be reduced eventually by having funding support from donors and through the assistance of APF. Komnas HAM is exploring these funding options.

- 4.4 Komnas HAM will update the Roadmap of the SEANF Secretariat based on the discussion at the 2017 first TWG meeting. The updated roadmap will be shared to the members in due course.
- 4.5 Maintenance of the SEANF website will be eventually turned over to Komnas HAM. CHRP will resume updating the website and reactivating the facebook page, members will send current and relevant documents and news articles to be uploaded and posted on the website and facebook page.

5.0 Amendments to the SEANF Rules of Procedure

- 5.1 SEANF members made necessary corrections with regard to typographical errors in SEANF rules of procedures and discussed proposed amendments thereto.
- 5.2 SEANF members agreed to amend further the SEANF Rules of Procedures until the second TWG meeting for 2017 and should be finalized and adopted during the 14th Annual Meeting.

6.0 SEANF Strategic Plan 2017-2021

- 6.1 The priorities of the SEANF for the next five years:
 - a. Movement of peoples – migrant workers, trafficking in persons and refugees, and asylum seekers
 - b. Business and human rights
 - c. Climate justice
 - d. Terrorism and extremism
 - e. Rights of vulnerable groups
 - f. Sustainable development goals
- 6.2 SEANF members agreed to intensify efforts to urge their respective state parties to ratify the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) and to conduct research studies to monitor whether local legislations are properly in line with the ACTIP.
- 6.3 Komnas HAM presented a matrix of the strategic plan with suggestions on activities that will operationalize the priorities. The matrix will be shared to the members for further inputs and comments. Activities for the Strategic Plan will also be finalized and adopted at the annual conference.
- 6.4 SEANF members agreed to prepare a resolution coached in general terms expressing its commitments against the death penalty, issues at the border, the issue on refugees and other pressing issues.
- 6.5 SEANF members acknowledged the suggestion of the CHRP to include in future agendas the concerns on LGBTIQ rights.

6.6 Members also agreed that those NHRIs with strong advocacy programs on any of the six priorities (of the strat plan) can lead the discussion in SEANF. As an example, Komnas HAM and NHRCT have strong programs on business and human rights and can facilitate the discussion and action planning and implementation in that regard.

6-66.7 NHRCT proposed that the SEANF include the standing agenda items in open session for members to share their own activities, experiences and best practices related to any of the six priorities in the SEANF Strategic Plan which might not have to be the same topics. In the event that the SEANF members find specific issues of common interest, this might induce further plans and actions to be conducted together and/or in collaboration with other networks such as the APF.

7.0 Business and Human Rights

7.1 The discussion on business and human rights emerged from the discussion on the strategic plan.

7.2 SEANF members shared its experiences in business and human rights in their respective countries.

7.3 SEANF members underscored the need to include business and human rights in their respective national action plans and to engage in effective dialogue with corporations in relation to business and human rights.

7.4 Komnas HAM shared its experience in preparing its National Action Plan with focus on business and human rights, in cooperation with NGOs and committed to share the plan once it is completed.

7.5 SEANF members concurred with the proposal of Komnas HAM to hold one high-level meeting in Timor Leste in 20-22 July 2017, to be funded by Raoul Wallenberg Institute. The agenda for the meeting would be to talk about business and human rights, border issues and extraterritorial obligations and to make a statement of recommendations to heads of states. The meeting intends to engage chairpersons of NHRIs and to release a press statement following the meeting.

7.6 SEANF members acknowledged the plan to NHRCT to organize a national event and a seminar on business and human rights to be held in Bangkok on 31 May 2017. SEANF members commended the NHRCT for inviting the Prime Minister of Thailand to give the opening remarks, and the United Nations to give a special lecture on the role of the UN in Business and Human Rights.

7.7 SEANF members lauded the CHRP for taking cognizance of the landmark environmental human rights case involving the world's largest carbon

produces known as the 'Greenpeace case'. SEANF members noted that the 'Greenpeace case' will serve as a starting point for NHRIs' significant involvement in environment and climate change issues. The body welcomed the initiative of the CHRP to update the SEANF members on developments involving the landmark case.

7.8 SEANF members supported the recommendation of NHRCT for business and human rights to be included in the agenda items in subsequent TWG meetings and in the SEANF strategic plan.

8.0 SEANF engagement with AICHR and ASEAN Bodies

- 8.1** SEANF members discussed and shared their experiences on their engagement with the AICHR and other ASEAN bodies.
- 8.2** SEANF members affirmed the commitment of CHRP to look into ways to better engage NHRIs in the ASEAN Civil Society Conference / Asia Pacific Forum parallel to the ASEAN Ministerial Meetings in July / August 2017, by co-organizing a session in Manila, Philippines and to invite SEANF members in the same. CHRP will report back to the members with details about the proposed side event / session.
- 8.3** SEANF members committed to assist in ensuring the participation of PDHJ in AICHR events.
- 8.4** SEANF members recognized efforts of Vietnam to establish a National Human Rights Institutions and committed to extend assistance to any country intending to do the same.
- 8.5** On ACTIP, as a first step, members should lobby for countries in South East Asia (with NHRIs) to ratify the convention.
- 8.6** For countries that have ratified, members should advocate for the application and implementation of the convention at the national level.
- 8.7** CHRP will check which body in ASEAN SEANF should engage with to strengthen implementation of ACTIP – identify when and where the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime is held.
- 8.8** Engagement with AICHR – SEANF members will continue talks with country representatives, support the creation of NHRIs in other countries, and also lobby for the inclusion of PDHJ in discussion spaces at ASEAN.

9.0 Second Technical Working Group Meeting for 2017 and 14th Annual Meeting

- 9.1** SEANF members agreed that the second TWG Meeting for 2017 of the SEANF will be held in Cebu or Manila, Philippines on 7-8 September 2017 and that the 14th Annual Meeting and Conference will be held on 8-10 November 2017 – venue yet to be agreed upon.

- 9.2** SEANF members decided to continue discussing migration and human rights as the focus for 2017. CHR will develop a substantive agenda and program of action.
- 9.3** In 2010, SEANF published a paper on migrant workers (NHRIs from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand). There should be plans to follow through on the recommendations.
- 9.4** Migration and human rights are also very significant for the years 2017-2018 because of the discussions leading to the Global Compact on Migration.
- 9.5** CHRP and Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme (CNDH – Morocco) are designated as GANHRI focal points for coordinating NHRI engagement in the process of the development of the Global Compact on Migration (together with NHRIs in Germany and Mexico).

10.0 Additional Matters

- 10.1** SEANF members noted that a Roundtable discussion on extraterritorial obligations of States will be held in Dili, Timor Leste, in July 2017. Komnas HAM is coordinating with Raoul Wallenberg Institute in the organizing of the program.¹
- 10.2** SEANF members noted that a forum on Human Rights Cities will be held in Purwakarta on 9-11 August, 2017. Komnas HAM is also coordinating with Raoul Wallenberg Institute for this activity.
- 10.3** SEANF members commended the excellent facilitation of the TWG meeting by the Chairperson of the SEANF, as well as the hospitality extended to all participants by the CHRP.

11.0 CHRP Presentation of the Greenpeace Case

- 11.1** SEANF members welcomed with great appreciation the presentation of the CHRP on the landmark Greenpeace case.
- 11.2** SEANF members agreed that NHRIs play a bigger role and intensify its engagement in the field of environmental human rights.

12.0 Migration and human rights

¹ Update: 12 May 2017 email from PDHJ: PDHJ will be busy for the preparation for Parliament Election in Timor Leste. PDHJ, as of this writing, is waiting for the response from Komnas HAM on possibly hosting the program in Jakarta.

[First draft 23 May 2017](#)

[Addendum from NHRCT 21 August 2017](#)

12.1 A special session on migration and human rights was organized on 28 April 2017. The minutes and action points can be found in a separate document, attached to this statement.

Manila, 14 May 2017

Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines