## Asia – Pacific Conference on Internet Freedom
22- 23 March, 2023 Bangkok, Thailand

The Asia – Pacific Conference on Internet Freedom conference is organized by ARTICLE 19 as part of the **Internet Freedom Initiative** coalition with partners the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), the International Center for Not-For Profit Law (ICNL), ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHR), and Open Net Association. The conference is also organized with the support of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

## Day 1 Programme (22 March)

| Time | Agenda |
|---|---|
| **8:30 – 9:00** | <u>**Registration Day One**</u> – Disperse Per Diem |
| **9:00 – 9:45** | <u>**Opening Remarks and Introductions**</u><br><br><u>Remarks by:</u><br><br>• Michael Caster, Asia Digital Programme Manager (Interim co-Head of Asia Programme), ARTICLE 19;<br>• Cabell Willis, Program Officer, Internet Freedom, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, United States Department of State<br>• Cynthia Veliko, Regional Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in South-East Asia |
| **9:45 – 11:15** | <u>**Online Freedom of Expression and Information under International Human Rights Law (Lighting talk)**</u><br><br><u>Facilitator:</u><br><br>• Damar Juniarto (Indonesia), Executive Director, Southeast Asia Freedom of Expression Network<br><br><u>Speakers:</u><br><br>• Bangladesh – Faruq Faisel, Regional Director South Asia Programme, ARTICLE 19<br>• Cambodia – Veasna<br>• Myanmar – Victoire Rio, Myanmar Internet Project<br>• Philippines – Lisa Garcia, Executive Director, Foundation for Media Alternatives<br>• Thailand/Laos – Emilie Palamy Pradichit, Founder & Executive Director, Manushya Foundation<br>• Vietnam – Anh Tuan, Vietnam Voice |

| | |
|---|---|
| | This opening session will be a comparative examination of regional trends in internet freedom, exploring geopolitical dynamics, threats and solutions, key take aways from six representative countries. Each speaker will have 10 – 15 minutes to present on their country context and will conclude with a concrete take away to stimulate conversation and discussion on the challenges and opportunities of promoting internet freedom in Asia Pacific over the two days of the conference. |
| **11:15 – 11:30** | **Coffee Break** |
| **11:30 – 13:00** | **Risks to internet users (Panel discussion)**<br><br>Session will be an intersectional dive into digital rights and security risks and challenges, with attention to surveillance and how online harms can transfer into the real world. Speakers will highlight various risks to internet users from a variety of country and thematic perspectives focus on but not necessarily limited to surveillance and how violations of the right to privacy negatively impact other human rights from the right to freedom of expression to the rights to association, assembly, and others.<br><br>Facilitator:<br><br>• Don Le, Research Assistant, ARTICLE 19<br><br>Speakers:<br><br>• Katherine Chen (Taiwan), Professor, National Chengchi University, Member Facebook Oversight Board<br>• Sadaf Khan (Pakistan), Association for Progressive Communication<br>• Darika Bamrungchok (Thailand), Program Manager, Thai Netizen Network<br>• Eloisa Mesina (Philippines), Asian Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) |
| **13:00 – 14:00** | **Lunch** |
| **14:00 – 15:00** | **Legislative developments affecting internet freedom**<br><br>This session will tackle regional laws and regulations amounting to censorship. Speakers will cover specific legislative challenges to protecting internet freedom from the perspectives of civil society, legislators and policymakers, and the technology sector. The session will begin with an overview of restrictive legislative measures in the region from expert panellists but open into a general discussion with all participants to identify regional trends in negative laws and regulations.<br><br>Facilitator:<br><br>• Kyungsin Park (Korea), Professor at Korea University Law School, Director at Open Net Korea<br><br>Speakers:<br><br>• Raoul (Philippines), Hon. Raoul Danniel A. Manuel, Member of Parliament<br>• Frederick Rawski (USA), Head of Human Rights Policy, APAC, META<br>• Kelly (Malaysia), Programme Officer, Sinar Project |

| | |
|---|---|
| **15:00 – 15:30** | **Coffee Break (Fireside chat: Asia Pacific School of Internet Governance – APSIG Chair) – Mubashir Sargana** |
| **15:30 – 16:30** | **Legal advocacy approach to defending internet freedom (Panel)**<br><br>Acknowledging the trend of increasing repressive laws and regulations across Asia Pacific, and building on the previous discussion, this session will tackle the opportunities and limitations for strategic litigation in challenging restrictive laws and regulations in the region to promote internet freedom. Speakers will share from their own direct strategic litigation practices, advocacy, and scholarship to present concrete case studies and lessons learned on the legal mechanisms available to digital rights defenders.<br><br>Facilitator:<br><br>• Daron Tan (Singapore), Associate International Legal Adviser, International Commission of Jurists<br><br>Speakers:<br><br>• Kyungsin Park (Korea), Professor at Korea University Law School, Director at Open Net Korea<br>• Thitirat Thipsamritkul (Thailand), Lecturer, Thammasat University Faculty of Law<br>• Edy Can (Indonesia), Board, The Alliance of Independent Journalists |
| **16:30 – 17:30** | **National Coalitions approach to defending internet freedom (Roundtable)**<br><br>The final session of day one will present one strategic, organizational model for tackling the challenges of internet freedom at the national level through discussion with representatives from three national coalitions, digital rights working groups in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Nepal supported by the Internet Freedom Initiative and exploring their own National Action Plans for internet freedom. The session will discuss both the thematic areas of internet freedom taken on by each working group but also share their modalities for organizing and engagement with key stakeholders.<br><br>Moderator:<br><br>• Mony (Cambodia)<br><br>Speakers:<br><br>• Rumky (Bangladesh), South Asia Senior Programme Officer, ARTICLE 19<br>• Nop Vy (Cambodia), Executive Director, Cambodia Journalists Alliance Association - Camboja<br>• Babita Basnett (Nepal), Executive Director, Media Advocacy Group |

# Day 2 Programme (23 March)

| Time | Agenda |
|---|---|
| 8:30 – 9:00 | **Registration Day Two** – Payment of Per Diem |
| 9:00 – 9:30 | **Recap Day One** |
| 9:30 – 10:30 | **Digital Rights Discussion with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights**<br><br>• OHCHR |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | **Coffee Break (Fireside chat: the Stockholm Internet Forum – SIF with Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency – SIDA) with Sejin Kim and Jenny Collste Lager** |
| 11:00 – 12:30 | **Internet freedom futures (Roundtable)**<br><br>In this session, experts will explore different elements of emerging technology, including new frontiers in internet freedom advocacy, future thinking on challenges and opportunities, including but not limited to AI-mediated filtering and infrastructure level censorship to the opportunities of new tools for digital rights advocacy, and disruptive narratives, to grappling with how major stakeholders view the future of internet freedom policy.<br><br>Facilitator<br><br>• TBD<br><br>Expert Commentators:<br><br>• Ephraim Percy Kenyanito (Kenya), Senior Programme Officer, ARTICLE 19<br>• Nayantara Ranganathan (India), Project Lead, Digital Asia Hub<br>• Ciprian Ianculovici (USA), Team Lead, Internet Freedom, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, United States Department of State |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | **Lunch** |
| 13:30 – 15:00 | **Problem solving and strategizing (Group Breakout sessions)**<br><br>Breaking into four or five groups participants will connect and share their expertise and passions and collaboratively arrive at new problem statements, innovative solutions, or action plans for creating or strengthening existing regional networks or initiatives, new directions in policy or technological advocacy, or identifying gaps in existing research and though leadership. While the task of identifying challenges and |

| | |
|---|---|
| | opportunities is not a new exercise, connecting with new people in new environments, even saying the same thing, may stimulate new ideas and trajectories for previously unexplored concepts. The session should be creative, free, and engaging, as much about networking on shared interests as arriving at actionable ideas.<br><br>• Group 1 (Focus on surveillance): Group coordinator – Don Le, ARTICLE 19<br>• Group 2 (Focus on censorship): Group coordinator – Mony, ARTICLE 19<br>• Group 3 (Focus on trends in laws and regulations promoting digital authoritarianism): Group coordinator – Damar, SAFENet<br>• Group 4 (Focus on digital rights litigation): Group coordinator – Daron Tan, ICJ (Singapore), Associate International Legal Adviser, International Commission of Jurists<br>• Group 5 (Focus on internet freedom and intersectionality): Group coordinator –  Nalini, ARTICLE 19 |
| **15:00 – 15:30** | **Coffee Break** |
| **15:30 – 17:00** | **Presentations from breakout groups (plenary)**<br><br>Facilitator:<br><br>• Michael Caster, Asia Digital Programme Manager (Interim co-Head of Asia Programme), ARTICLE 19 |
| **17:00 – 17:30** | **Closing Remarks**<br><br>• Michael Caster, Asia Digital Programme Manager (Interim co-Head of Asia Programme), ARTICLE 19;<br>• Cabell Willis, Program Officer, Internet Freedom, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, United States Department of State |

UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

South-East Asia
Regional Office

ARTICLE¹⁹