



## Launch of the 2023 ANNI Report on the Performance of National Human Rights Institutions in Asia

1 November 2023

11:15 - 13:15 (GMT+8) Kuala Lumpur time

Hilton Petaling Jaya Hotel, Ballroom

**Livestream:** FORUM-ASIA's [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#) (formerly Twitter) channels

### Background

In Asia, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) play a critical role in the promotion and protection of human rights in various countries, acting as a bridge between international standards on the one hand, and the application of these standards at the domestic level, on the other. They occupy an important institutional position for the realisation of a wide spectrum of human rights in their national contexts – thereby also promoting and protecting human rights in the region, where pan-Asian human rights systems have yet to be developed.

Owing to the nature of their work, NHRIs in Asia continue to face a variety of challenges in effectively implementing their mandate. These have been exacerbated in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and NHRIs have had to respond to the evolving civil, political, socioeconomic, cultural, and gender-specific rights concerns that have emerged in the last few years.

The primary objective of the Asian NGO Network on National Human Rights Institutions (ANNI) – a network of Asian NGOs and human rights defenders working on issues relating to or with NHRIs in their respective countries – is to strengthen and promote the role of NHRIs towards respect for, and better protection of, human rights in Asia. This is done by formulating advocacy strategies on the work and functioning of NHRIs in various Asian countries; conducting interventions on NHRIs advocacy in various avenues; and documenting and monitoring NHRIs' performance in compliance with the Paris Principles, which are the international minimum standards for ensuring legitimate, effective, and credible NHRIs.

Since 2006, ANNI has been publishing the ***“ANNI Report on the Performance and Establishment of NHRIs in Asia”***, which assesses the performance of NHRIs in Asian countries, and their establishment in countries which do not have an NHRI yet. These reports are published and disseminated as lobby or advocacy tools, whose target audiences primarily include human rights defenders and CSOs in different Asian countries, working on NHRI advocacy. They are also disseminated to NHRIs by ANNI members, to solicit their feedback (during the monitoring and reporting period) and are used to advocate not only for positive

changes in their work and functioning, but to also make recommendations to governments. These reports also substantially inform ANNI's interventions, such as the stakeholders' submissions to the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions' (GANHRI-SCA) reviews and accreditation of NHRIs, as well as in other fora, such as regional and national-level consultations.

2023 marks an important year for NHRIs and those who conduct advocacy on the functioning of these institutions, as it is the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Paris Principles. To mark the occasion, and to disseminate the findings of the network's assessment to a wide audience, ANNI will be launching the 2023 edition of the ANNI Report at the 10<sup>th</sup> Asian Human Rights Defenders Forum (AHRDF10). This year's ANNI Report will be focusing on the performance of NHRIs in 13 countries over a two-year period (2021-2022), through a quantitative and qualitative civil society assessment.

The launch of the Report will be followed by a panel discussion, bringing together panellists associated with NHRIs and NHRI-related advocacy, such as NHRI representatives, human rights defenders from ANNI member organisations, and representatives of NHRI networks. The discussions will centre around the findings of the Report; the human rights issues facing the region; reflections on 30 years of the Paris Principles and their importance for NHRIs in the Asian region; opportunities for collaboration among NHRIs and civil society organisations; and the way forward. The panel discussion will be followed by a question-and-answer session for the attendees to engage with stakeholders involved in the event.

### Objective

- To disseminate the findings of CSOs relating to the performance of NHRIs in Asia, and to discuss ANNI members' experience in conducting NHRI advocacy – the challenges, lessons learned, setbacks and good practices; and
- To further ANNI's engagement with regional stakeholders and NHRIs in the region on a range of human rights challenges in various countries, and on advocating for Paris Principles-compliant NHRIs to effectively protect and promote human rights in their countries

### Format

The ANNI Report will be launched at the AHRDF10, followed by a panel discussion that will bring together representatives from NHRIs, NHRI networks, and human rights defenders from ANNI member organisations.

**Launch** – Mary Aileen Diez Bacalso, Executive Director, FORUM-ASIA

**Panellists** –

1. Yibee Huang, Covenants Watch
2. Haroon Baloch, Bytes for All
3. Fia Hamid-Walker, Asia Pacific Forum of NHRIs (APF)
4. Prof. Raymund Rosuelo, CHR Philippines
5. Shomira Sanyal, ANNI Secretariat/NHRI Programme (Moderator)

**Discussion Topics** –

- The findings of the 2023 ANNI Report;
- The human rights issues facing the region in the assessment period (2021-2022);
- Reflections on 30 years of the Paris Principles, and their importance for NHRIs in the Asian region;
- Opportunities for collaboration among NHRIs and civil society organisations; and
- The way forward

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