



Present and Future of National Action Plans in Asia Through the Eyes of Four Business and Human Rights Champions

11:30-13:00 (Bangkok time, GMT+7), 9 June 2020

United Nations Virtual Forum on Responsible Business and Human Rights

New Challenges. New Approaches.

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Background

The first stand-alone National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights in Asia was adopted by Thailand in November 2019. Similar stand-alone plans are scheduled to be finalized in 2020 in India, Japan, Mongolia and Pakistan. The Government of Malaysia has adopted a longer road map that should lead to a NAP adopted in 2021. Other countries, including Indonesia, Maldives and Nepal, and have decided to plan on the implementation of the UNGPs in the context of wider Human Rights Action Plans.

Alongside these developments, governments are drafting new policy provisions to manage the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on their people and economies, with significant implications for business. In some ways, the Business and Human Rights agenda is at an inflection point in Asia, emerging in a time of grave economic and public health crisis. It is not yet clear whether the design and implementation of NAPs will be strengthened or weakened in this climate. It is more certain that NAPs will be shaped by the exigencies of our time.

Session Description

Four country experiences in developing a NAP will be presented by the four people that have been leading those efforts in their respective countries. Emphasis will be placed on good practices and pitfalls experienced. The four Government officials will also be asked to comment on how NAPs are being or should be used to plan in advance for times of emergencies such as the ongoing one related to COVID-19.

While representatives of the governments will be the main speakers, the discussant roles will be assigned to non-state actors. Half of the session will be left for questions formulated from the virtual floor. Questions will be collected in advance of the session and clustered by the moderator but also accepted on the spot as inspired by the presentations of the speakers.

Session Objectives

The session will serve the main purposes of informing on progress in developing NAPs and sharing peer experiences. The discussion will include reflections on the role of Governments in setting expectations for business enterprises to uphold Human Rights, including in times of emergencies.

Questions

- At what point is the developing of the NAP in your country?
- Highlight one thing of your experience that you are particularly proud of and one thing you wish you had approached differently
- Do NAPs also offer an opportunity to plan for corporate responsibility in times of emergency such the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic?

Speakers

- **Ms. Rabiya Javeri Agha**, State Secretary, Ministry of Human Rights, Government of Pakistan
- **Ms. Oyu Vasha**, Head of Human Rights Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Mongolia
- **Ms. Nareeluc Pairchaiyapoom**, Director of International Human Rights Division, Rights and Liberties Protection Department, Ministry of Justice, Royal Thai Government
- **Ms. Akiko Sato**, Human Rights Now and Civil Society Platform for Japan's National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (BHR-NAP Platform)
- **H.E. Mr. Pirkka Tapiola (global reflections)**, Ambassador, Delegation of the European Union to the Kingdom of Thailand
- **Mr. Dante Pesce (global reflections)**, Member, United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights
- **Ms. Sor Rattanamanee Polkla (discussant)**, Executive Coordinator, Community Resources Centre
- **Ms. Chanda Thapa (discussant)**, Deputy Secretary General, Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP)
- **Mr. Livio Sarandrea (moderator)**, Business and Human Rights Advisor, United Nations Development Programme