

## ACSC/APF 2017

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

### **WHAT?**

#### ***THE ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE/ ASEAN PEOPLES' FORUM (ACSC/APF)***

The ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) is a solidarity gathering of diverse civil society organizations (CSOs) in Southeast Asia, which organizes its own parallel activities during the ASEAN Summit. It is a broad civil society movement on ASEAN issues that has a strong mandate in representing and strengthening ASEAN peoples' voices. For the past 11 years, it remains a strategic platform for CSOs to engage ASEAN member states and mechanisms.

In this meeting, CSOs bring up broad issues from different sectors and concerns, such as human rights, development, trade, environment, youth, and culture, affecting many countries in the region.

Initially, this forum was named as ACSC (the 1st ACSC in Malaysia – 2005), and adopted in the Philippines (2006) and Singapore (2007). The additional name APF was added during the IV ACSC (2009) in order to accommodate the different interpretation towards the term CSO and people's organizations from Thailand's CSOs. Since then, different titles have been used for the ACSC/APF forum in the subsequent meetings.

The output from this meeting is a joint statement and recommendation for the ASEAN Leaders regarding the ASEAN Summit. A feature of the ACSC/APF is to open spaces for dialogue with ASEAN Leaders. Whether CSO representatives are able to meet with ASEAN Heads of State in the form of an Interface during the ACSC/APF depends upon the attitude of the government hosting the Summit and ACSC/APF. Nevertheless, the joint statements and recommendations are submitted to the ASEAN Secretariat and the government representatives.

### **WHO?**

Participants of the ACSC/APF come from civil society organizations, NGOs, people's organizations, and people's movements.

#### ***THE PHILIPPINE PROCESS***

The Philippine Process is a broad network of CSOs, peoples' organizations, and social movements all over the country that strategically engage the issue of ASEAN, and which carry a tradition of critically engaging ASEAN governments since 2005 through the regional platform-ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF), an annual meeting of CSOs parallel to the ASEAN Summit of Heads of State.

#### ***THE NATIONAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE***

This year's host will be the ACSC/APF Philippines through its National Organizing Committee (NOC) which has more than 50 CSOs including coalitions, national organisations, national networks, centers, academics, and regional groups with offices in the Philippines. As the 2017 host, ACSC/APF Philippines has a standing terms of reference of engagement on ASEAN issues with the Philippine government. For several years, the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) has been the lead convener of the ACSC/APF Philippine Process. This time, it was again nominated as the co-convener for 2017, along with the PhilWomen on ASEAN.

### **WHERE?**

This 2017, as the Philippines assumes chairship of ASEAN, civil society organizations in the Philippines will also be the host for the ACSC/APF.

## **WHY?**

In 2017, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) will be celebrating its Golden Year. The Philippines Government, as Chair of ASEAN in 2017, is hosting the next ASEAN Summit and activities to commemorate the 50 years of ASEAN.

In conjunction with the upcoming ASEAN meetings of Heads of States, the peoples movements in Southeast Asia will hold a parallel civil society forum to present the situations on the ground and exchange studies and demands or alternatives on urgent issues faced by the peoples of Southeast Asia. Through our participation in this event, we wish to contribute to the effort of raising more awareness about ASEAN, especially that we are directly working with our respective community partners.

## **HOW?**

The ACSC/APF 2017 will organize a series of parallel activities and mobilizations in the Philippines.

### ***ACSC/APF ENGAGEMENT MODALITY***

- OPENING DOORS – providing a platform for more people to be involved.
- PARTICIPATION – to get as many groups and communities as genuine partners. This would involve getting people from grassroots community, Sabah and Sarawak and also groups who are not generally in the front line.
- CONSULTATIVE/DIALOGUE – inclusive engagement in the dialogue processes.
- COALITION BUILDING – as some of the members are part of different networks, there is an opportunity to build coalitions.
- CONSENSUS – in the spirit of democratic decision process we endeavor for consensus building and respect of ideas.
- CITIZEN SPACES – spaces for common people to voice their issues.
- RESPECT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY – to respect differences of opinions, representation of people/issues, openness to learn and to engage.
- NON-VIOLENCE – to rejection promotion of violence or incitement of hatred.

### ***ACSC/APF GUIDING PRINCIPLES***

- HUMAN RIGHTS – adhere to international human rights principles and standards as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights laws;
- DEMOCRACY – principle of democratic process to be respected;
- GOOD GOVERNANCE – to be participatory, consultative and have genuine engagement and dialogue;
- RULE OF LAW – to adhere to the rule of law;
- NON-DISCRIMINATION – to respect that everyone is equal irrespective of race, religion, sex, gender, social opinion and other status, etc.;
- NONRETROGRESSIVE / PROGRESSIVE/EVOLUTIONARY – not to regress in term of human rights and to be updated with current minimum standards; and
- COMMITMENT TO SPREAD AWARENESS ON ASEAN – socializing ASEAN to the constituents.

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## **FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE GO TO:**

<http://aseanpeople.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ASEANPeoplesForum/>

or contact the ACSC/APF 2017 Secretariat at: [secretariat.acsc.apf2017@gmail.com](mailto:secretariat.acsc.apf2017@gmail.com)