



**Concept Note**  
***ACSC/APF 2024: Toward A People-Led Democracy and***  
***Sovereignty in Southeast Asia***  
**19-21 September 2024**  
**Dili, Timor-Leste.**

### **I. Background**

The global economic system known as imperialist capitalism is in its systemic, and deepening crisis. Multiple crises have resulted in the form of an ecological crisis, debt crisis, living cost crisis, mental health crisis, as well as the crisis of capitalist modernity itself. In this vacuum, uncertain and impassable times allow the unequal balance of power to minority ruling power, where it reinforces and encourages the rise of fascism, racism, populism, extremism, right conservatism, and apartheid, instead of progressive changes, alternative practices, popular governance, genuine democracy and real development that serve people and planet needs.

The Southeast Asia region is not resilient to these global systemic and periodic crises. The region was designed to submit to the demand of global capital, and specially the Global North development needs, and Western-dominated oppressive and exploitative regime at global scale. The region is now being increasingly financialized and digitized, marked in the significant growth of e-commerce, signifying also its long decades of inability to industrialize, and this growing financialization and digitalization serving as a major factors contributing to rising precarity, austerity and informal economy in the region, and for certain, deepening inequality.

The Southeast Asia region as part of the Asian continent as a whole has continued sustaining the high income, consumption and development needs of the North. The region hosted and served better the transnational corporations and monopoly companies from the North, allowing tax concession and fiscal austerity in order to secure a legal and policy environment friendly to global monopolies at the expense of neglecting the investment and spending to social needs and development of the people in the region. Majority of its population are living under poverty, with no basic rights such as the right to housing, education, health, employment, social security, protections, and citizenship: in short, no rights to welfare and life.

This is to say, most of the governments in Southeast Asian countries have turned to a more pro-West, free market, liberalization and elites, instead of promoting policies that serve the people and the planet. Hence, most of the states in Southeast Asia, has been, for decades and years, becoming more oligarchic, where it designed to keep few people control the political power and concentrate economic wealth and at the same time, it encourage the separation of state governance from people participation and collective mechanism, it fostering the exclusive power and privilege at the hands of few clientelistic, and dynastic system of rule, protecting as a vassal of most powerful Western states in the region.

Democracy in the region is consistently in tragic regression for years, civic space is shrinking, where the government passed new laws, regulations, institutional and technological design to silence dissent voices, activists and protest. With the development of oligarchilization and monopoly, has fomented the social, economic and territorial polarization, with the widening of petty-criminal, gangsterization, and extremism. Neo-obscurantism are in reigned through the various means of money politics, propaganda campaign and tech-facilitated algorithm bias in supporting conservative agenda by manipulating the conscious of the masses and channeling into support the various right wing politicians and political parties with social chauvinist agenda and pro-corporatism.

Hence, ASEAN, as it was, was a regional association headed by anti-democratic forces. The democratic rights, development needs and sovereignty aspirations of the people are incompatible with current neoliberalism, monarchies, militarism, authoritarianism, gerontocracy, and the monoculture regime that reigned in the ASEAN region. Its regional mechanism has not been so effective in terms of holding country members accountable for justice and respecting human rights. The economic pillars centered on competition, and commodification are the dominant, core of state-oriented regional integration and community-building.

However, the ASEAN region is a peasants and youth-dominated region – most of the working people are becoming more precarious, and working in daily struggle for life as informal workers. There are people's demands for recognition, autonomy, and independence. The Rohingya people suffered the systemic violence that denied their nationhood but also other basic rights. Liberation struggle for people such as in West Papua continues despite increasing militarization and violence of the Indonesian military occupation.

The hope lies in the majority victims of neoliberalism, of capitalist globalization and oligarchy of Southeast Asia. The people are resisting, people are organizing themselves for resilient, resistances and for creating alternatives, and building their own counter-hegemonic initiatives in many spheres of social-cultural, economic and politics. The people are experimenting, criticizing, demanding, protesting, and mobilizing for changes, from the mainland to the maritime archipelago of Southeast Asia countries.

The people of Southeast Asia are facing the same enemies, its common challenges: oligarchy and monopoly. This required a collective praxis, coordinated actions and mobilizations, this required a common agenda and common goals of democratization in all spheres of economy, cultural and political. In addition, the existing regional integration is directed by these powerful forces: national oligarchy and global monopolies. Therefore, the people of Southeast Asia need a new alternative regionalism that is centered on supporting national independence, democracy of the people, and sustainable development.

In line with these background, previous conferences, and current theme, we invite submission and contributions in the following thematic areas:

- a. Working People, Neoliberalism and Alternative Regionalism
- b. State Violence, Militarism, National Liberation and Democracy
- c. Tech Monopoly, Digital Authoritarianism and Internet Freedom
- d. Ecological Crisis, Environmental Rights, Agrarian and Urban Issues
- e. Minority, Marginal People and Gender Justice
- f. Peace Building, Human Security and Transitional Justice

## **II. Objectives PASS**

The objectives of the ACSC/APF 2024 is:

- a. Promote open-space, people-to-people, grassroots discussion to synergize on alternative practice and strategize on advocacy, campaign, movement-building and resistance on national and regional level
- b. To strengthen the people movement, agendas, demands, regional solidarity and people's power for a struggle to resist exploitative and oppressive regime
- c. To discuss and deliberate for institutional-building, improvement and consolidation of the ACSC/APF

### III. Venue

Escola Secundaria Técnica Vocacional, Becora Dili, Timor-Leste. Google Maps: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/gC5LCjRi15Ne015f9>

### IV. Agenda

The event will take place during three days, 19-21 September 2024, Dili, Timor-Leste.

#### Day 1: 18 September 2024

Time	Activity	Venue
15:00-17:00	Pre-Registration and Claim Name-Baggage	TBC
17:00-18:30	RSC Meeting	TBC

#### Day 2: 19 September 2024

Time	Activity	Venue
08:00-08:30	<b>Participants Arrival and Registration</b>	TBC
08:30-08:40	<b>Cultural Performance</b>	TBC
08:40-09:00	<b>Welcoming Remarks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair of TL NOC, Elisabeth Araujo</li> </ul>	TBC
09:00-09:45	<b>Opening Remark:</b> H.E. Jose Manuel Ramos Horta, President of RDTL	TBC
09:45-10:00	<b>Brief Report on 11 Countries Situations</b> (3 minutes Max/Country) <b>Moderator:</b> Chair of TL NOC,	TBC
10:00-10:30	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
10:30-12:30	<b>Open Plenary Session I:</b> People and Planetary Emancipation: A Critical View from Timor-Leste Fifty Years Struggle for Total Liberation, H.E. Mari Alkatiri, Former Prime Minister of Timor-Leste - Q/A  Moderator Giving the Synthesis of the Plenary: TBC	
12:30-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:30	<b>Open Plenary Session II: Critical Overview for ASEAN Mechanism</b> <b>Opening Talk:</b> David Gum Awng, Deputy Minister of International Cooperation of the National Unity Government of Myanmar.	

	<p><b>Panelist</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ASEAN Parliamentarians for human rights (APHR), TBC</li> <li>2. Ms. Yuyun Wahyuningrum, Indonesia reps to AICHR</li> <li>3. Prof. Eduardo C. Tadem, University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS)</li> <li>4. Ms. Yasmin Ullah, Executive Director, Rohingya Maiyafuonor Collaborative Network</li> <li>5. Mr. Virgilio Guterres, Ombudsman of Timor-Leste.</li> </ol> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Mr. Vieng Akhone Souliyo – Lao CSO Coordination Committee (LCCC) and Executive Director of Community Health and Inclusion Association (CHias)</p>	
15:40-17:10	<p><b>Convergence Space I</b></p> <p>A.I B.I C.I D.I E.I F.I</p>	

### Day 3: 20 September 2024

Time	Activity	Venue
08:00-08:30	<b>Participants Arrival and Registration</b>	
08:30 - 10:00	<p><b>Open Plenary Session III: Feminist movement in upholding Substantive Democracy in Southeast Asia</b></p> <p><b>Opening Talk:</b> Chandy Eng, Executive Director of Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC), Cambodia</p> <p><b>Panelist</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Women migrant workers in the northern regions of Laos (Border Lao, Thai, Myanmar and China) by Ms. Vansy Senyavong-Lao APF NOC, Lao CSO Coordination Committee (LCCC) and Director of Women Maeying Houamjai Phatthana (MHP),</li> <li>2. Potential speaker address the informal workers, Thailand NOC</li> <li>3. Women organizations, movements and initiatives, Dr. Vo Hoang Yen, Founder and Director of Center for Disability Research and Capacity Development (DRD Viet Nam), Confirmed.</li> <li>4. LGBTQIAN+ community and the intersection of LGBTQIA+ movement upholding substantive democracy in Southeast Asia, ASEAN SOGIE Caucus</li> </ol> <p>Moderator: Ms. Chatchalawan Muangchan, Empower Foundation, Thailand</p>	
10:00-10:30	Coffee Break	
10:30-12:00	<p><b>Open Plenary Session IV: People and Planet First: Toward a Liberating Southeast Asia</b></p> <p><b>Opening Talk:</b> Mr. Kannavee Suebsang, Members of MP Thailand, Fair Party Secretary</p>	

	<p><b>Panelist</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alternative to elitist, oligarchic democracy and the struggle of working people, TBC</li> <li>2. Spending and underdevelopment problem in SEA: Case of Timor-Leste, Febe Gomes, Lao Hamutuk, Timor-Leste</li> <li>3. Ecological crises and peasants struggle, Vietnam NOC</li> <li>4. On Burma Situations, Ms. Zue Padonmar, First Secretary from Interim Executive Council of Karenni State</li> <li>5. On Rohingya Struggle, Ms. Nurhayati Ali, Rohingya Mayyafuino Collaborative Network</li> <li>6. Militarism, State Violence and Shrinking democracy, Tioria Pretty, Deputy Coordinator of KontraS.</li> </ol> <p>Moderator: Ms. Duong, Vietnam NOC</p>	
12:00-13:30	Lunch	
13:30-15:00	Convergence Space 2 A.2 B.2 C.2 D.2 E.2 F.2	
15:00-15:30	Coffee Break	
15:30-17:00	Convergence Space 3 A.3 B.3 C.3 D.3 E.3 F.3	
17:00-18:00	Drafting Committee: Presenting Joint Statement to RSC for Approval	

#### Day 4: 21 September 2024

Time	Activity	Venue
08:00-08:30	<b>Participants Arrival and Registration</b>	
08:30-10:00	Drafting Committee: Presenting the Outcome Documents to Assembly	
10:00-10:30	Coffee Break	
10:30-12:00	Drafting Committee: Discussion and Adoption of Outcome Documents in Assembly	
12:00-13:00	Lunch	
13:00-13:30	Joint Press Statement Release and press conference	
13:30-15:00	Closing Remark: H.E. Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, Prime Minister of Timor-Leste - Dialogue	May 5 Park, Colmera

15:30-18:00	<b>Rally for a Celebration of International Peace Day</b> (March from 5 May Park to the Office of Minister of Sport and Youth, Lecidere)	
18:00-21:00	Hand Over to the Next ACSC/APF Host International Solidarity Night - Solidarity Performance for Myanmar, PEF, Thailand	Minister of Sport and Youth, Lecidere, Dili.

## V. Notes on Thematic Convergence Space

Following are the details of the thematic areas of convergence space.

### a. Working People, Neoliberalism and Alternative Regionalism

Focal Point:

Fernando Ximenes <[fernandoximenes87@gmail.com](mailto:fernandoximenes87@gmail.com)>

Jenito Santana <[zona.namihen@gmail.com](mailto:zona.namihen@gmail.com)>

Ryan Martinez <[aniceto.ryanmartinez@gmail.com](mailto:aniceto.ryanmartinez@gmail.com)>

This convergence space will cover issues including, and not limited to: monopolies, free market, trade, investment, austerity, extractivism, under-development, debt, labor protections, welfare, migrant workers, domestic workers, precarious workers, trade union, human trafficking, social inequality, economic injustice, until the alternative practice, people solidarity, and people's regionalism.

### b. State Violence, Militarism, National Liberation and Democracy

Focal Point:

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Debby, <[debbie.stot@gmail.com](mailto:debbie.stot@gmail.com)>

Abel, Hali ba Dame

This convergence space will cover areas including, and not limited to: authoritarianism, state repressiveness, terror, violence, control, militarization, shrinking civic space, crackdown of freedom of expressions, media, governance, accountability, transparency, human rights defender, civic education, and civic movement, freedom of religious, oppressed people struggle for independence such as West Papua, Myanmar. This will cover political and military violence such as that in Myanmar,

### c. Tech Monopoly, Digital Authoritarianism and Internet Freedom

Focal Point:

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Juvita, JPF Podcast, <[juvitapereirafaria@gmail.com](mailto:juvitapereirafaria@gmail.com)>

This thematic convergence space aimed to include broad discussion on areas including, and not limited to: monopolies tech companies, digital economy, surveillance, shutdown, blocking, circumventions, censorship, data mining, privacy, protections, AI discrimination, state regulations and control mechanism, community network, civic tech, Internet Literacy, digital rights and the internet freedom.

### d. Ecological Crisis, Environmental Rights, Agrarian and Urban Issues

Focal Point:

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Owen, Myanmar, <[gen.okkarshein@gmail.com](mailto:gen.okkarshein@gmail.com)>

Leo Soares, UNAER, <[soaresleo90@gmail.com](mailto:soaresleo90@gmail.com)>

This thematic convergence space will discuss the following issues including, and not limited to: climate change, biodiversity loss, disaster, depeasantization, rural-urban migration, food sovereignty, malnutrition, rural women, urban poor, land grab, evictions, dispossession, gentrifications, renewal energy, agro-ecology, permaculture, family farming, peasants movement and cooperative.

*e. Minority, Marginal People and Gender Justice*

Focal Point:

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David Kittituch Sriamrung, Thailand,

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This thematic convergence space aimed to provide space for workshops in areas including, and not limited to: Rohingya people, indigenous people, ethnic and religious minority, LGBTIQ+ persons, children, youth, women, elders, people with disabilities, stateless, sex workers, and displaced persons and undocumented peoples.

*f. Peace Building, Human Security and Transitional Justice*

Focal Point:

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This thematic CS will discuss the following issues to human security, which will be achieved through peaceful and just settlement of conflict, cessation of military/state violence, Dialogue, peace building and justice accountability.

## **VI. Notes on Event:**

In line with the thematic areas, we invite submission and contributions to the following activities:

- a. **Plenary**, ACSC/APF 2024 will be started with a plenary discussion. The RSC and country NOC have the rights to propose their suggested, and proposed speakers to a certain theme of the plenary discussion. The speaker also can self-propose to speak in the plenary since the self-proposals are being approved by RSC. There would be four plenary sessions for three days, with three/four speakers in each plenary. The moderators can be from members of NOC or RSC. Highly encouraged the speakers from youths and women, assuring gender balance, and eleven countries have same quotas for speakers, and moderators.
- b. **Convergence Space**, ACSC/APF 2024 will have dozens of parallel workshops taking place each day during the three days conference. The Convergence space where all the thematic areas are being held in discussion. The convergence space shall be hosted by at least two organizations from two different countries. We encourage the local, national, regional and global-based organizations to organize their convergence space.
- c. **Site Event**, ACSC/APF 2024 will provide a designated space for a self-organized event such as exhibition, discussion, protest, theater, art shows, live arts painting, and film screening.
- d. **Rally/March**, ACSC/APF 2024 will promote activities both in the main venue and its surrounding designated space for convergence space and site events, the ACSC/APF 2024 also intends to organize a rally, peaceful

march in Dili in order to enable participants to express their freedom of expression, and voices. The tentative plan is to celebrate International Peace Day by organizing a rally in solidarity for an oppressed people's struggle for liberation, Stop War rally.

- e. **Night Solidarity**, the ACSC/APF 2024 will provide an open space for celebrating cultural diversity, a moment of joyfulness between participants. The ACSC/APF 2024 will provide a night film screening, cultural night such as presenting traditional folk dancing from various peoples of Southeast Asia. Participants are invited to sign and read poems. Fundraising activity also encourages, where the products from community and organization are encouraged for display and sale on site.

**Timor-Leste National Organizing Committee:**

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