

**A Joint Statement by the People of the Asia Pacific Region
13th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights
Institution**

**28-31 July 2008
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

This statement is one of the outcomes of the NGO Meeting on Engagement with National Human Rights Institutions that was organized in parallel to this meeting.

We the representatives of the Asia and Pacific people would like to give voice to their stories on grave and systematic violations of fundamental rights and freedoms.

We call upon the APF, the International and Regional Community and NHRIs to hear the stories from Iran

Let me tell you of the Executions of 29 dissidents this week and the practice of holding children on death sentences until they are 18 and old enough to kill.

Let me tell you of the systematic floggings, torture, stoning, mutilations, arbitrary detention and enforced disappearances of human rights defenders

Let me tell you of the proposed state control of woman's rights to marriage, divorce, inheritance and compensation

Let me tell you of the control of learning and the right to education of women and any one perceived as a dissident.

Let me tell you of the restrictions on the freedom of movement of human rights defenders or anyone critical of the State and the proposed death penalty for the simple action of blogging against the state.

Let me tell you of the state control of freedom of association and assembly of trade unions, lawyers and human rights defenders.

We further call upon the APF to recognise these grave and systemic human rights abuses and to pay closer attention to the situation of Human Rights Defenders in **Kurdistan** and the discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities

We welcome last year's declaration on the crisis in **Burma** by the four ASEAN NHRIs.

We further urge APF members to again raise the grave human rights situation with in **Burma** there with their own governments and at international and bilateral meetings. These concerns include the arbitrary detention of political prisoners, religious and ethnic discrimination, rape of women and girls, forced labour and other violations of international humanitarian law during counter – insurgency.

We call for the APF to promote the protection, and security of Human Rights Defenders including women and request the APF to call for an end to the culture of impunity in **Nepal**.

We call for the APF to urge Provedor, and Komnas HAM to play a more active role in seeking accountability for past human rights abuses documented by the Commission of Truth and Friendship and further promote the restoration of human rights, peace and justice for those affected in **Indonesia** and **Timor Leste**

We finally call upon the APF, to hear the stories from the isolated **Pacific Islands**

Let me tell you of the smallness of Pacific populations, the geographical isolation and its increased vulnerabilities to external and internal threats.

Let me tell you of the lack and absence of human rights monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

Let me tell you of the December 2006 Fijian military coup and gross violations of fundamental rights and freedoms. And Let me tell you of the only Pacific NHRI in Fiji that was compromised and no longer complies with the Paris Principles.

Let me tell you of a shared common pacific vision for regional development that enhances national sovereignty. A vision that has grown alongside a process of regional self-determination best expressed by the Pacific Islands Forum in its various policy declarations and, in particular, **The Pacific Plan**.

Let me tell you of great hopes for human rights development in regional cooperation. And in the absence of these initiatives human rights defenders particularly women in Fiji and NGO's remain vulnerable.

Let me tell you of conflict in **Fiji, Solomons, PNG** in particular the internal conflicts and displacements in **Bouganville**.

And let me tell you of our smaller Pacific Island Countries and the increasing human rights challenges

We call upon the international community and the APF in particular to hear the Pacific Voice and call for action to protect human rights defenders in particular women and minority groups and encourage the establishment of national and regional human rights monitoring bodies.

We the representatives of the Asia Pacific People make an urgent appeal to APF, the international, Regional community and national human rights institutions to adopt country and region specific measures that promote the observance, protection and fulfilment of human rights in our Asia Pacific Region.