



Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

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14 September 2015

Dr. Chee Soon Juan
Secretary General
Singapore Democratic Party
Singapore

Dear Dr. Chee:

We in the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD) monitored with great interest the General Elections in Singapore which took place last 11 September 2015. Together with many democracy supporters and activists all over the world, we hoped that these electoral exercises would be different from the past, having witnessed how the reinvigorated political opposition's message seemed to resonate so well with the Singaporean electorate. We were particularly impressed by the Singapore Democratic Party's (SDP) attempt to present alternative policies in a number of issue-areas, and how the party conveyed these in a positive campaign that did not resort to character assassination and other dirty tricks.

It is for this reason that when we saw the final results, we could not help but feel disappointed that the Singaporean people again wasted another golden opportunity to advance democracy in your city-state. The election results for constituencies contested by the SDP, which appear to reflect the performance of the political opposition in general, manifested the systemic constraints that opposition political parties have to overcome. Half-century of one-party political rule had indeed impacted on the Singaporean psyche, which, coupled with the use of state resources, gerrymandering and political intimidation, resulted in an electoral process which is hugely disadvantageous to the political opposition.

The election results, however, should also be seen as a sign of resistance to this flawed political and electoral system. That the SDP, and the political opposition in general, was able to obtain very respectable results is proof that all is not lost for your country. The future of Singaporean democracy is in the hands of reform-oriented political parties like yours. After all, Singapore deserves an inclusive government that will carry the aspirations of every citizen, particularly the poor and the marginalized.

We are proud of what you have accomplished, and we encourage you to press on. You can be assured that we in CALD will be with you in every step of the way.

Very truly yours,

SGD
Oyun Sanjaasuren, MP
CALD Chairperson
President, United Nations Environment Assembly
Member of Parliament, Mongolia
Co-Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party