

# CONFERENCE REPORT

# LIBERALISM

PROMOTING GROWTH, REDUCING INEQUALITY

6 to 10 November 2014, Hong Kong



Friedrich Naumann  
STIFTUNG **FÜR DIE FREIHEIT**





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## CONCEPT PAPER

The heart of the liberal philosophy is a belief in the dignity of the individual, in his freedom to make the most of his capacities and opportunities according to his own lights... This implies a belief in the equality of man in one sense; in their inequality in another.

**Milton Friedman**

*Capitalism and Freedom* (1962)

Recipient of Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences (1976)

...inequality is not inevitable... It is not the result of the laws of nature or the laws of economics. Rather, it is something that we create, by our policies, by what we do... It is plain that the only true and sustainable prosperity is shared prosperity.

**Joseph Stiglitz**

*Speech in the AFL-CIO Convention* (2013)

Recipient of Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences (2001)

...liberal economic policies, especially free trade, have been much more successful at producing lasting growth than policies of state intervention.

**Otto Graf Lambsdorff**

*Liberty – The Best Remedy Against Poverty* (2002)

Former German Minister of the Economy

and Former Chairman of the Board, Friedrich Naumann Foundation

...the price of increased prosperity is the constant defense of free market policies, which, as liberals well know, ultimately means the defense of individual freedom.

**Juan Carlos Hidalgo**

*The Rise of Emerging Economies: Challenges and Liberal Perspectives* (2013)

Policy Analyst, Cato Institute's Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity

Liberalism is said to be the ideology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Writing in the aftermath of Soviet Union's dissolution, American philosopher and economist Francis Fukuyama observed, "What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government." The argument generated substantial debate, which persists up to this day. Corollary to this debate is the implication of liberalism on the economy, particularly in terms of generating economic growth and reducing inequality.

The influence of liberalism on the global economy has been evident even before the end of the Cold War. The creation of the Bretton Woods institutions at the end of World War II is said to usher in a truly liberal international economic system. This system, it was claimed, could enhance the possibilities of postwar peace. As noted by then US Secretary of State Cordell Hull (1933-1944): "...unhampered trade dovetailed with peace; high tariffs, trade barriers, and unfair economic competition, with war...if we could get a freer flow of trade...freer in the sense of fewer discriminations and obstructions...so that one country would not be deadly jealous of

another and the living standards of all countries might rise, thereby eliminating the economic dissatisfaction that breeds war, we might have a reasonable chance of lasting peace.” Writing more than a half century later, Columbia University Professor Erik Gartzke reached the same conclusion: “...the same market forces that encourage efficient allocation of resources, under the right circumstances lead also to democracy within nations and, between nations, to peace... Making peace is, indeed, incumbent on allowing market forces, limiting the scope of government and of integrating nations through the web of economic exchanges...”

While the relationship of liberal economy to peace appears to be settled, its capacity to raise “living standards of all countries” seems to be more contentious, and goes to the very core of liberalism’s conception of “equality” (or for that matter, “inequality”). The quotations from Nobel laureates Milton Friedman and Joseph Stiglitz above show the philosophical division on whether inequality is inherent in human nature or a product of economic policies. From a liberal standpoint, a distinction is oftentimes made between “equality of opportunities” and “equality of outcomes”. Liberals are said to favor “equality of opportunities”, which means that all human beings must be provided equal access or opportunity to live and improve their lives. The implicit assumption here is that individuals must be assessed based on merit, and since not all have the same qualifications, it is natural that some will get ahead of the rest (therefore resulting in an unequal society). “Equality of outcomes”, on the other hand, is an idea usually conflated with the socialists. It is essentially a state where people have approximately similar economic resources or wealth.

The debate between “equality of opportunities” and “equality of outcomes” also underpins the relationship between or among liberal economy, economic growth, and wealth/income inequality.<sup>1</sup> A liberal economy supports economic liberalization, privatization, free trade, open markets, deregulation, and reductions in government spending in order to enhance the role of the private sector in the economy. Anti-globalization activists denounced these “neoliberal” policies, which are in line with the so-called “Washington consensus”<sup>2</sup>, as the culprit to increasing rates of inequality within and between countries.

The gap between the rich and the poor is indeed increasing. The report published by Oxfam International in January 2014 reveals this worrisome trend:

- Almost half of the world’s wealth is now owned by just one percent of the population.
- The wealth of the one percent richest people in the world amounts to \$110 trillion. That’s 65 times the total wealth of the bottom half of the world’s population.
- The bottom half of the world’s population owns the same as the richest 85 people in the world.

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<sup>1</sup> Wealth inequality and income inequality, while related, are not the same. Wealth inequality, the broader of the two concepts, can be described as the unequal distribution of assets within a population. Income inequality pertains to the unequal distribution of household or individual income across the various participants in an economy.

<sup>2</sup> Washington consensus refers to the lowest common denominator of policy advice being addressed by the Washington-based institutions to Latin American countries as of 1989 (and later on, to other countries as well). These policies include: (1) Fiscal discipline; (2) A redirection of public expenditure priorities toward fields offering both high economic returns and the potential to improve income distribution, such as primary health care, primary education, and infrastructure; (3) Tax reform (to lower marginal rates and broaden the tax base); (4) Interest rate liberalization; (5) A competitive exchange rate; (6) Trade liberalization; (7) Liberalization of inflows of foreign direct investment; (8) Privatization; (9) Deregulation (to abolish barriers to entry and exit); and (10) Secure property rights.



- Seven out of ten people live in countries where economic inequality has increased in the last 30 years.
- The richest one percent increased their share of income in 24 out of 26 countries for which we have data between 1980 and 2012.

That inequality is increasing, despite the global economic expansion since the post-World War II era, raises questions on whether the rising “neoliberal” tide indeed lifts all boats, or does it only lift the yachts of the wealthy. Does the “invisible hand of the market” promote the general interest of all, or does it only cater to the whims of the elites?

But on the other hand, should rising inequality be blamed on liberalism and the policies it engenders? Is the widening gap between the rich and the poor a result of the application of liberal economic policies or their absence (or for that matter, debasement)?

The quote from former German Minister of the Economy Otto Graf Lambsdorff above claims that liberal economic policies, far from being the cause of inequality, are actually the key to lasting prosperity. Citing the results of a multi-country correlation study about economic freedom, he argued: “...the group of the poorest and least growing countries is almost totally identical with those who have not opened their economies and constantly interfere with the freedom of the people. Yes, there are people who are ‘left behind’, but they are not the victims of free trade or globalization. They are victims of their own governments!”

The correlation between economic freedom and other prosperity factors is supported by a recent study done by Dr. Detmar Doering, Director of the FNF Liberty Institute. In the paper “Freedom, The Rule of Law and Market Economy”, he advanced the following findings:

- The per capita income in the economically freest countries is almost 10 times as high as in the least free.
- Gross domestic product is highest in countries with the best ranking for protection of rights to property.
- Long-term prosperity is positively correlated with stable, constitutional conditions (rule of law).

Based on these findings, he concluded: “Where economic freedom exists protected by institutions under the rule of law, individuals fare better than in cases where they do not exist.” Similarly, Cato Institute’s Policy Analyst Juan Carlos Hidalgo, whose quote was cited above, proclaimed: “The real path towards sustained growth is further economic liberalization.”

The interplay between liberalism, growth and inequality occupies front and center in the *EFN Asia-CALD-LI-FNF Conference and Executive Committee Meetings* on 6-10 November 2014 in Hong Kong – considered to be as one of the world’s economic and financial centers. It brings together delegates from liberal research institutes, thinktanks, political parties, business community and other organizations and networks all over the world to discuss how the liberal economy relates to wealth creation and inequality. Hosted by the Lion Rock Institute (LRI) and the Democratic Party of Hong Kong (DPHK), and with the support of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), the gathering carries the theme “Liberalism: Promoting Growth, Reducing Inequality.” It is composed of the following sessions:

- CALD-EFN Asia Opening Plenary Session (7 November, 14:00-14:50)
- CALD-EFN Asia Panel Discussion (7 November, 15:20-16:30)
- Visit to the Hong Kong Legislative Council (7 November, 17:00-18:30)

- CALD-LI Opening Plenary Session (8 November, 09:00-10:00)
- CALD-LI World Café Session (8 November, 10:30-12:00)

Apart from these sessions, CALD and LI are also organizing the following side-events and executive committee meetings:

- CALD Seminar on the Liberal Climate Change Agenda (7 November, 08:00-12:00)
- Special CALD Climate Change Summit (7 November, 12:00-13:30)
- LI General Debate on Global Political Developments (8 November, 08:00-09:00)
- Updates on Political Developments in Taiwan, Thailand and Hong Kong (8 November, 12:00-14:00)
- LI Executive Committee Meeting (8 November, 15:30-17:00)
- Political Discussion: Asia and the World (9 November, 09:00-10:30)
- CALD Executive Committee Meeting (9 November, 11:00-13:00)
- CALD Women's Caucus Seminar on Migrant Workers (9 November, 14:00-17:00)

The objectives of the main conference, side-events and executive committee meetings are as follows:

- To discuss how the liberal economy or neoliberal economic policies relate to economic growth and wealth/income inequality;
- To share information on the key issues and trends in the Asian region and how they relate to developments in other parts of the world;
- To strategize on how to promote the liberal climate change agenda within the liberal network and in the broader community;
- To tackle possible liberal solutions to the problems and issues confronted by migrant workers and their host and sending countries
- To provide the means of cooperation, exchange of ideas, interchange of information and network-building among – and between – liberal parties, networks and organizations with a liberal orientation and vision; and
- To discuss and sort all administrative matters concerning CALD and LI with the Execom members, particularly the 2015 line-up of activities

## **CONCEPT PAPER ON CALD WOMEN'S CAUCUS SEMINAR ON MIGRANT WORKERS**

### ***CALD Women's Caucus***

CALD has given birth to its Women wing in June 2006 as the outcome of their significant contribution to CALD's thrust especially in the promotion of democracy and human rights, justice, rule of law, and free and fair elections. Since its conception, members have regularly conducted roundtable discussions on advancing women in politics and in setting its agenda. Remarkably, its programs have also reinforced the capability of women among CALD member parties through workshops on party management, grassroots organization, communication, among others.

### ***CALD Seminar on Migrant Workers***

Migrant workers make up around 3% of the Hong Kong population, and an overwhelming majority of them are women. In 2013, there were some 320,000 foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong, 50% of which are from the Philippines, 47% from Indonesia, and the remaining 3%

is from Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. They generally reside in their employer's residence and perform various household duties such as cooking, serving, cleaning, dish-washing, and childcare. According to the Hong Kong's national provision on migrant workers, such workers must live with their employers, and their salaries are subject to a statutory minimum of HK\$4, 010 monthly which started September 30 last year. Apparently, there have existed a myriad of high-profile court cases that carries grievances of migrant workers that has to do with the alleged torture and mistreatment carried out by their employers. The CALD Women's Caucus aims to bring together women leaders from its membership and other networks to discuss the issues migrant workers face in Hong Kong and elsewhere, and how women leaders can help in addressing these issues. The seminar aims:

- To gather women political leaders and provide them a venue for exchange of information and network-building;
- To discuss current issues affecting migrant workers in Hong Kong and the responses to these issues;
- To present the situation of migrant workers in Hong Kong from the lenses of human rights;



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## PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

### Thursday 6 November

<b>Variable</b>	Arrival and Check in at the hotel of CALD delegates	<b>Hyatt Regency</b> 18 Hanoi Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong T: +852 2311 1234 F: +852 3721 1235 W: hongkong.tsimshatsui.hyatt.com
	Free Night	

### Friday 7 November

<b>Variable</b>	Arrival and Check in at the hotel of LI delegates	<b>Hyatt Regency</b> 18 Hanoi Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong T: +852 2311 1234 F: +852 3721 1235 W: hongkong.tsimshatsui.hyatt.com
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### CALD Seminar on the Liberal Climate Change Agenda

*Venue: Salon II & III, Hyatt Regency*

<b>07:30 – 08:00</b>	Registration (CALD)	
<b>07:00 – 10:00</b>	Registration (LI)	
<b>08:00 – 08:45</b>	Opening Session	<i>Welcome Remarks</i>  <b>Mr. Gan-Ochir Zunduisuren</b> Head of Foreign Relations, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia <i>on behalf of CALD Chairperson Oyun Sanjaasuren</i>  <i>Keynote Address</i>  <b>Hon. Sir Graham Watson</b> President, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party



		<p>Chairperson, Board of Trustees of Climate Parliament, United Kingdom</p> <p><i>Presentation on CALD Climate Change Projects</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Celito Arlegue</b> Executive Director, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats, Philippines</p>
<b>08:45 – 10:00</b>	<p>Panel Discussion: Liberal Climate Change Agenda: What? So What? Now What?</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Ms. Kem Monovithya</b> Member of Permanent Bureau and Deputy Director of Public Affairs, Cambodia National Rescue Party</p>	<p><i>Panelists</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Joseller Guiao, MP</b> Member, Committee on Ecology and Natural Resources, House of Representatives, Philippines</p> <p><b>Hon. Saumura Tioulong, MP</b> Member of the Cambodian National Assembly, Cambodia National Rescue Party United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) Parliamentary Champion 2012-2014 Member, UNISDR Advisory Group of Parliamentarians for Disaster Risk Reduction</p> <p><b>Dr. Monthip Sriratana-Tabucanon</b> Member, CALD Climate Change Committee Recipient, 2009 Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN) Award Former Member of Parliament, Democrat Party, Thailand</p> <p><i>Open Forum</i></p>
<b>10:00 – 10:30</b>	Coffee/Tea Break	
<b>10:00 – 13:00</b>	<p><b>LI Bureau Meeting</b> <i>Venue: (room tbd)</i></p>	<i>(Invitation only)</i>
<b>10:30 – 11:45</b>	<p>Working Groups: 'CALD's Climate Change Agenda: What's Next?'</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Ketty Chen</b> Acting Director, Department of International Affairs, Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan</p>	<p>Participants will be divided into three (3) working groups. Through three (3) rounds of "caravan" workshop methodology, they will be asked to brainstorm on how to promote the CALD climate change agenda within and outside the liberal network.</p> <p>The panelists in the previous session will facilitate the discussions in the working groups.</p>

<b>11:45 – 12:00</b>	<p>Closing Session</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Gan-Ochir Zunduisuren</b> Head, Foreign Relations Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia</p>	<p><i>Closing Remarks and Synthesis</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Saumura Tioulong, MP</b> Member of the Cambodian National Assembly, Cambodia National Rescue Party United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) Parliamentary Champion 2012-2014 Member, UNISDR Advisory Group of Parliamentarians for Disaster Risk Reduction</p> <p><i>Launch of CALD Climate Change Handbook</i></p>
<b>12:00 – 13:30</b>	<p>Lunch</p> <p><b>Special CALD Climate Change Summit</b> (A summit meeting that aims to formulate an action plan for CALD's climate change programme.)</p>	<p><i>Presided by</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Monthip Sriratana-Tabucanon</b> Member, CALD Climate Change Committee Recipient, 2009 Asian Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Network (AECEN) Award Former Member of Parliament, Democrat Party, Thailand</p>
<b>13:30</b>	<p>Departure for the Harbour Grand Hong Kong Hotel</p>	

**CALD-EFN Asia Joint Session**  
*Venue: Harbour Grand Hong Kong Hotel*

<b>14:00 – 14:50</b>	<p>Opening Plenary Session</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Andrew Work</b> Co-founder and Director, Lion Rock Institute, and Editor-In-Chief, Harbour Times, Hong Kong</p>	<p><i>Welcome Remarks</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Chee Soon Juan</b> Secretary General, Singapore Democratic Party Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats</p> <p><b>Mr. Bill Stacey</b> Chairperson, Lion Rock Institute, Hong Kong</p> <p><b>Hon. Markus Löning</b> Vice-President, Liberal International Former Commissioner for Human Rights, Germany Free Democratic Party, Germany</p> <p><b>Mr. Olaf Kellerhoff</b> Head of Asia and Human Rights Department, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Germany</p>
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		<p><i>Keynote Address</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Emily Lau, MP</b> Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong Chairperson, Democratic Party, Hong Kong</p>
<b>14:50 – 15:20</b>	Coffee/Tea Break	
<b>15:20 – 16:30</b>	<p>Panel Discussion on the Liberal Economy and Wealth Disparity</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Jules Maaten</b> Project Director Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Philippine Office</p>	<p><i>EFN Asia Conference Proceedings Summary</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Parth Shah</b> President, Centre for Civil Society, India</p> <p><i>Panelists</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Saumura Tioulong, MP</b> Member of the Cambodian National Assembly, Cambodia National Rescue Party Former Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Cambodia</p> <p><b>Hon. Sin Chung Kai, MP</b> Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong Democratic Party, Hong Kong Individual Member, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats</p> <p><b>Dr. Parth Shah</b> President, Centre for Civil Society, India</p> <p><b>Hon. Jay Kun Yoo</b> Former Member of Parliament Uri Party, South Korea</p> <p><b>Dr. Sethaput Suthiwart-Narueput</b> Executive Chairman, Thailand Future Foundation</p>
<b>16:30</b>	Departure for the Hong Kong Legislative Council	
<b>17:00 – 18:30</b>	Visit to the Hong Kong Legislative Council	<p><i>Greeting by and Group Photo with</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Chen Wai-on, SBS</b> Secretary General of the Legislative Secretariat Hong Kong Legislative Council</p> <p>Participants will be divided into three (3) groups for: (1) tour/observation; (2) meeting with Democratic Party of Hong Kong; and (3) roundtable discussion with Councillors of</p>

		Legislative Council
<b>18:30</b>	Departure for the Gala Dinner Venue	
<p align="center"><b>Gala Dinner for EFN Asia, CALD, LI and FNF Participants</b>  <i>Venue: 3/F, The Millions, Happy Valley Stand, Happy Valley Race Course</i>  <i>(Hosted by EFN Asia and CALD)</i></p>		
<b>19:00 – 21:30</b>	<p><i>Masters of Ceremonies</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Armin Reinartz</b>  Senior Analyst  Southeast and East Asia Office  Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Thailand</p> <p><b>Ms. Jaslyn Go</b>  International Liaison and Assistant Treasurer, Singapore Democratic Party</p>	<p><i>Remarks</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Siegfried Herzog</b>  Regional Director, Southeast and East Asia Office  Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Thailand</p> <p><b>Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren</b>  Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats  President, United Nations Environmental Assembly  Minister of Environment and Green Development, Mongolia  Co-Chair, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia</p> <p><b>Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell</b>  President, Liberal International, Andorra</p> <p><b>Mr. Bill Stacey</b>  Chairperson, Lion Rock Institute, Hong Kong</p> <p><b>Mr. Martin Lee</b>  Founding Chairperson, Democratic Party, Hong Kong  Individual Member, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats and Liberal International</p> <p><i>Special Performance of Sichuan Opera</i></p>

## Saturday 8 November

<p align="center"><b>LI General Debate / CALD-LI Conference /  Asian Political Updates / Report from the LI Secretariat /  LI Executive Committee Meeting and Administrative Session</b>  <i>Venue: Regency Ballroom, Hyatt Regency</i></p>		
<b>07:30 – 08:00</b>	Registration (LI & CALD)	



<b>08:00 – 09:00</b>	LI General Debate on Global Political Developments	<p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Baroness Kishwer Falkner of Margravine</b> Vice-President, Liberal international LibDem Foreign Affairs Spokesperson, House of Lords, United Kingdom</p>
<b>09:00 – 10:00</b>	<p>Opening Plenary Session</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Dr. J.R. Nereus “Neric” Acosta</b> Philippine Presidential Adviser on Environmental Protection Head, CALD Climate Change Committee Former CALD Secretary General</p>	<p><i>Opening Remarks</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell</b> President, Liberal International, Andorra</p> <p><b>Hon. Oyun Sanjaasuren, MP</b> Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats President, United Nations Environmental Assembly Minister of Environment and Green Development, Mongolia Co-Chair, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia</p> <p><i>Keynote Address</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Martin Lee</b> Founding Chairperson, Democratic Party, Hong Kong Individual Member, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats and Liberal International</p>
<b>10:00 – 10:30</b>	Conference Photo & Coffee/Tea Break	
<b>10:30 – 12:00</b>	<p>World Café Session on the Conference Theme</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Mr. Moritz Kleine-Brockhoff</b> Resident Representative Indonesia and Project Director Malaysia Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom</p>	<p><i>Table Hosts</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Albert Ho, MP</b> Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong Democratic Party, Hong Kong</p> <p><b>Hon. Lousewies van der Laan</b> Vice-President, ALDE Party D66, Netherlands</p> <p><b>Mr. Barun Mitra</b> Director, Liberty Institute, India</p>
<b>12:00 – 14:00</b>	<p>Lunch</p> <p><b>Updates on Political Developments in Taiwan, Thailand and Hong Kong</b></p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p>	<p><b>Hon. Bi-khim Hsiao, MP</b> Member of Taiwan Legislative Yuan Former Secretary General, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan</p> <p><b>Hon. Kasit Piromya</b> Vice-President, Liberal International</p>

	<b>Mr. Siegfried Herzog</b> Regional Director, Southeast and East Asia Office Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Thailand	Former Member of Parliament and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Democrat Party, Thailand  <b>Hon. James To, MP</b> Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong Democratic Party, Hong Kong  <i>Open Forum</i>
<b>14:00 – 15:00</b>	Report from the LI Secretariat (Interactive Session)	<i>Session Chair</i>  <b>Mr. Emil Kirjas</b> Secretary General, Liberal International, Macedonia
<b>15:00 – 15:30</b>	Coffee/Tea Break	
<b>15:30 – 17:00</b>	LI Executive Committee Meeting, Administrative Session ( <i>EC Delegates only</i> )	<i>Presided by</i>  <b>Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell</b> President, Liberal International, Andorra
	Free Night	

## Sunday 9 November

<b>LI Executive Committee Meeting and Administrative Session / Political Discussion on Asia and the World / CALD Executive Committee Meeting / CALD Women's Caucus and INLW Session / CALD Women's Caucus Seminar on Migrant Workers</b> <i>Venue: Regency Ballroom, Hyatt Regency</i>		
<b>07:30 – 08:00</b>	Registration (LI & CALD)	
<b>08:00 – 09:00</b>	LI Executive Committee Meeting, Administrative Session ( <i>EC Delegates only</i> )	<i>Presided by</i>  <b>Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell</b> President, Liberal International, Andorra
<b>09:00 – 10:30</b>	Political Discussion: 'Asia and the World'  <i>Session Chair</i>  <b>Dr Juli Minoves-Triquell</b> President, Liberal International, Andorra	<i>Panelists</i>  <b>Hon. Sam Rainsy, MP</b> President, Cambodia National Rescue Party Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats  <b>Hon. Tian Chua, MP</b> Vice-President, Parti Keadilan Rakyat, Malaysia  <b>Hon. Kiat Sittheamorn</b>

		<p>Deputy Leader, Foreign Affairs and Economics Democrat Party, Thailand</p> <p><b>Hon. Sir Graham Watson</b> President, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party, United Kingdom</p> <p><i>Open Forum</i></p>
<b>10:30 – 11:00</b>	Coffee/Tea Break	<i>(End of the LI Programme)</i>
<b>11:00 – 13:00</b>	<p>CALD Executive Committee Meeting (EC Delegates only)</p>	<p><i>Presided by</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Oyun Sanjaasuren, MP</b> Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats President, United Nations Environmental Assembly Minister of Environment and Green Development, Mongolia Co-Chair, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia</p>
<b>13:00 – 14:30</b>	<p>Lunch</p> <p><b>Session on “Domestic Violence Continues: Daily Human Rights Violation Against Women and Girls...What Can We Liberals Do?”</b> Organised by International Network of Liberal Women and CALD Women’s Caucus</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Ms. Margaret de Vos van Steenwijk-Groeneveld</b> President, International Network of Liberal Women, Netherlands</p>	<p><i>Speakers</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Cecilia Wikström MEP</b> Vice-President, Liberal International Folkpartiet Liberalerna, Sweden</p> <p><b>Hon. Lousewies van der Laan</b> Vice-President, ALDE Party D66, Netherlands</p> <p><b>Ms. Maysing Yang</b> Vice President, International Network of Liberal Women Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan</p> <p><i>Open Forum</i></p>

## CALD Women's Caucus Seminar on Migrant Workers

*Venue: Regency Ballroom, Hyatt Regency*

<b>14:00 -14:20</b>	<p>Opening Session</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Ms. Jaslyn Go</b> International Liaison and Assistant Treasurer, Singapore Democratic Party</p>	<p><i>Welcome Remarks</i></p> <p><b>Ms. Monovithya Kem</b> Member of Permanent Bureau and Deputy Director for Public Affairs Cambodia National Rescue Party <i>on behalf of CALD Women's Caucus Chair Mu Sochua</i></p> <p>Opening Keynote Address</p> <p><b>Hon. Henedina Abad, MP</b> Deputy Speaker Philippine House of Representatives Former CALD Women's Caucus Chair</p>
<b>14:20 –15:20</b>	<p>Migrant Workers Rights as Human Rights</p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Dr. Helena Wong</b> Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong Democratic Party, Hong Kong</p>	<p><b>Mr. Chito Gascon, Esq.</b> Member of the Human Rights Victims Claims Board, Commission on Human Rights, Philippines</p> <p><b>Dr. Rajiva Wijesinha</b> Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats</p> <p><i>Open Forum</i></p>
<b>15:20 -15:50</b>	<p>Coffee/Tea Break</p>	
<b>15:50 - 16:00</b>	<p>'UN Mechanism on Protection of Migrant Workers' <i>Input of Liberal International</i></p>	<p><b>Hon. Markus Löning</b> Vice-President, Liberal International Former Commissioner for Human Rights, Germany Free Democratic Party, Germany</p>
<b>16:00 - 17:00</b>	<p>Formulation of Action Plan to Improve the Plight of Migrant Workers in Asia</p> <p>Closing Session</p>	<p><i>Presided by</i></p> <p><b>Ms. Jayanthi Balaguru</b> Vice Chairperson, CALD Women's Caucus Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia</p>
<b>19:00 - 21:00</b>	<p><b>Farewell Dinner</b> <b>Hosted by the Friedrich</b></p>	<p><i>Keynote Address</i></p>



	<b>Naumann Foundation for Freedom</b>  <i>Venue: Salon I-III, Hyatt Regency</i>	<b>Dr. Wolfgang Gerhardt</b> Chairperson Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom
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## Monday 10 November

<b>Variable</b>	Check out of the hotel and Departure	
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# LIBERALISM



Friedrich Naumann  
STIFTUNG FÜR DIE FREIHEIT

PROMOTING GROWTH, REDUCING INEQUALITY

6 to 10 November 2014, Hong Kong

## PROFILE OF SPEAKERS AND SESSION CHAIRS

### CALD-EFN ASIA JOINT SESSION

#### Opening Plenary Session

##### *Session Chair*



**Mr. Andrew Work**

Co-founder, New Work Media

Co-founder, Lion Rock Institute, Hong Kong

Andrew Work is a Co-Founder and Director of The Lion Rock Institute in Hong Kong. He has spoken and written of issues of economic policy and fundamental values connected to freedom for over a decade. He started in politics at 16 years old, campaigning for free trade, and still speaks out support sound policy issues that promote economic freedom and growth.

In 2013 he founded Harbour Times, a publication seeking to elevate political discourse in Hong Kong by providing a platform for politicians, senior civil servants, diplomats and other full-time political players to have a more in-depth discussion and develop greater understanding of important political issues.

Mr. Work also worked full time as the Executive Director of The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong. He graduated with a degree in Biology from McGill University and received his MBA from the University of Victoria. He is the Akela and Section Leader of the Cub Pack in the 1st Hong Kong Canadian Scout Group and President of The Canadian Club.

##### *Welcome Remarks*



**Dr. Chee Soon Juan**

Secretary General, Singapore Democratic Party

Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Dr. Chee Soon Juan is the leader of the opposition Singapore Democratic Party (SDP), and a vocal opponent of the ruling People's Action Party – which has held power since 1959. In 1992, the National University of Singapore sacked him as a lecturer when he joined the SDP and took part in an election. He has been arrested and jailed more than a dozen times for his political activities, primarily for repeatedly challenging Singapore's laws that require protest organizers to obtain a police permit before staging political demonstrations or making public speeches on political issues. He was also sued for defamation on multiple occasions for opinions he expressed about members of the People's Action Party.

After refusing to pay monetary damages for these suits, he was declared bankrupt in 2006, and banned from traveling and standing in parliamentary elections. His bankruptcy has been annulled in 2012, paving the way for him to contest the 2016 general elections.

Dr. Chee is the author of several books as well as contributed chapters in other books. He was Research Associate at Monash Asia Institute (1997), Human Rights Fellow at University of Chicago (2001), the Reagan-Fascell Fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy (2004), and a visiting fellow of the Sydney Democracy Network (2014). He is the recipient of Defender of Democracy Award (2003) given by the Parliamentarians for Global Action and the Prize for Freedom (2011) given by Liberal International. He was also awarded the Hellman/Hammett Writers Grant by Human Rights Watch (2003).



**Mr. Bill Stacey**

Chairperson, Lion Rock Institute, Hong Kong

Mr. Bill Stacey is the Chairman of Hong Kong's leading free market think tank, the Lion Rock Institute. He is on the Board of Advisors of the Mannkal Economic Education Foundation in Australia, and has been involved in advocacy of market reform for the last 25 years. Professionally, Mr. Stacey has been an executive with leading financial institutions in Asia and globally.

During the 1997 financial crisis in Asia and subsequently, he led restructuring initiatives, strategic assessments and provided input to reform proposals. As a senior equity analyst with Credit Suisse, he led research on the three largest China financial sector IPOs and is a leading commentator on the financial systems in the region. Mr. Stacey is currently Managing Director and head of the Asia equities business of Keefe Bruyette and Woods, a specialist financial services investment bank.



**Hon. Markus Löning**

Vice-President, Liberal International  
Former Commissioner for Human Rights, Germany  
Free Democratic Party of Germany

Markus Loening founded "Löning Human Rights & Responsible Business" in early 2014. In 2010-2013, he was Human Rights Commissioner of the German Federal Government, and in 2002-2009 he was a member of the Bundestag with an emphasis on European and development policy. He has traveled to over 70 countries and worked with governments and civil society around the world. He is Vice-President of Liberal International and member of the German Committee of UNICEF.

*Keynote Address*



**Hon. Emily Lau, MP**

Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong  
Chairperson, Democratic Party, Hong Kong

Hon. Emily Lau Wai-hing is a Member of the Hong Kong Legislative Council representing New Territories East and is the current Chairperson of the Hong Kong Democratic Party. An appointed Justice of Peace, Hon. Lau is concurrently the Deputy Chairperson for the China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group.

Her academic background includes her B.A. Broadcast Journalism from the University of Southern California, M.Sc. International Relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science as well as being a lecturer on Journalism in the University of Hong Kong. Prior to her political career, Hon. Lau has been a reporter for media outfits BBC-TV and Hong Kong TVB News among others.

For her work in politics and human rights, Hon. Lau was awarded the 2009 Political Leader Award from The Women's Foundation of Hong Kong, the 2003 Monismann Prize on Freedom of Speech from the University of Uppsala in Sweden, and the 1998 Bruno Kreisky Human Rights Award.

### **Panel Discussion on the Liberal Economy and Wealth Disparity**

#### *Session Chair*



**Mr. Jules Maaten**

Country Director  
Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom  
Philippine Office

Since 2010 Jules Maaten is Country Director Philippines of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), where he works on good governance, human rights and free market projects and on the "It's All About Freedom"-campaign. Before that, from 1999 to 2009, he was a Member of the European Parliament, dealing amongst other issues with EU-ASEAN relations. He was the Parliament's Rapporteur on the EU-Asia Strategy. He was also a leading parliamentarian in the field of environmental protection, public health and consumer affairs, and the introduction of the euro currency. From 1992 to 1999 he worked in London as the Secretary General of Liberal International, the world union of liberal parties.

#### *Panelists*



**Hon. Saumura Tioulong, MP**

Member of the Cambodian National Assembly  
Cambodia National Rescue Party  
Former Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Cambodia

Hon. Saumura Tioulong is currently a member of the Cambodian National Assembly, from of the Cambodia National Rescue Party, representing the capital city of Phnom Penh – a post that she has held since 1998. From 1993 to 1995, she also served as Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Cambodia. Hon. Tioulong obtained her MBA as well as her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of Paris. In Paris, she later started her successful business career. This, however, did not stop her from supporting democratic development in Cambodia. She is a signatory of the Win with Women Global Initiative and has been actively involved in CALD projects.





**Hon. Sin Chung-kai, MP**

Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong

Democratic Party of Hong Kong

Individual Member, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Mr. Chung-Kai Sin is an elected Legislative Councillor of Hong Kong serving a 4-year term since October 2012 until September 2016. Since 2006, he has been the deputy chairman of the Democratic Party. He has also served as a member of the Central Committee of Democratic Party of Hong Kong since the party was founded in 1994.

He was a member of the Legislative Council representing New South Territories and the Information Technology Sector, from 1995 to 1997 and 1998 to 2008, respectively. Chung Kai also served as a member of the Housing Authority from 2001 to 2009, and board director of the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited from 1999 to 2009. He has been an elected representative in all three tiers of the Government: the Legislative Council, Regional Council (abolished by the HKSAR Government in 1999) from 1988 to 1994, and the Kwai Tsing District Council from 1985 to 2003.

Mr. Chung-Kai earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Hong Kong in 1982, and his Masters degree in Business Administration from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1997.



**Dr. Parth Shah**

President, Centre for Civil Society, India

Dr. Parth J. Shah is the President of Centre for Civil Society. CCS advances social change through public policy. Their work in education, livelihood, and policy training promotes choice and accountability across the private and public sectors. In the 2013 ranking of think tanks, CCS was ranked 50<sup>th</sup> globally and 1<sup>st</sup> in India.

He holds a PhD in Economics from Auburn University and taught economics at the University of Michigan. His research and advocacy work focus on the themes of economic freedom (law, liberty and livelihood campaign), choice and competition in education (fund students, not schools), property rights approach for the environment (terracotta vision of stewardship), and good governance (new public management and the duty to publish). Dr. Shah has authored *Why is India Poor? Social Change & Public Policy*, *Environmental Challenges: The Tragedy of the Collective*; has edited *Morality of Markets*, *Friedman on India*, *Profiles in Courage: Dissent on Indian Socialism*, *Do Corporations Have Social Responsibility?* and co-edited *Law, Liberty & Livelihood: Making a Living on the Street*; *Terracotta Reader: A Market Approach to the Environment*; *BR Shenoy: Theoretical Vision and BR Shenoy: Economic Prophecies*; and *Agenda for Change*.



**Hon. Jay Kun Yoo**

Former Member of Parliament  
Uri Party, South Korea

Hon. Jay-Kun Yoo is a former member of the National Assembly of Republic of Korea. Since July 2008, he has been in office as the Chairman of YIJUN Institute of International Law. As a congressman for nine years, he was the Chairman of the National Defense Committee, the National Convention of the ruling Millennium Democratic Party, and the Standing Committee on Democracy and Human Rights of the IPU. He attended IPU conferences as the head of the National Assembly delegation, contributing to help foreign leaders have a better understanding of the issues surrounding the Korean Peninsula. Hon. Yoo also served as the President of the Korea-U.S Inter-Parliamentary Council. Notably, he served as the Chief of Staff for President Kim Dae-jung and as the Senior Foreign Policy Advisor for Former President, Roh Moo-hyun.

Hon. Yoo went to Yonsei University where he earned his Bachelor of Arts and Masters Degree in Political Science. He continued further studies, obtaining an MS and PhD in Sociology from the Brigham Young University and University of Washington, respectively. He has written many books and articles on international human rights law and foreign affairs.



**Dr. Sethaput Suthiwart-Narueput**

Executive Chairman, Thailand Future Foundation

Dr. Sethaput Suthiwart-Narueput is currently Executive Chairman of the Thailand Future Foundation, a nonprofit business and policy research foundation, and Managing Partner for Advisor Co. Ltd., a corporate advisory firm. He was President of SCB Asset Management, Thailand's then largest investment management company with over 10 billion USD under management. He was also previously with the Stock Exchange of Thailand and the Ministry of Finance, the World Bank in Washington, DC and McKinsey & Co. in New York.

Dr. Suthiwart-Narueput received his BA with highest honors from Swarthmore College and his MA and PhD in economics from Yale University.

**CALD-LI CONFERENCE**

**Opening Plenary Session**

Session Chair



**Dr. J.R. Nereus "Neric" Acosta**

Philippine Presidential Adviser on Environmental Protection  
Head, CALD Climate Change Committee  
Former CALD Secretary General

Dr. Neric Acosta is an experienced legislator, educator, ardent advocate of the environment, and international scholar. He is currently Presidential Adviser for Environmental Protection, General Manager of the Laguna Lake Development Authority and the Vice President for International Affairs of the Liberal Party of the Philippines (LP). He also served as secretary general of CALD from 2005-2014. Acosta was previously the secretary general of LP and served as representative of Bukidnon province in Northern

Mindanao to the Philippine House of Representatives.

His major legislation included bills on clean water, solid waste management and biodiversity protection. He is also the principal author of the groundbreaking Clean Air Act, a model of environmental legislation in Asia. Dr. Acosta's passion for education earned him various scholarships. After completing his BA (Bachelor of Arts) in Political Science from the University of the Philippines, he went on to complete an MA (Masters in Arts) in Public Affairs (International Relations and Political Studies concentration) from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Hawaii as an East West Center Scholar. He also attended the special programs Leaders in Development (1999) and Environmental Economics (2002) at the Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University.

### *Opening Remarks*



**Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell**

President, Liberal International, Andorra  
Former Andorran Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dr. Juli Minoves is the 13th President of Liberal International. He is a former Andorran Minister of Foreign Affairs and ambassador to, among others, the United Nations, the United States and Canada. At the United Nations he was the Vice President of the General Assembly. He is the Deputy President of the Liberal Party (Andorra). Dr. Minoves has a PhD. at Yale University and was educated as an economist at the University of Fribourg) and Political Scientist at Yale University. The LI President has co-drafted the statutes of the International Criminal Court and has helped to establish the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2006. Dr. Minoves speaks Catalan, French, Spanish, English and Italian fluently.



**Hon. Oyun Sanjaasuren, MP**

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats  
President, United Nations Environmental Assembly  
Minister of Environment and Green Development, Mongolia  
Co-Chair, Civil Will Green Party of Mongolia

Hon. Oyun Sanjaasuren is Mongolia's Minister of Environment and Green Development, Member of Parliament and leading female politician. As co-chair of the Civil Will Green Party, she has been a consistent voice advocating clean politics, good governance and sensible socio-economic development. Her background in mining following her PhD at Cambridge has uniquely positioned her to focus on the development of Mongolia's extremely rich soil.

Since entering politics in 1998, she has been systematically elected to Parliament and has chaired a number of key standing committees, pushing in particular crucial legislation on corruption, election financing and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In 2014, she assumed the chairmanship of the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD) and was elected as the inaugural President of United Nations Environmental Assembly. To further her goals, she also founded and chairs the Zorig Foundation, a leading NGO dedicated to the advancement of democracy, good governance and development. A former Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the Mongolian Geological Association, she is a woman of versatile interests.

## *Keynote Address*



### **Mr. Martin Lee**

Founding Chairperson, Democratic Party of Hong Kong  
Individual Member, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats and Liberal International

Mr. Martin Lee (Lee Chu Ming) is the founding chairman (1994 – 2002) of the Democratic Party, which is one of the largest and most popular political parties in Hong Kong. Prior to the founding of the Democratic Party in October 1994, Lee was chairman of the United Democrats of Hong Kong — Hong

Kong's first political party that won the first-ever democratic elections to the territory's Legislative Council in 1991.

Since its establishment, the Democratic Party has committed efforts to advancing democracy and safeguarding human rights and the rule of law in Hong Kong. In 2008, the Democratic Party merged with another pan-democratic party The Frontier, and further strengthened its political influence in Hong Kong. Lee was also a popular elected Legislative Councillor from 1985 to 2008.

## **WORLD CAFÉ SESSION ON THE CONFERENCE THEME**

### *Session Chair*



### **Mr. Moritz Kleine-Brockhoff**

Resident Representative Indonesia and Project Director Malaysia  
Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom

Mr. Moritz Kleine-Brockhoff is the Resident Representative, Indonesia Office and Project Director, Malaysia of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF). Before assuming these positions, he also served as Head of FNF's Asia Desk in Potsdam, Germany and Project Director, Malaysia/Myanmar and Cambodia based in the FNF Southeast and East Asia

Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand. Before joining FNF, Mr. Kleine-Brockhoff was the Southeast Asia Correspondent of German daily newspaper Frankfurter Rundschau. He covered all ASEAN countries and lived in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 2000 to 2009.

### *Table Hosts*



### **Hon. Albert Ho, MP**

Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong  
Democratic Party of Hong Kong

Hon. Albert Ho is currently secretary general of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China and was chairman of the Democratic Party from 2006 to 2012. By profession, he is a solicitor and a member of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong. Hon. Ho earned his Bachelor of Laws and Post-graduate Certificate in Laws from the University of Hong Kong.



**Hon. Lousewies van der Laan**

Vice-President, ALDE Party  
D66, Netherlands

Hon. Lousewies van der Laan is a Vice-President on the Bureau of LI Cooperating Organisation ALDE Party. She is the Chief of Staff to the President of the International Criminal Court. Hon. van der Laan was an MP in the Dutch Parliament (2003-2006) and a Member of the European Parliament (1999-2003) for LI full member D66. In the Dutch Parliament, she was the President of the Technology Committee and Vice-President Committee on European Affairs. In the European Parliament, she was the Vice-President of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs.



**Mr. Barun Mitra**

Director, Liberty Institute, India

Mr. Barun Mitra is a commentator on current affairs dealing with a range of issues from economic development to conservation of wildlife. His articles have appeared in publications across the world, from *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, to *The Indian Express*, the *China Daily* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He regularly appears on national television to discuss current affairs. He has attended a number of international events, including the WTO ministerial meetings, UN Framework Convention of Climate Change, World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the World Health Assembly. His current interest is to develop a better understanding of the interface between political context and public policy, in order to make policy proposals politically viable.

He is the founder and director of the Liberty Institute, a non-profit, independent public policy research and advocacy organisation, based in New Delhi. It is dedicated to harnessing the power of the market to enhance individual freedom in economic and political domains. In 2001, a book, "Population: The Ultimate Resource" published by the Institute, was awarded the Sir Anthony Fisher Prize. Among the recognition the Institute has received was the Templeton Award for social entrepreneurship in 2003. Mr. Mitra had also received the 2005 Julian L. Simon Award for his contribution in international environmental policy debate.

**UPDATES ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS ON TAIWAN, THAILAND, AND HONG KONG**

*Session Chair*



**Mr. Siegfried Herzog**

Regional Director, Southeast and East Asia Office  
Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Thailand

Mr. Siegfried Herzog is the new Regional Director Southeast and East Asia for the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom in Bangkok. An economist by training, he was previously heading the Foundation's country office in Manila from 2006-2010, then the regional office in New Delhi as the Regional Director for South Asia.

He completed his Masters in "Economics with North American Area Studies" at the Eberhard-Karls University Tübingen, having spent one year as an exchange student at Georgetown



University, Washington D.C. His M.A. thesis on informal credit markets in Bangladesh received an award from the Schitag-Foundation. He was one of the founders of NETZ e.V., a German NGO working on grass-roots development in Bangladesh. Before going to university he got a vocational training degree in industrial management at the Porsche car company. An active moderator, Mr. Herzog frequently facilitates skills and strategy workshops for partners and the Foundation's staff members.

#### *Table Hosts*



**Hon. Bi-khim Hsiao, MP**

Member of Legislative Yuan

Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan

Former Secretary General, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Hon. Bi-khim Hsiao began her political involvement with the international affairs of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) when she started the office of the DPP Mission in Washington D.C in 1995. From 1996 until 2010, successive Chairmen had appointed her as Director of International Affairs for the Party. Moreover, she was also the spokesperson for the former President Chen Shui-bian in his 2000 and 2004 election campaign and became his advisor after his first election in 2000.

In 2001, Hon. Hsiao was elected to the Legislative Yuan, representing overseas constituents, and was re-elected in 2004 from Northern Taipei City. She was again re-elected in 2012. She was a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, eventually chairing the Committee and was active in establishing parliamentary exchanges and friendship with other countries. In 2011, she became Vice-President of the DPP's New Frontier Foundation.

Hon. Hsiao completed her undergraduate degree at Oberlin College where she received a BA (Bachelors of Arts) in East Asian Studies. She continued her graduate studies at Columbia University, United States of America, where she received a Masters degree in Political Science.



**Hon. Kasit Piromya**

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thailand

Democrat Party of Thailand

Hon. Kasit Piromya began his political career as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1968 and later in 1979 went on to become the 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary in the Office of the Director-General of the Economic Affairs Department. Before becoming the Ambassador of Thailand to Mongolia in 1991, he was the Ambassador attached to the Ministry of European Affairs in 1988. Khun Kasit was also ambassador to the Russian Federation in 1992-1993, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia in 1994-1996 and to Germany in 1997-2001. More recently, he was Ambassador of Thailand to Japan in 2001 and also the United States of America from 2004-2005.

Other positions he held were advisor to the Senate Committee, and advisor to the Democracy Party and PAD Movement from 2006-2008. He was a Democrat Party-List Candidate in 2006, and Democrat Shadow Deputy Prime Minister in 2008. Khun Kasit completed his tertiary education at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand as a member of the faculty of Political Science. Later, he went to study International Affairs at Georgetown School of Foreign Service in the U.S., and also International Relations at the Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands.



**Hon. James To, MP**  
Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong  
Democratic Party of Hong Kong

Hon. James To is a member of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong representing the Kowloon West constituency. He was also a member of the Yau Tsim Mong District Council. Hon. To earned his Bachelor of Laws Degree from the University of Hong Kong.

## **CALD WOMEN'S CAUCUS SEMINAR ON MIGRANT WORKERS**

### **Opening Session**

#### *Session Chair*



**Ms. Jaslyn Go**  
International Liaison and Assistant Treasurer,  
Singapore Democratic Party

Ms. Jaslyn Go is the International Liaison and Assistant Treasurer of the Singapore Democratic Party (SDP). She joined the party in the mid 2000s as an ardent supporter and enthusiastic activist dedicated to bring changes to Singapore's repressive and authoritarian regime. A proud mother of two, Ms. Go's dedication to the SDP underscored her motivation to champion the cause of underprivileged Singaporeans.

As an International Liaison for her party, she hopes to connect with like-minded democrats to forge a freer and more egalitarian world.

#### *Welcome Remarks*



**Ms. Monovithya Kem**  
Member of Permanent Bureau and Deputy Director for Public Affairs  
Cambodia National Rescue Party  
*on behalf of CALD Women's Caucus Chair Mu Sochua*

Ms. Monovithya Kem is the Deputy Director-General of Public Affairs of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP). She is Cambodian-born, with global perspectives, after having lived in Cambodia, the U.S. and Europe. Prior to joining CNRP, she had more than several years of work experiences, locally and abroad, with human rights groups and development institutions such as United Nations agencies in Cambodia and the World Bank Headquarters in Washington DC. Her political involvement in Cambodia began since she was 12 years old at the first Cambodia's general elections in 1993. In 2006, she successfully led an international campaign to free her father and other rights activists from Cambodian prison. In 2008, she managed the campaign for the Human Rights Party, which is now a founding partner of CNRP. During her years in Washington DC, she actively engaged in policy dialogues with various think tanks and research institutions. She holds a Masters in Business Economics and a Bachelor in Business Administration.

## *Opening Keynote Address*



### **Hon. Henedina Abad, MP**

Deputy Speaker  
Philippine House of Representatives  
Former CALD Women's Caucus Chair

Hon. Dina Abad is the Deputy Speaker of the Philippine House of Representatives. She is also Vice President for Policy, Programs and Advocacy of the Liberal Party of the Philippines. Hon. Abad was the former Chairperson of the CALD Women's Caucus and served as Vice President of the International Network of Liberal Women. Prior to her entry to government, she served as professor and dean of the Ateneo School of Government. At the Ateneo, she held various senior administrative and teaching posts.

She served many local NGOs in various capacities such as Chairperson of the Transparency and Accountability Network, Executive Director of the Philippines-Canada Human Resource Development Committee, Inc. and Coordinator of the Congress for a People's Agrarian Reform. She finished her Economics degree from the Ateneo de Manila University and her Master of Public Administration degree from the Harvard School of Government. She also participated in various courses focusing on participatory development and leadership in transition economies of the Harvard Institute for International Development.

## **Migrant Workers Rights as Human Rights**

### *Session Chair*



### **Dr. Helena Wong**

Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong  
Democratic Party of Hong Kong

Dr. Helena Wong is a member of the Legislative Council of Hong Kong for Kowloon West constituency. She is also an academic staff at Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Dr. Wong graduated from Chinese University of Hong Kong with a Bachelor of Arts in Religion and Master of Philosophy. She continued to receive her Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science from UCLA.

### *Panelists*



### **Mr. Chito Gascon, Esq.**

Member of the Human Rights Victims Claims Board,  
Commission on Human Rights, Philippines

Mr. Chito Gascon is currently a member of the Human Rights Victims Claims Board of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines. He previously served as Undersecretary at the Office of the Political Advisor in the Office of the President, Republic of the Philippines. He is a political activist and social reformer who has been working on democratic governance concerns for close to three decades. He became the National Chair of the Philippine Young Liberals and the first Asian Vice-President for the International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth. He later served as

Undersecretary for Legal, Legislative and Special Concerns at the Department of Education (DepEd).

Prior to returning to government after victory in 2010 general elections, he was the Liberal Party Director General from 2008 and Political Affairs Director of its 2010 campaign. He is the first Filipino recipient of both the *Democracy and Development Fellowship* at Stanford University's Centre for Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law (2005) and the *Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellowship* at the International Forum for Democratic Studies of the National Endowment for Democracy (2006).

He obtained his BA (Bachelor of Arts) and LL.B (Bachelor of Laws) degrees from the University of the Philippines. He also earned a LL.M (Master of Laws) Degree, specializing in International Law, at St. Edmund's College in Cambridge University as a joint British Chevening & Cambridge Overseas Trust Scholar.



**Dr. Rajiva Wijesinha**

Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka

Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha is a Sri Lankan Member of the Parliament, Presidential Adviser on Reconciliation and Leader of the Liberal Party Sri Lanka. He previously served as Secretary General of the Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process in Sri Lanka (SCOPP), and also Secretary for the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights.

He is a leading liberal theoretician in South Asia, and has conducted workshops on liberalism in India, Pakistan, Nepal and Afghanistan and Indonesia. His publications include: *Liberal Values for South Asia*, *Declining Sri Lanka* and *Political Principles and Their Practice in Sri Lanka*. He recently released a collection of speeches entitled, "Asian Liberal Perspectives: Promoting Democracy, Equity, and Pluralism." Hon. Wijesinha studied at Oxford University, England where he completed Bachelor and Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

## **UN MECHANISM ON PROTECTION OF MIGRANT WORKERS**

### **Input of Liberal International**

**Hon. Markus Löning**

Vice-President, Liberal International

Former Commissioner for Human Rights, Germany

Free Democratic Party of Germany



# LIBERALISM



PROMOTING GROWTH, REDUCING INEQUALITY

6 to 10 November 2014, Hong Kong

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### CALD-EFN Asia Joint Session

- Human rights and democracy transcend national boundaries, and these are matters people all over the world should care about.
- An economic system should provide economic growth that is balanced, equitable, and that respects the dignity of the human being.
- Accountability in both business and politics is essential.
- Wealth inequality affects the way people behave socially and politically.
- It is more practical and helpful if liberals would focus on inequality of opportunities than inequality of wealth.
- Equality of treatment under the law would help address inequality of income and wealth.

### CALD-LI Conference

- Democracy is not just about pure elections but also about the defense of human rights and the capacity to make free choices.
- Progressive policies can make a difference in governance and can help achieve development.
- The fight for human rights and democracy transcends nationalities, gender and generations.
- Liberals should give priority to opportunities to education and accountability to help address wealth disparity. It is important to communicate this in order for society to understand where the liberal stance lies.
- While opportunities are important, it is essential to identify the outcomes of opportunities and understand the processes that lead to opportunities.
- More than communicating the concepts of market economy, rule of law, equal opportunities, among others, liberals also need narratives that make a connection to society.

### Updates on Political Developments in Taiwan, Thailand and Hong Kong

- Inclusive consultation in governance is a must. Without it, there could be social discontents that lead to public protests and other extra-institutional public actions.
- The DPP Taiwan needs to develop a discourse for economic growth that would further support Taiwan's trade integration to the world.
- Diversification and inequality need to be appropriated in DPP Taiwan's economic agenda.
- Strong institutions help improve governance and promote a working democracy.
- In Thailand, populism diminishes the good working relations between the majority and minority in parliament.

- Proper checks and balance mechanisms help institutions function effectively.
- Hong Kong will continue to fight to democratically elect their leaders. The international community can show support by continuing to speak up for Hong Kong.

### **CALD Women's Caucus Seminar on Migrant Workers**

- Most women migrating to work are domestic helpers and they are more vulnerable to violence compared to others.
- Transparency and accountability are vital during the recruitment process from both country of origin and the destination country.
- Social and cultural isolation in country of destination can lead to more vulnerabilities and abuses.
- Issues on female migrant workers cannot be considered as simply women's issues. Both men and women should find solutions to address the vulnerability of women migrants.
- Aggressively building on and strengthening international agreements, conventions and best practices can help ensure the protection of women migrant workers.
- Human rights are not given by states, but recognized by states. States are obligated to create an enabling environment to make sure that rights are protected.
- Women migrant workers are exposed to the systemic risks of political and economic patriarchal structures that discriminate them.
- The migration of workers is a result of the "push and pull" of market forces. Migration is a reality. To some, it is a matter of choice. To others is a matter of necessity.
- The Migrant Workers Convention is the uncompromising link between migrant workers and human rights and designed to address the vulnerable context in which migrants live and work.
- Among the vital areas of concern of institutions dealing with the protection of migrant workers are: awareness-raising, skills and knowledge training, maintenance of records, support and counseling, and reintegration.





# LIBERALISM



Friedrich Naumann  
STIFTUNG FÜR DIE FREIHEIT

PROMOTING GROWTH, REDUCING INEQUALITY

6 to 10 November 2014, Hong Kong

## CONFERENCE REPORT

### FRIDAY | 7 NOVEMBER

#### CALD-EFN Asia Joint Session

Delegates from CALD and LI participated in the Opening Plenary Session of the CALD-EFN Asia Joint Session held on 7 November at the Harbour Grand Hong Kong Hotel. The joint session was organized and hosted by the Lion Rock Institute (LRI) and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF).



#### Keynote Address

##### **Hon. Emily Lau, MP**

Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong  
Chairperson, Democratic Party, Hong Kong

Lau started with an invitation for everyone to visit the “umbrella square” where the umbrella movement protests are happening and where the “contemporary history of China” is unfolding.

She described the umbrella movement as a peaceful gathering of protesters and yet on 28 September, the police fired teargas at the crowd despite their firm stance not to retaliate and not to resort to violence. Lau said that she was arrested by the police that day because she wanted to bring in equipment to the square for the protests. She was detained together with legislators



from the Democratic Party and Labor Party from noon until an hour before midnight. By the time they were released, the police had already fired 87 rounds of teargas to the protesters.



means the big businesses and the professionals.

More freedom and democracy and less inequality is what the people of Hong Kong are fighting for, she said. "Because we don't have a democratic system, and that is why the policies are so much skewed toward the business community," Lau added. "I am very, very much in favor of a business-friendly environment...But for so many years, we've been denied the right to elect the government," she further noted. She also explained that Beijing promised that the people of Hong Kong can elect in 2017 a Chief Executive who will be the head of the executive authorities by universal suffrage. Currently, Hong Kong has Chief Executive C.Y. Leung who was chosen in 2012 by a committee of 1,200 people who were mainly drawn from functional constituencies, which

On 31 August, the National People's Congress Standing Committee, China's Parliament, made a decision that Hong Kong can indeed elect a Chief Executive via universal suffrage in 2017, but there would be a nominating committee. This provision is also present in the Basic Law, a mini-constitution propagated by Beijing in 1990. By having a nominating committee, like the one that elected Leung in 2012, means that it would still be controlled by the businesses and professionals close to the property tycoons. Lau warned that to be valiantly nominated as a candidate, the support of more than five members of the committee is needed. So if there are 1,200 members, at least 601 votes are needed to be nominated. The Hong Kong people trusted Beijing and they thought they will eventually have genuine elections, but it could just be a process controlled by Beijing and their tycoon friends. The people were shocked and angry that was why the students started boycotting classes until the crowd swelled and now a lot were demonstrating as part of the Occupy Central Movement.

Lau admitted that she did not know when and how this movement was going to end. She said they wanted to talk to the authorities, however, Chief Secretary Carrie Lam turned them down. The Hong Kong government had talks with the students only once, but there was never a follow-up after. She saw a positive perspective though in what's happening in Hong Kong. Members of the media and the journalists covering the bloodsheds and slaughtering in Afghanistan, Ukraine, Iraq, Africa and elsewhere, were quite surprised on how peaceful the demonstrations were in Hong Kong. Lau emphasized that the international community should encourage this kind of peaceful gathering particularly in a world full of violence and slaughter. She said while others are also struggling for democracy and human rights, in Hong Kong, the people have chosen to struggle with peace and non-violence.

Lau noted that the members of CALD and LI chose a very timely schedule to organize the conference and the liberal gathering. Lau was not even sure what the exact outcome of the event would be and how it would help or affect the current situation in Hong Kong, but she knew that Beijing was very worried about international interference. Lau, however, emphasized that "as a human rights defender who has worked for democracy for so long, she always said that human rights and democracy transcend national boundaries, and these are matters people all over the world should care about." Lau encouraged the participants of the conference to see and experience what Hong Kong is currently fighting for. When asked by foreign friends on what they should do, Lau said, "it's not a question of what you should do or me telling you what you should do. It's what you, as a decent, upstanding human being, when you see such things happening, decide what to do."

In conclusion, she acknowledged the presence of friends who are, struggling for democracy and human rights and cited the situation of Dr. Chee Soon Juan who continues to fight for democracy and freedom in Singapore. “I hope you all fight with us,” Lau underscored.

### **Panel Discussion on the Liberal Economy and Wealth Disparity**

This session was facilitated by Mr. Jules Maaten, Country Director of the FNF Philippine Office. Among the speakers were Hon. Saumura Tioulong, Member of the Cambodian National Assembly representing the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) and former Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Cambodia, Hon. Sin Chung Kai, Legislative Councillor representing the Democratic Party of Hong Kong (DPHK) and Individual Member of CALD, Dr. Parth Shah, President of the Centre for Civil Society of India, Mr. Jay Kun Yoo, former Member of Parliament from the Uri Party of South Korea and Dr. Sethaput Suthiwart-Narueput, Executive Chairman of the Thailand Future Foundation.



### ***Panelists***

#### **Hon. Saumura Tioulong, MP**

Member of the Cambodian National Assembly,  
Cambodia National Rescue Party  
Former Deputy Governor of the National Bank of Cambodia

Tioulong emphasized that economic growth is necessary, however when she thinks of how poor the Cambodian population is, she cannot help but ask, “What is economic growth for and for whom?” She said that Cambodia is one of the most promising markets in Southeast Asia, but there should be an economic system that would provide economic growth that is balanced, equitable, and that respects the dignity of the human being.

**Hon. Sin Chung Kai, MP**

Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong

Democratic Party, Hong Kong

Individual Member, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Sin explained the extent of inequality in Hong Kong despite being ranked first as the freest economy in the world for the last twenty years. Hong Kong has the lowest export among the economies. Income tax rate is 15.5%-16% and profit tax for business is only 1.5%-1.8%. However, Hong Kong has the highest of all gini coefficients, which measures inequality and income disparities.

He shared how peculiar tiny apartments in the Hong Kong costs. For a 300 sq. ft. apartment in Hong Kong, the cost would be HK\$500,000. Average cost would be HK\$1,500 per square feet and a new graduate would only earn around HK\$1,500. He narrated that when he graduated thirty years ago, it took him five to six years to save up in order to pay the down payment for his apartment and move in. Currently, the new graduates have to save up for twenty years in order to afford the downpayment and pay the mortgage for the next fifty years.

Sin concluded by saying that Hong Kong is indeed having its prosperous years in the last 40-50 years. They have a wealthy economy, but Hong Kong is doing very little to reduce inequality.

**Dr. Parth Shah**

President, Centre for Civil Society, India

Shah highlighted first the inequality between the private and political sector. Within the economic area, he noted that there is the Consumer Protection Act that protects the consumers against false claims. In the political sphere, there should also be a Voter Protection Act that protects the public against false promises made by political parties and candidates. Shah believed that liberals should focus on the fight to bring more accountability within the political system so people can have access to the truth about who they voted for.

The second point Shah raised was the difference between the old rich and the new rich, particularly on how they utilize their wealth. He said that the new rich invests in new technologies, new ventures. They always work hard as philanthropists that envision bigger things. They think of ways of how to keep building and growing. It is quite the opposite, Shah explained, of the old rich as these people only live for themselves and or for their family.

**Hon. Jay Kun Yoo**

Former Member of Parliament

Uri Party, South Korea

Yoo narrated how he has been familiar with liberal networks since 1993 when the FNF sponsored a conference with former South Korean president, Kim Dae-jung, who was a founding father of CALD. During the conference, Kim asked Yoo what he should do when he becomes President. Yoo said, "You already tried three times, I'm sure you'll get it the fourth time." Then Otto Graf Lambsdorff, a respected politician from the Free Democratic Party of Germany and a former chairman of FNF, advised that liberalism, free trade, free market system, democracy, and human rights would make policies and platforms for governance stronger. After the conference, they went back to South Korea, ran, campaigned, and got elected. Five years later, Roh Moo-hyun, a "disciple of Kim Dae-jung" ran and also got elected. Yoo served as

senior adviser to Roh and invited FNF and CALD to hold a conference in South Korea in 2002. He served two presidents with gratitude to FNF and CALD.

He remembered Park Chung-hee, a military strongman who was elected as president of South Korea from 1962 until his assassination in 1979. He ruled an authoritarian government, but during his tenure the economic growth was 8.9% for twenty years. During Kim's presidency, however, the economic growth was only 3.4%. Yoo posed a question to the audience why an authoritarian government that did not open its market to the world, did not globalize, and did not connect to other countries, fared better in terms of economic growth compared to democratic, open systems.

**Dr. Sethaput Suthiwart-Narueput**  
Executive Chairman, Thailand Future Foundation

Sethaput talked about changing the perspective and approach to help the liberal ideology and the free market mechanism resonate more in Asia. The change of approach should start with liberals. First, he said liberals tend to focus more on the inequality of wealth when it would be more helpful to focus on the inequality of opportunity. Through the prism of inequality of wealth, Sethaput said the nation debates gear towards handouts and subsidies and "we see in the region the terrible effect that subsidies has had on markets and on public finances." On the other hand, when liberals focus on the inequality of opportunity, the debate would focus on the access to quality education and that would resonate more to the Asian middle class.

Second, the focus should shift from inequality of income and wealth to equality of treatment under the law. "Rule of law [and] control of function, are issues, which will naturally resonate a lot more with the people in Asia because as we know throughout the region, corruption perception opt to be quiet high and people tend to believe that the people in power are seen to be above the law," he explained. He added that this circumstance reflects that governments in the region are really not representative of the population. The wealth of leaders, the heads of government and the Members of Parliament, are about nineteen thousand times compared to that of the average population. In the US, it's about twenty six times, while in the UK it's fifty four times.

This shift of mindset would not only attract people in the region to engage in the debate, but would also "mitigate the worst impacts of inequality." Sethaput concluded, "It's not just inequality that people care about, but also issues of governance, which made people feel that people become rich because of connections or unfairness or lack of transparency. These kinds of issues make people more resentful of wealth inequality."

**SATURDAY | 8 NOVEMBER**

### **CALD-LI Conference**

The CALD-LI Conference Opening Plenary Session was chaired by Dr. J.R. Nereus “Neric” Acosta, Philippine Presidential Adviser on Environmental Protection, Head of the CALD Climate Change Committee and former CALD Secretary General. The welcome remarks were delivered by Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell, President of Liberal International (LI) and Hon. Oyun Sanjaasuren, MP, CALD Chairperson, President of the United Nations Environmental Assembly, Minister of Environment and Green Development of Mongolia and Co-Chair of the Civil Will Green Party of Mongolia.



### **Opening Remarks**

#### **Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell**

President, Liberal International, Andorra

Minoves highlighted the strength of liberalism as a philosophy of comfort. While a lot of ideologies and schools of thoughts are promoted as solutions to chaos, weakness, and corruption, Minoves said the danger of some is to promote liberalism as the one that promises strength, order, and recovery. He believes that the task of liberals is to “debunk such philosophy of strength and reach out to the younger generations.” The question is how and where to start.

Minoves said it is important to come together with a “clear message and a consistent strategy” because democracy is not just about pure elections, but also about the defense of human rights and the capacity of making one’s voice be heard – freedom of expression and of the press, among others. Liberals are “heirs of the humanists and rationalists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century” and they continue to promote the idea of tolerance and the freedom to express our ideas. While fundamentalists think of ideas as battlegrounds, liberals prefer to respect each other’s convictions and still allow interactions such in the case of religious convictions.





Minoves commended the peaceful conduct of demonstration in Hong Kong. He said, “They teach us a lesson that freedom and democracy can never be taken for granted. Their fight for illiberalism implies courage and determination.” Despite numerous cultures, religious traditions, and economic backgrounds, Minoves stressed that liberals should not be trapped to being on the defensive.

**Hon. Oyun Sanjaasuren, MP**

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats  
President, United Nations Environmental Assembly  
Minister of Environment and Green Development, Mongolia  
Co-Chair, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia



Sanjaasuren welcomed everyone and thanked LI, CALD, and FNF for organizing a platform to discuss and exchange liberal ideas about growth and inequality. She briefly narrated how Mongolia was set free from the chains of communism and went through a slow transition to democracy after a group of young students organized a non-violent protest in 1989. Mongolia managed to transform itself from a very isolated country to a very open one. They had the first democratic elections in July 1990, just a few months after the student protests. Mongolia’s democratic transition was not a very easy task, she said.

Sanjaasuren quoted Genghis Khan, a Mongolian warrior who created one of the largest empires in history, “It’s easy to conquer the world on a horseback, it’s much more difficult to dismount a government.” She said that when the Berlin wall went down, the harder task was to rebuild and live up to the promises after. The last 25 years of the Mongolian transition, particularly the first 10 years, were very difficult. Everything collapsed so they had to build new institutions: the economy, the private sector, the legislature, and even the mentality had to be changed. In the year 2000, the economy started growing and then the mining industry started to thrive. Legal reforms were introduced and institutional safeguards were set such as anti-corruption working groups, political party building, and access to freedom of information. Sanjaasuren said she is proud because her party is one of the staunch supporters of a more open government.

There were challenges along the way and politicians started to introduce populist policies, and the presence of more and more state interventions increased in business and mining projects. According to Sanjaasuren, the advantage of having a vibrant multiparty parliamentary democracy is that if mistakes are made in the policies, through deliberations and debates, politicians can repair those mistakes and come back to the right path. The downside to this, however, is it slows down development and affects the opportunities of the people to have decent jobs and incomes.

Sanjaasuren stressed that liberal leaders should be responsible and should come up with very progressive and good policies. It could also help if liberals would focus on environmentally friendly developments.

Sanjaasuren concluded by expressing her hope for the resolution of the challenges faced by the democratic forces in Hong Kong. She said that the unfolding story of Hong Kong is a story of many Asian democracies. “Universal suffrage and freedom to make our own choice has to be upheld and respected in any country,” she said.

## **Keynote Address**

### **Mr. Martin Lee**

Founding Chairperson, Democratic Party, Hong Kong

Individual Member, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats and Liberal International



Lee discussed how the current generation of Hong Kong transformed democracy into something beautiful. He said, "The people of Hong Kong have redefined it in a peaceful protest and become lovers of peace and democracy." He recalled that for the first seven days of the Umbrella Movement, it poured everyday and all of the students were all wet, but considered it as having been baptized to democracy. Lee reiterated that the protest was voluntary and that everyone pushed for the "Love and Peace" idea of protesting. Lee was surprised to see how peaceful it was – "school children sitting down in the streets doing their homework, and at the end of the day, they are cleaning up the streets of Hong Kong." This single movement, he said, has succeeded the expectations of many including that of the Occupy Central movement.

The Hong Kong people "have always been into democracy, looking for the promise they have given us." Lee briefly narrated a crucial period in Hong Kong's quest for democracy when the Basic Law guaranteed seventeen seats, only to be usurped by China since it would choose all the candidates. Lee said when Deng Xiao Ping, the architect of the "one country, two systems" policy, came up with this idea. He decided not to break from the socialist roots, despite its quest for capitalism in Hong Kong. Lee emphasized that human rights are protected under the rule of law in Hong Kong and despite the "one country, two systems" policy, the people of Hong Kong wanted to make sure that "we keep our core values."

Hong Kong would not be able to grow democratically, if it cannot democratically vote its leaders. Lee is optimistic that with the current generation, led by student leaders such as Joshua Wong, the fight for democracy would continue to move forward and the essence behind every action would continue to be in the trajectory of a "beautified democracy."

## **World Café Session on the Conference Theme**

The World Café is "a creative process for facilitating collaborative dialogue and the sharing of knowledge and ideas to create a living network of conversation and action. In this process a café ambiance is created, in which participants discuss a question or issue in small groups around the café tables. At regular intervals the participants move to a new table. One table host remains and summarizes the previous conversation to the new table guests. Thus the proceeding conversations are cross-fertilized with the ideas generated in former conversations with other participants. At the end of the process the main ideas are summarized in a plenary session and follow-up possibilities are discussed."

Mr. Moritz Kleine-Brockhoff, Resident Representative of FNF Indonesia and Project Director for FNF Malaysia, served as the session chair. Three table hosts were designated to lead the discussions for the following questions:

1. As liberals and democrats, how do we counter the perception (which undoubtedly affected the electoral fortunes of liberal parties and politicians) that liberal policies are responsible for the persisting wealth inequality in the world today?



2. How do we promote economic freedom and market economy to countries, which do not embrace the concepts citing the danger of inequality?
3. What can organizations like LI, CALD and FNF do to correct the wrong perception about liberalism and to promote liberal policies (rule of law, property rights, market economy, etc.) that foster

Among the table hosts who reported on the results of their respective discussions were Hon. Albert Ho, Legislative Councillor from DPHK, Hon. Lousewies van der Laan, Vice President of the ALDE Party and Member of Parliament from D66 Party of Netherlands, and lastly, Mr. Barun Mitra, Director of the Liberty Institute of India.



Ho said that the people from the well developed countries are more concerned about the question on social and economic inequality compared to those from developing countries. In the latter case, the developing countries are more concerned about economic growth and the improvement of life, than the question of tolerance to inequalities. Ho explained that there is confusion about what liberals and democrats truly believe in compared to neo-liberals. He explained that the philosophy of liberals and democrats is to believe in a caring and just society and to provide good social security to people in order for them to have a decent and dignified life. Moreover, it is essential to ensure that the citizens be provided with education and sufficient social help such as housing and access to health. Liberals do not dismiss the fact that there is a certain degree of disparity between the rich and the poor, that is why liberals give priority to opportunities, to education, and to accountability. Ho said, “we make ourselves answerable” so it is important to grab the opportunity to communicate and educate the society on what we believe in.

Lousewies van der Laan reported on the how liberal organizations correct the wrong perception about liberalism and how to promote liberal policies. She said, “If liberalism is about free markets, then why are we so bad at selling ourselves?” Liberals are partly to be blamed

because of the constant talks about market economy and jobs as well as rule of law and equal opportunities. But talking about other areas of real concern that people appeal to such as policies, health, education, climate change and gender equality, would help liberals provide an access for people to understand what liberalism is all about. Economic freedom and inequality do not register to people because they are abstract. “We need to build a narrative that would communicate that we are against all kinds of concentration of power, whether it be political or economic,” van der Laan said. It is imperative to reclaim liberalism so that people will define liberals as more assertive, self-confident, and aggressive on issues that matter to them.

Lastly, Mitra said they had a very great discussion on inequality and the lack of access to education and other social services. He explained there were a lot of points raised about outcomes vis-à-vis opportunities, but he said it should also be about the rules, the laws, and the process. There was also a discussion about the loose concept of what leads to opportunities and the process behind it. In Hong Kong, there are those who are rich who can travel and have access to education and health. There are also those rich people who have access to property and only a select group can really benefit from those developments. Mitra said it is important to recognize the outcomes that come with the opportunities, but there is a need to focus more closely on the issue of the rule of law and “the process that heads out to a particular opportunity in contrast to the outcome.”

#### **Updates on Political Developments in Taiwan, Thailand and Hong Kong**



Mr. Siegfried Herzog, Regional Director for the FNF Southeast and East Asia Office, served as the session chair. The speakers were Hon. Bi-khim Hsiao, Member of Taiwan Legislative Yuan from the DPP Taiwan and former CALD Secretary General, Hon. Kasit Piromya, LI Vice President, former Member of Parliament from DP Thailand and Former Minister of Foreign of the Kingdom of Thailand, and Hon. James To, Legislative Councillor from DPHK.

## Hon. Bi-khim Hsiao, MP

Member of Taiwan Legislative Yuan  
Former Secretary General, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats  
Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan



Hsiao updated the liberal family about the the current political environment in Taiwan and the issues that the people in Taiwan are currently fighting for. Hsiao reported on the 29 November 2014 9-in-1 elections, which would include elections of mayors, city councils, village chiefs, village representatives, among others. She said this would be the largest election that the DPP would contest with over 50,000 candidates campaigning at various levels of the local government. The polls showed DPP leading in major cities in Taiwan, and it was predicted that the party would have more votes than ever at the local level. The DPP campaigned for an independent candidate running in Taipei City who has been a supporter of DPP. Hsiao said it is likely that DPP would defeat the

KMT for the first time in the one-on-one election in Taipei City. Their former president, who once served as a mayor of Taipei City, won in a three-way election with 40% of the popular votes, but they expected a simple majority of over 50% for the independent candidate they were supporting.

Hsiao also shared about the current status of President Ma Ying-jeou's approval rating that went as low as 9% in September 2014 because he used wiretapped information to remove the Speaker of Parliament. President Ma was not happy that the Speaker did not aggressively support his policies, and he insinuated the the Speaker was collaborating with the opposition, the DPP, on policy matters. This incident pulled his ratings down and created divisions within the party.

In March 2014, there was a mass occupation of students of the Legislative Yuan, Taiwan's Parliament. This was triggered by the fact that the government tried to promote and pass a trade and services agreement with China. This agreement was presented to the Parliament without full prior consultation with the private sector or those industries that could be potentially affected. As a response, the DPP, which is still the minority in Parliament, staged a boycott, but the KMT Chair tried to pass it with a 30-second reading. The student responded with angry protests, which included occupying Taiwan's Parliament for about a month. This has been compared to the current protests in Hong Kong, and the similarities include inequality, high cost of living, expensive housing, falling wages, and bleak hope for their future. Hsiao said that "social discontent led to the occupation...about 70% of the public, according to our polls, were sympathetic to the students." The occupation protests were orderly and ended smoothly, but there were instances of fights with the police.

Hsiao also shared the challenges they face as they prepare a comeback in the national elections in 2016. Hsiao explained that DPP needs to develop a discourse for economic growth that supports further integration with the world – trade integration and liberalization of transpacific partnerships. They also need to deal with inequality and diversification. Taiwan must try to decrease its overdependence on China and diversify and strengthen ties with other trading partners outside China. Inequality and distribution must also be addressed so that the problem of uneven economic growth and falling wages could be resolved. Hsiao stressed that diversification and inequality need to be appropriated in DPP's economic agenda.



Taiwan must also be cautious and must reduce China's influence on different areas (politics, media, and economy), which similarly intensified China's role in Hong Kong. *The Economist* showed a "Growing Capital Index" and rated Hong Kong in 1st place and Taiwan in 8th place. The intensification of the relations with China shows a lot of discontent or worry or worsens the factor of capitalism and business," Hsiao said. However, the DPP needs to create a structure for the peaceful relations with China. She said the DPP sent delegations to China to have that mutual understanding to create the structure of stable engagement with China.

Just like Hong Kong, Taiwan experiences lack of trust in the government that results in extra-institutional means of protesting and occupations in order to stop unsound and non-inclusive policies. That is why Hsiao emphasized the strengthening of institutions to achieve effective governance and a full working democracy in the future.

#### **Hon. Kasit Piromya**

Vice-President, Liberal International

Former Member of Parliament and Former Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
Democrat Party, Thailand

Piromya said that Thailand, which was dominated by money politics and populism, lost all the manifestations of a liberal democracy. With populism, he explained, policies were rushed and majority rule was in control. The relationship between the majority and minority in the parliament was not respected. Propaganda machineries were maximized by the government and access to the press and media was curtailed.

Piromya said democracy has dominated Thai politics for the past 50 years, but there was always a struggle on checks and balance. Although Thailand has managed to have all institutions of a democratic society, the so-called independent institutions such as the



constitutional court, the administrative court, the anti-money laundering, anti-corruption, the office of the ombudsman, the human rights commission, among others, checks and balance does not necessarily function effectively on them. And with these, people went to the streets to protest and seek decentralization of the Thai political structure. On 22 May 2014, the military took over again with the excuse that they do not want to see violence in the streets.



Now that the military is in power, Piromya said the question that needs answer is whether the military would continue to rule or would they answer the people on issues such as the decentralization of the Thai political structure and a more clear-cut division for the checks and balance and the rule of law. Piromya said that for the past five months of military rule, the military is looking more into stability than bridging the gap of differences in participatory politics. He said that in a few months, they might be in the streets once again.

**Hon. James To, MP**

Legislative Councillor, Hong Kong  
Democratic Party, Hong Kong



To showed an inspiring music video of photos that encapsulates the entire Occupy Central story. He said Beijing decided not to let any of the Pan-democrats join the elections and this clearly makes its results not a genuine choice of the people. The original plan of the Occupy Central movement, To said, is very simple - to let 5,000 to 10,000 people sit down and show civil disobedience and then disperse after three days. However, the students rushed into the government office and created a whole movement. Others joined and the protest escalated to 50,000. To explained that when the students allowed the government to intimidate them and concede, then many would have suffered horrible prison time. He said it is

hard to imagine how everything would end, but To is definite that the Chinese government is set up to build a new nation, and a possible consolidation of power by China would trigger another dictator. To called on the international community to speak up for Hong Kong and support Hong Kong's fight for democracy.

**SUNDAY | 9 NOVEMBER**

**CALD Women's Caucus Seminar on Migrant Workers**



This session convened women leaders from the CALD Women's Caucus and other networks and discussed the issues migrant workers face in Hong Kong and in other parts of the globe. The session also talked about how women leaders could help in addressing these issues. Ms. Jaslyn Go, International Liaison and Assistant Treasurer of the Singapore Democratic Party (SDP), served as the session chair. Ms. Monovithya Kem, Member of Permanent Bureau and Deputy Director for Public Affairs of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) conveyed the welcome remarks on behalf of Hon. Mu Sochua, MP, CALD Women's Caucus Chair. Hon. Henedina Abad, MP, Deputy Speaker of the Philippine House of Representatives and former CALD Women's Caucus Chair, delivered the keynote address.

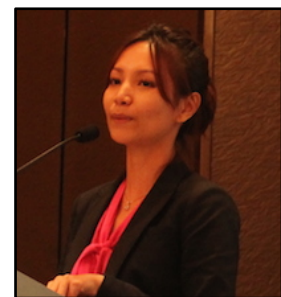
*Welcome Remarks*

**Ms. Monovithya Kem**

Member of Permanent Bureau and  
Deputy Director for Public Affairs  
Cambodia National Rescue Party

*on behalf of CALD Women's Caucus Chair Mu Sochua*

Kem sent her warmest regards to everyone on behalf of Mu Sochua, chair of the CALD Women's Caucus, who was in Nepal to attend a conference on migrant workers. Kem said she was honoured to speak on Mu's behalf because Kem has always known her to be a champion of the cause of migrant workers. Through social media, Mu was able to inform Cambodians of the many horrific stories of abuses that Cambodian female migrant workers were experiencing especially in Malaysia. Though from different political parties at that time, Kem, who was a supporter of the Human Rights Party (HRP), decided to contact Mu who was with the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP), because Kem felt she needed to reach out and find ways to help. Currently, Kem and Mu are members of the Cambodia National Rescue Party, a party formed by the alliance of HRP and SRP.



Women account for half of the total migrant workers globally, Kem reported. Most women migrating to work abroad are female domestic workers and they face additional vulnerability compared to any typical migrant worker. They are more exposed to gender-based violence. Kem explained that the vulnerability they face are linked to the following factors:

1. There is no transparency and no clear accountability during the recruitment process both from the country of origin and the destination country.
2. There is lack of assistance and protection mechanism from both the country of origin and the destination country.
3. There is social and cultural isolation in the country of destination. Language barriers could lead to more vulnerabilities and potential abuses.
4. There is lack of accurate information on the terms and conditions from the country of origin and country of destination. Kem said Cambodia, particularly its embassies, is not doing its job in providing information on who they should contact when having problems.

Kem believed that there are more abuses than what are reported. The women, she explained, don't have the means and even the courage to report them. Some fly back to Cambodia clinically insane because of the abuses. It is also a sad fact that this issue on the violence on women is not being raised enough by politicians because the migrant women do not get to vote.

It is clear that this is a regional issue, Kem said. The conferences and gatherings such as the CALD conferences, could help raise and address the issue together. "Whether we are in opposition or government, we need to come together to work on this," Kem concluded.

## **Keynote Address**

### **Hon. Henedina Abad, MP**

Deputy Speaker

Philippine House of Representatives

Former CALD Women's Caucus Chair



Abad started by stating lightheartedly that in the House of Representatives of the Philippines, she is the Deputy Speaker; however, in her home, she is the speaker. She said issues on female migrant workers cannot be considered as simply a women's issue. "Men and women should really be engaged in trying to look for solutions to the issue of migration and particularly the vulnerability of women migrants," Abad said. The flaws and problems of political and economic systems reflect in the phenomenon of migration. It confirms the truth that there would be trade offs in personal and public choices made in pursuit of the development of the country. She said that it is imperative not to marginalize this issue in the periphery of public and political discussions and debates.

Abad shared key reflections that could give a collective approach or response on how to guarantee the protection of women migrants. Statistics show women migrants make up more than half of migrant workers and they are undoubtedly the most vulnerable. Despite challenges and temporary setbacks in the pursuit and realization of freedom, peace, justice, and development, Abad said there is still progress in place on matters relating to women's human rights, women in parliament, gender equality, among others at the center of the democratic and liberal agenda. Abad shared a few highlights from the book authored by Daron Acemoglu and



James Robinson called “Why Nations Fail,” which “propounds why nations thrive when they develop inclusive political and economic institutions and why they fail when these institutions become extractive and concentrate power and opportunity in the hands of the few.” Abad suggested that the task for democracy then must be grounded on the creation and growth of inclusive institutions, both political and economic. In order for this to happen, Abad recognized the important role of the government and the political will to create institutional changes. Politicians could be leaders who could deliver a voice and act on setting peace, justice, and democracy at the core of the strategy to establish inclusive institutions. Moreover, the book also highlights that “countries thrive when they build political and economic institutions that empower and protect the full potential of its citizens to innovate, invent, and develop.”

Migration is a push and pull phenomenon because men and women are forced to look for employment elsewhere other than their own countries where they’re suppose to work; however, opportunities are scarce. Unfortunately, the most vulnerable are the poor, wherein overseas have become a matter of necessity rather than a choice, Abad explained. “Migration is a result of those extractive institutions. Migration is a result of the absence of inclusive institutions,” she added.

For many countries, the Philippines included, Abad said 10% of our GDP comes from the remittances of overseas workers and it has become a support system in the economy. Many domestic workers continue to seek employment in other countries. To most, President Noynoy Aquino said, “It’s a matter of choice rather than a necessity.” It is therefore, important to call on neighboring countries to partner together to make sure the rights and humanity of migrant workers are protected. Abad concluded by saying that it is a necessity to “build on existing international agreements, UN conventions, country best practices to move forward and aggressively ensure the protection of women migrant workers.”

### **Session on Migrant Workers Rights as Human Rights**

This session talked about the key rights of migrant workers and the current challenges that relate to the protection and promotion of their rights. The speakers in this session also shared the policies that Asian governments follow in order to promote and protect these rights. Dr. Helena Wong, Legislative Councillor from the DPHK, facilitated the session and gave her warmest greetings on behalf of the Women’s Affairs Committee of the DPHK. Wong said that Hong Kong has a huge number of migrant workers with 320,000 foreign domestic helpers working at the moment. Hong Kong’s child care and elderly service are very minimal and not prioritized, which explains its dependence on the assistance of migrant workers. According to Wong, the people of Hong Kong are very grateful for the help they get from the domestic helpers. Mr. Chito Gascon, Esq., Member of the Human Rights Victims Claims Board of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines, presented the state and non-state initiatives that help improve and further develop the promotion of the rights and protection of migrant workers. Dr. Rajiva Wijesinha, Member of Parliament from Sri Lanka and former CALD Chairperson, shared the initiatives of Sri Lanka vis-à-vis the mechanisms that would ensure the protection of migrant workers. He also shared key insights on how to improve the cooperation between the sending and the recipient countries.

**Mr. Chito Gascon, Esq.**

Member of the Human Rights Victims Claims Board,  
Commission on Human Rights, Philippines



Gascon thanked CALD, LI, FNF, and EFN for the opportunity to interact on important issues. Gascon talked about valuing the human rights perspective when discussing about violations on migrant workers. Gascon explained that all human beings possess rights by virtue of their humanity and that they are not given by states but are merely recognized by states. Moreover, human rights are recognized or enshrined in various documents and practices, among them national constitutions, regional agreements, international agreements and customary international law. There are also non-state actors like NGOs, political parties, social movements, women's movements, and

advocacy groups for migrants, among others, that continue to challenge governments in terms of their obligations under human rights laws to hold governments accountable for the violations that occur. Gascon said that ultimately, states are obligated to create an enabling environment to make sure that these rights are protected.

Gascon also discussed the debate between two kinds of treatments that migrant workers are expected to receive: "Equal Treatment" and "International Minimum Standard." Equal Treatment means foreigners are to be treated the same way as locals. The International Minimum Standard means states are obligated to respect the rights of other states and is important for these states to ensure a higher standard. Gascon said as women migrant workers are exposed to additional vulnerabilities, they also become exposed to the systemic risks of the political and economic patriarchal structures that discriminate them.

Migration is a reality and it would not stop. Gascon said migration for employment would continue and its growing at a tremendous rate. The Philippines, for example, currently has 12 million people who are working abroad. With a total population of 100 million, the 12% migrant workers send in US\$25 billion a year, and Gascon said this is one of the reasons why the Philippine economy is improving.

There are clear risks and vulnerabilities to human rights violations that migrant workers are exposed to. Nevertheless, they continue to work abroad to seek for greener pasture. Their migration is also a result of the push and pull of market forces that create the conditions for work. Gascon explained that without the regime of protection, this creates the condition for possible violations such as under or non-payment of wages, strict control of migrant mobility, harsh living and work conditions, detention when under risk of law, among others. Migrant workers assume these risks because they believe they can secure the assistance of the sending and receiving governments when they are exposed to harm.

Gascon also shared some of the ratified human rights treaties. He presented the importance of the Migrant Workers Convention (MWC), ratified on 1 July 2003, the only United Nations instrument containing the broadest protection for migrant workers. Enshrined in this treaty is the uncompromising link between Migrant Workers and Human Rights. The MWC puts migrant workers at the forefront of migration issues. It is the most comprehensive instrument dealing with the rights of migrant workers. Although other human rights treaties are applicable to migrant workers, the MWC was specifically designed to address the vulnerable context in which migrants live and work. The MWC is one of the more recent documents to be added to the growing 'bill of rights' at the international level, which all together form the UN human rights

treaty mechanism. The other six are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Committee Against Torture (CAT), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDA), and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Other initiatives such as the International Agenda for Migration Management of the Berne Initiative is meant to provide “guidance to states in managing migration in full compliance with international standards, including those of human rights” and the International NGO Platform for the Migrant Workers’ Convention that “coordinates NGO initiatives to raise awareness of the rights of migrants & to facilitate the promotion, implementation, & monitoring of the MWC.”

**Dr. Rajiva Wijesinha**

Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka

Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats



Wijesinha presented the efforts of Sri Lanka in dealing with the protection of migrant workers and the ongoing reforms and initiatives to improve the mechanisms that would benefit them. He said Sri Lanka, over the years, has been dependent on its migrant workers because of the remittances that go back to the country. It is evident though that abuse and exploitation of migrants are part of the repercussions that help provide growth in their economy.

In response to the challenges faced by migrant workers, Wijesinha explained that while he was Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights, Sri Lanka introduced a chapter on the Rights of Migrant Workers into the Human Rights Action Plan. The Plan was ratified by the Cabinet in 2011, but Wijesinha said the “lack of a Ministry with adequate supervisory” functions made it difficult to implement.

There is a continuing program, however, with regard to the Ministries, which dealt with social concerns namely: Ministries of Child Development and Women’s Affairs, and the Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare. These two Ministries coordinate with civil society, as shown in the report on “Sri Lanka’s Missing Mothers” produced by Save the Children. Some of the action points raised in the report are in accordance with the suggestions in the Human Rights Action Plan.

Wijesinha said they have been working toward reducing the proportion of women among migrants. He said, “Banning mothers from going abroad has been suggested, and though I believe this is inappropriate and could also constitute a violation of rights, we limit the migration of mothers with young children.”

Amongst the vital areas, which the Ministry and the Bureau work on are:

- a) Awareness raising
- b) Training
- c) Maintenance of Records
- d) Support and Counseling
- e) Reintegration

Awareness training would include information about migrant's rights and the potential problems they might face. While it is important to ensure protection, empowerment is also key, thus proper training is essential as well to enable them to deploy their skills and abilities to maximum benefit. Wijesinha stressed that "possibilities of exploitation are rife, and it is best to equip workers with the knowledge and skills that will protect them, rather than thinking only in terms of external protection." He added, "The need for better coordination, and the provision of facilities that will promote social reintegration" is crucial. The government needs to track them and ensure that support is available as required. Counselling for the vulnerable and their families and assistance with reintegration on return are a must."

There have been progress since, Wijesinha reported. The Divisional Secretariats, "the smallest unit at which citizens interact with government officials for programme coordination," were advised to have vulnerability indices at Grama Niladhari level, which is the first interface between government and citizen. It was also encouraged that the families of migrant mothers be given special attention. Wijesinha said the Divisional Secretaries have begun tracking migrant workers to take prompt action when agents engage in irregularities and that the Ministry now has representatives in most Divisional Secretariats. Moreover, there are improvements on reintegration mechanisms, assistance with loans for housing, and availability in counselling that have helped ensure that the benefits of long labour abroad are not squandered.

There are still areas that need to be improved. "We also need to develop better mechanisms to cope with trafficking in which officials too can be involved," Wijesinha emphasized. He narrated the case of an ambassador to Italy who was recalled after engaging in human smuggling because apparently, "the demand for jobs in some countries is so large, and the profits to be made so tempting, that dealing with abuse is a difficult process." There is much to learn, he noted, from countries like the Philippines, which has "long known the importance of better support for migrant labor." Wijesinha added that "recent innovations of the Ministry and the Bureau, in line with the suggestions of the Human Rights Action Plan, indicate that we too have begun to understand the importance of basic rights for these active contributors to national welfare."

### ***Open Forum***

#### ***Which country performed better?***

Ms. Josephine Chan Shui-ying, founding member of the DPHK and spokesperson of the Women's Affairs of DPHK, asked if the Philippines has a mechanism that would assess which countries have performed better in terms of protecting the human rights of its migrant workers. Gascon emphasized on the importance of rule of law, and he said that he is pleased that there is rule of law in Hong Kong which protects Filipino workers. The recent increase in the minimum wage of domestic helpers from HK\$2,800 to HK\$4,000 is also a good sign that Hong Kong values migrant workers. The Philippines is more comfortable where Filipinos would be protected. Gascon said there are some bad cases reported, but generally, most Filipinos are happy with their employment in Hong Kong. The Philippines just wants its people to be protected, and protection must be the responsibility of the sending and receiving states.

#### ***Need for sharing of data***

Mr. Robert Woodthorpe Browne of the LI British Group asked if there might be information that is valuable to them as citizens of recipient countries to help sending countries track abuses and ensure migrant workers' rights are upheld. Gascon said they are happy to share the systems

and planning mechanisms installed by the country to provide guidance and protection to migrant workers. However, Gascon warned that if there are problems with the sending countries, but the receiving country does not respond, then there would be gaps. That is the reason why the MWC becomes important because it creates international standards in which all states can find common ground to work together. Gascon added that the Philippines has an alert system, an exchange of information system set up for coordination on trafficking issues. “We are for free movement and we don’t want to impose restrictions, but we want it to be a choice rather than forced by circumstances,” Gascon said.

Wijesinha, on the one hand, said that there is a need for better migration policies as well as regulation. Otto Graf Lambsdorff said liberals actually want more government, but strong government particularly in the area of migrant workers. The complete lack of proper regulation on the side of the recipient countries is shocking. Wijesinha also said there is a need for a much better recording mechanism in recipient countries and their willingness to share the mechanisms to the sending countries would tremendously help. There should also be clear agreements between countries not only on a government-to-government level, but also on a more general level where minimum safeguards must be enforced rigidly.

Mr. Kasit Piromya, former Foreign Affairs Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand, gave emphasis on the available networks that could act as channels of cooperation and information. While government-to-government is very crucial in addressing the concerns of migrant workers, Piromya said CALD and more formal organizations such as ASEAN can also can push to bridge the gaps on issues on migration.

### **‘UN Mechanism on Protection of Migrant Workers’**

*Input of Liberal International*

#### **Hon. Markus Löning**

Vice-President, Liberal International  
Former Commissioner for Human Rights, Germany  
Free Democratic Party, Germany



Löning discussed the liberal efforts being done in Europe to address migration issues. He reported on the meetings they had among Members of Parliament in Geneva in June 2014 where the situation of migrant workers was the focus. They met with the Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Migrants, François Crépeau, and with Michelle Leighton, Chief of the Labour Migration Branch of the International Labor Organization (ILO). He also said that LI fully supports the ratification of the Covenant for the Rights of Migrant Workers.

Löning shared that migrant workers’ rights are human rights and there are no differences between the rights of citizens and other people coming in. All people are entitled to the same rights and governments must protect all people. He shared that in Europe, there are different situations for different groups. The so-called “illegals” should not be called as such according to Löning. They have rights and are entitled to the full protection of their rights. As liberal politicians, he said, it is their duty to work with the judiciary, the police force, the schools, and hospitals to make sure the every person’s rights are upheld. Discrimination should never be an issue and liberals should make sure of that.

Apart from these, migrants are part of the social systems in every European country. In order for systems to work, the paranoia against migrants must stop. It is important to recognize the talent of the workforce because those talents would fill in the vital gaps needed in various industries. "Free movement is a right and we should not be naïve about it," Löning said. "The complete liberal vision must be the free movement of everybody in this world", he added.



