

CONFERENCE REPORT



Council of
Asian Liberals
and Democrats

11TH CALD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Liberalism

VS

ILLIBERALISM

WHICH SIDE DOES ASIA BELONG?

3-7 NOVEMBER 2016 | BANGKOK, THAILAND

11TH CALD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Liberalism *VS* ILLIBERALISM

WHICH SIDE DOES ASIA BELONG?

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Council of
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CONCEPT NOTE

"To survive the rise of global Trumpism, the liberal idea must adapt again—to become more robust on issues like Islamism, immigration, and integration; more comfortable with democracy than it has been in recent years; and more conscious of itself as an ideology."

Sobrab Ahmari

"Illiberalism: The Worldwide Crisis" (2016)

Liberalism vs. Illiberalism: Which Side Does Asia Belong?

In June 2010, the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD) held a conference, "Asian Liberal Parties in Power: Getting There, Remaining There", in Manila, the Philippines. The conference, which coincided with the inauguration of a Liberal Philippine president, was inspired by the rise of a significant number of liberal political parties all over the world, particularly in Asia. More than six years after, is the 'specter of liberalism' still haunting the world?

It appears that there is no easy answer to this question. On the one hand, it is said that liberalism is suffering from a worldwide crisis as seen in the electoral victories of political parties of the far left and the far right. Capitalizing on issues such as immigration and economic inequality, these parties are posting a significant challenge to the liberal political establishment, from Europe to the United States.

On the other hand, there are those who claim that the rise of illiberal movements affirms, more than ever, the need for the principles of moderation, pluralism and tolerance that liberalism espouses. Moreover, while illiberal political parties are indeed making inroads at the ballot box, the trend has not been as pervasive as it is often portrayed. Asia, for one, is experiencing the rise of liberal forces side-by-side the intransigence of illiberalism.

In this regard, CALD, in cooperation with the Democrat Party (DP) of Thailand, and with the support of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) for Freedom, has chosen the theme “Liberalism vs. Illiberalism: Which Side Does Asia Belong?” for its General Assembly (GA) Conference in Bangkok, Thailand on 3-7 November 2016. A Climate Change Public Forum, Party Network Workshop, Youth Forum on Climate Change and CALD Executive Committee Meeting will take place as well. The objectives of the conference and related events are the following:

CALD General Assembly Conference

- To serve as a forum where the most pertinent issues and problems about the future of liberalism in the 21st century, particularly in Asia, can be raised and discussed;
- To come up with a list of proposals on how liberal political parties can address these issues and problems, particularly those relating to the rise and persistence of populism and illiberalism; and
- 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.

CALD Climate Change Public Forum

- To discuss the far-ranging impacts of climate change and the importance of climate change adaptation;
- To impress on the participants the necessity of investing in climate-smart and climate-resilient infrastructure;
- To showcase best practices on building such type of infrastructure, and whether these can be replicated in Asian countries; and
- To come-up with a plan on how CALD can contribute to the promotion of climate-smart and climate-resilient infrastructure in the region.

CALD-ALDE Party Network Workshop

- To present organizational innovations and best practices that helped the Alliance for Liberals and Democrats of Europe (ALDE) Party in ensuring its effectiveness and viability;
- To tackle the opportunities and constraints that CALD members could confront in replicating such innovations and best practices in their respective countries; and
- To draw up a set of proposals on how CALD could better provide assistance to its members, both politically and administratively.

CALD Youth Forum on Climate Change

- To present the CALD Youth climate change communications framework formulated in its recently concluded workshop in Bali, Indonesia;

- To come up with specific climate change campaigns based on the abovementioned framework; and
- To discuss concrete strategies to promote CALD Youth climate change campaigns through different social media platforms.

CALD Executive Committee Meeting

- To discuss the proposed amendments to the CALD Charter prepared by the drafting committee;
- To review and assess CALD's previous activities, and plan the schedule and themes of 2017 events;
- To provide an update on recent political or party developments that relate to CALD members and partners; and
- To facilitate the turnover of the leadership of CALD and CALD Women's Caucus.

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Council of
Asian Liberals
and Democrats

PROGRAMME

3 November 2016, Thursday

Arrival in Bangkok

Variable

Arrival in Bangkok

Check-in at the hotel of delegates

Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel

250 Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok 10110, Thailand

T: 66 (0) 2649 8888 / F: 66 (0) 2649 8000

Free night

4 November 2016, Friday

CALD Climate Change Public Forum / CALD-LI Consultative Meeting / CALD-ALDE Party Network Workshop / Welcome Dinner

08:30 – 09:00

Registration

Ballroom II, Level 2, Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel

Mobility in the Time of Climate Change: A Public Forum on Building a Climate-Smart and Climate Resilient Infrastructure

Climate change impacts threaten to stall economic development in Asia and the Pacific, and endanger the health and safety of its vast population. Climate change causes temperature, wind, and precipitation to vary, with profound effects on natural systems. These in turn have effects on the health, safety, and livelihoods of people—especially poor people. Nowhere in the world are as many people affected by climate change as in Asia and the Pacific.

Asian Development Bank
Understanding and Responding to Climate Change in Developing Asia (2009)

Asia-Pacific is said to be the most vulnerable region to the adverse effects of climate change – highlighting the need for climate change adaptation to lessen vulnerability and increase resilience.

The United Nations defines adaptation as “the adjustment in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts.” It added that the concept refers to “changes in processes, practices, or structures to moderate or offset potential damages or to take advantage of opportunities associated with changes in climate.” Adaptation, in essence, involves adjustments to decrease the vulnerability to climate change and increase resilience to future impacts. Considering that rising temperatures, intensifying typhoons, widespread flooding and devastating droughts have become “the new normal”, building countries and peoples’ capacities to adapt becomes more important than ever.

One aspect of adaptation is in terms of infrastructure. Head of CALD Climate Change Committee and former Philippine Presidential Adviser on Environmental Concerns Neric Acosta said that infrastructure must be more “climate-smart or climate-proof, not simply as a matter of green design, but also in terms of ensuring settlements are resilient and able to adapt to harsh environmental vicissitudes.” For example, roads, airway strips and harbors, which are essential to the country’s mobility and economy, must be able to withstand climate change impacts. Basic mobility, provision of health services and food supplies, and movement to safer ground in case of extreme weather events are all made more difficult, if not impossible, if climate-smart and climate-resilient infrastructure are not in place.

This public forum aims to increase the awareness of CALD members and the general public on the importance of investing in climate-smart and climate-resilient infrastructure, particularly those that relate to transportation, in this era of climate change. It primarily features a panel discussion among the members of the CALD Climate Change Committee, which hopes to address climate change impacts and best practices in building climate-proof infrastructure.

09:00 – 09:45

OPENING SESSION

Session Chair

Dr. Khunying Kalaya Sophonpanich

Deputy Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand
Former Minister of Science and Technology, Thailand

Opening Remarks

Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Keynote Address

Hon. Isra Suthornvut

Secretary General
ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly

09:45 – 11:30

PANEL DISCUSSION

Host

Ms. Bulgan Bayasgalant

Chairperson, CALD Youth
Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Panelists

Dr. Monthip Sriratana – Tabucanon

Member, CALD Climate Change Committee
Former Member of Parliament, Thailand
Democrat Party of Thailand

Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

11:30 End of the Public Forum

11:30 – 12:30 Lunch
*Rossini's Italian Restaurant, Level 1
Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel*

12:30 – 14:00 **CLIMATE CHANGE DOTMOCRACY SESSION
(INTERNAL PLANNING AMONG CALD MEMBERS)**

Moderator

Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Issue: How can CALD contribute to the promotion of climate-resilient infrastructure in various countries in the region?

Method: The moderator presents information about the issue at hand (i.e. fact sheets, papers, and other supporting documents) followed by the posting of key questions to be answered. In small groups, participants brainstorm potential answers and collectively (or independently) draft each idea on its own dotmocracy idea sheet. Each sheet is then shared amongst the group by being passed or posted on a wall. Participants read each sheet and fill in one dot per sheet on the following opinion scale: strong agreement, agreement, neutral, disagreement, strong disagreement, and confusion. Before a participant passes/moves to the next sheet, he/she signs the sheet and adds brief comments as to the idea's strengths/opportunities and/or concerns/weaknesses. This process continues until all participants have dotted, signed, and commented on the ideas. The end stage in this method is when the results are shared and celebrated. A small group of final decision-makers (CALD Climate Change Committee) formulate a decision or plan based on the popular ideas.

14:00 – 15:30

CALD-LI Consultative Meeting

This is a consultative session designed to report progress on and gather inputs for the draft Liberal International (LI) Manifesto 2017. This key international liberal document is scheduled to be presented in the LI Spring Congress in Andorra next year.

Speakers

Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell

President, Liberal International
Liberal Party of Andorra

Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Member, LI Manifesto Drafting Committee

15:30 – 16:00

Coffee / Tea Break

16:00 – 18:00

CALD-ALDE Party Network Workshop

Drawing from the experiences of ALDE Party, this workshop will tackle best practices in different aspects of organizational development and party management – from organizational innovations, party administration, electoral campaigns, fund-raising to political communication. The objective is to share experiences and best practices that may be of use to the CALD network or to its member-parties.

Workshop Facilitator

Mr. Andrew Burgess

Political Adviser, ALDE Party

19:00 – 21:00

Welcome Dinner

Hosted by the Democrat Party of Thailand

Ballroom 1, Level 2, Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel

5 November 2016, Saturday

CALD Executive Committee Meeting / CALD Women's Caucus Luncheon Session / Visit to Golden Palace / CALD Handover Dinner

08:00 – 08:30

Registration

Ballroom II, Level 2, Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel

08:30 – 12:30

CALD Executive Committee Meeting

Presiding Officer

Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

12:30 – 14:00

Lunch

Grand Asoke, Level 2, Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel

CALD Women's Caucus Luncheon Session

Speakers

Hon. Mu Sochua, MP

Chairperson, CALD Women's Caucus

Cambodia National Rescue Party

Ms. Jayanthi Devi Balaguru

Vice Chairperson, CALD Women's Caucus

Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia

14:15 – 14:30

Assembly at the hotel lobby and leave for Golden Palace

Golden Palace is where the remains of the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej lies in state.

Dress Code: Formal or Semi-Formal (Black)
Male: Black suit; black collared shirt; black tie;
black leather shoes
Female: long black dress/suit; black shoes

15:30 – 18:30

Expression of Sympathy with the Thai People on the demise of King Bhumibol Adulyadej (1927-2016)

19:30 – 21:30

CALD Handover Dinner

Hosted by the Democrat Party of Thailand

Supatra River House

266 Soi Wat Rakhang, Arunamarin Road, Siriraj, Bangkok Noi, Bangkok 10700 Thailand

Phone: 662-411-0305 | Email: info@supatrariverhouse.net

Host

Ms. Bulgan Bayasgalant

Chairperson, CALD Youth
Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Dinner

Ratification of the Election of Democrat Party as CALD Chair-Party

Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Outgoing Chairperson, CALD
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Acceptance Speech

Hon. Abhisit Vejjajiva

Incoming Chairperson, CALD
Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand

21:30

Return to the hotel

6 November 2016, Sunday

CALD General Assembly Conference / CALD Youth Climate Change Forum

08:00 – 08:30

Registration

Ballroom II, Level 2, Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel

08:30 – 09:30

OPENING SESSION

Session Chair

Hon. Kiat Sittheamorn

Secretary General, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Deputy Leader, Foreign Affairs and Economics Democrat Party, Thailand

Opening Speeches

Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell

President, Liberal International
Liberal Party of Andorra

Mr. Siegfried Herzog

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

Keynote Address

H.E. Abhisit Vejjajiva

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Former Prime Minister, Thailand
Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand

09:30 – 10:45

SESSION 1: WHAT EVERY LIBERAL OUGHT TO KNOW ABOUT THE GLOBAL RISE OF ILLIBERALISM

Session Chair

Dr. Ratchada Dhnadirek

Former Member of Parliament, Thailand
Executive Committee Member, Democrat Party, Thailand

Speakers

Hon. Josephine Sato, MP

Member, Philippine House of Representatives
Secretary General, Liberal Party of the Philippines

Dr. Chee Soon Juan

Secretary General, Singapore Democratic Party
Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Hon. Ted Hui Chi-fung, MP

Legislative Councilor, Hong Kong
Democratic Party, Hong Kong

Open Forum

Conference Group Photo

10:45 – 11:15

Coffee / Tea Break

11:15 – 12:30

SESSION 2: TRENDS YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT LIBERALISM IN ASIA

Session Chair

Hon. Mardi Seng, MP

Senator, Cambodia
Cambodia National Rescue Party

Speakers

Asst. Prof. Dr. Punchada Sirivunnabood
Lecturer, Mahidol University, Thailand

Mr. Hanjaya Setiawan
Secretary of Government Affairs Department
Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle

Ms. Ya-wei Chou
Associate Researcher, Department of International Affairs
Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan

Open Forum

12:30 – 13:30

Lunch
Orchid Cafe, Lobby Level, Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit

13:30 – 15:15

SESSION 3: THE MOST COMMON MISTAKES THAT LIBERALS EVERYWHERE MAKE (FISH BOWL CONVERSATION)

Moderators

Dr. Pimrapa “Mary” Dusadeeisariyakul
Programme Manager, Thailand
Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom

Mr. Celito Arlegue
Executive Director
Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Issue: Why are liberals losing the political battle in many areas of the world? What are they doing wrong and how can that be addressed?

Method: Arrange 8-10 chairs in an inner circle (the fishbowl). With the remaining chairs, arrange them in concentric circles outside the fishbowl (the audience). Ask for a few participants to fill the fishbowl and have the rest of the participants fill the outside chairs. The moderator introduces a topic and the conversation begins with those in the fishbowl. The audience listens to the discussion.

An open fishbowl mode will be utilized. In an open fishbowl, one chair in the fishbowl is left empty. Under this mode, any member of the audience may sit in the empty seat and participate in the discussion. When this happens, an existing member of the fishbowl must depart a chair, always leaving one chair free.

The moderator then summarizes the discussion at the end.

15:15 – 15:30

Coffee / Tea Break

15:30 – 17:00

SESSION 4: HOW TO MAKE LIBERAL PARTIES WIN AGAIN (WORLD CAFÉ)

Issues: (1) How can liberals broaden their popular appeal and remain true to their liberal values?; (2) How can liberals counter illiberalism and populism?; and (3) How can liberals help each other in confronting current challenges?

Method: 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.

Session Chair

Hon. Kasit Piromya

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

Report of the World Café Table Hosts

Ms. Jayanthi Devi Balaguru

Vice Chairperson, CALD Women's Caucus
Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia

Hon. Sin Chung Kai

Former Member of Parliament, Hong Kong
Deputy Chairperson, Democratic Party, Hong Kong
CALD Individual Member

Dr. Ratchada Dhnadirek

Former Member of Parliament, Thailand
Executive Committee Member, Democrat Party, Thailand

17:00 – 18:00

CLOSING SESSION

Session Chair

Mr. Monsor Nyamdavaa

Vice President, Civil Will Green Youth Association
Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Closing Keynote Address

Hon. Florencio “Butch” Abad

Former Secretary (Minister), Department of Budget and
Management, Philippines
Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and
Democrats
Former President, Liberal Party of the Philippines

Closing Speeches

Dr. Chee Soon Juan

Secretary General, Singapore Democratic Party
Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and
Democrats

H.E. Abhisit Vejjajiva

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Former Prime Minister, Thailand
Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand

18:00	End of Conference
18:45 – 19:00	Assembly at the hotel lobby and leave for dinner venue (youth delegates only)
19:30 – 21:30	<p>Dinner and CALD Youth Climate Change Forum <i>Mother May I Kitchen, 26/2 Sukhumvit 59 Alley, Khlong Tan Nuea, Watthana, Bangkok 10110, Thailand</i></p> <p><i>Welcome Remarks and Session Chair</i></p> <p>Ms. Bulgan Bayasgalant CALD Youth Chairperson Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia</p> <p><i>Roundtable Discussion</i></p> <p>Hon. Ted Hui Chi-fung, MP Legislative Councilor, Hong Kong Democratic Party, Hong Kong</p> <p>Ms. Ya-wei Chou Associate Researcher, Department of International Affairs Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan</p> <p>Mr. Tanat Thanakitamnuay Advisor to Deputy Leader Democrat Party, Thailand</p> <p>Mr. Pakapol Keeratiparadorn Analyst Democrat Party, Thailand</p>

7 November 2016, Monday

Departures

Variable

Departures

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WHICH SIDE DOES ASIA BELONG?

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<p>Alliance of Liberal Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party</p> <p>Andrew Burgess</p>	<p>Democrat Party of Thailand (DP)</p> <p>Chala Anusiraya Nopparat Thitisarnsiri Nattapat Neokul</p>
<p>Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP)</p> <p>Mardi Seng Phirum Keo Mu Sochua</p>	<p>Democratic Party of Hong Kong</p> <p>Sin Chung-Kai Teddy Hui Chi-fung</p>
<p>Civil Will Green Party of Mongolia (CWGP)</p> <p>Oyun Sanjaasuren Bulgan Bayasgalant Monsor Nyamdavaa Gerelmaa Batchuluun</p>	<p>Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan (DPP)</p> <p>Lo Chih-chung Ya-wei Chou Chia-Hung Chou Tzu-Yu Chen</p>
<p>Democrat Party of Thailand (DP)</p> <p>Abhisit Vejjajiva Kasit Piromya Kiat Sitheeamorn Ratchada Dhnadirek Monthip Sriratana-Tabucanon Tanat Thanakitamnuay Pakapol Keeratiparadorn</p>	<p>Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) Philippines</p> <p>Minnie Salao</p> <p>Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) Southeast and East Asia Regional Office</p> <p>Siegfried Herzog Pimrapa "Mary" Dusadeeisariyakul Katrin Bannach</p>

<p>Indonesia Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP) Hanjaya Setiawan</p> <p>Liberal International (LI) Juli Minoves - Triquell</p> <p>Liberal Party of the Philippines (LP) Florencio “Butch” Abad Josephine “Nene” Sato</p> <p>Liberal Party of Sri Lanka (LPSL) Newton Peiris Roshan Amararachchi Dunston de Silva</p> <p>Nation Awakening Party (PKB) Hesbul Bahar Maria Ulfa</p>	<p>Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (PGRM) Jayanthi Balaguru Pang Whye Nam Lily Aw Lai Kheng</p> <p>Singapore Democratic Party (SDP) Chee Soon Juan</p> <p>Resource Persons - Thailand Isra Suthornvut Punchada Sirivunnabood</p> <p>CALD Secretariat Celito Arlegue Paolo Zamora Jorgia Salonga Francis Rafael Banico Francis Miguel Panday Audrey Frias (intern)</p>
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PROFILES OF SPEAKERS & SESSION CHAIRS

4 November 2016, Friday

CALD Climate Change Public Forum / CALD-LI Consultative Meeting / CALD-ALDE Party Network Workshop / Welcome Dinner

Session Chair



Dr. Khunying Kalaya Sophonpanich

Deputy Leader, Democrat Party of Thailand
Former Minister of Science and Technology

Dr. Khunying Kalaya Sophonpanich is the former Minister of Science and Technology from 2008-2011, and a former Member of Parliament. Currently, she serves as the Deputy Leader of the Democrat Party of Thailand. She held several organizations mainly in the realm of environment, civil society, and politics. Dr. Sophonpanich is also member of the committee of Thai Junior Encyclopedia Project by the command of His Majesty the king, and served as the President of the Thailand-England Parliamentarians Friendship Group.

Dr. Sophonpanich received her Bachelor's Degree in Physics from the Chulalongkorn University, and earned the Degree in High Energy Nuclear Physics at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London, England.

Opening Remarks



Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren is Mongolia's former 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 advocate of 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 had been systematically elected to Parliament and had 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 (UNEA). In July 2016, she became the chairperson of Global Water Partnership, a global organization that aspires for a water secure world.

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



Hon. Isra Sunthornvut

Secretary General
ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly

Presently, Hon. Isra Sunthornvut is the Secretary-General of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), the producer and host of "Fud Fid Fo Fi" television program for Modernine TV, a weekly columnist for Thai Post newspaper, and also the host of "Kham Khob Fah," Bluesky/Fah Wan Mai Channel. Spending almost 15 years in the political arena, he was a Member of Parliament (Party List), Democrat Party, in 2013 and the Secretary to the Opposition Leader of the House of Representatives in 2012. He was the Vice Minister Attached to the Prime Minister's Office and the Deputy Secretary General to the Prime Minister in 2011 and 2010. In 2009, he was the Secretary to the Opposition Leader of the House of Representatives and the Spokesman and Advisor (for Foreign Affairs) to the Governor of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration in 2006 and 2007.

Hon. Sunthornvut also received two Thai prestigious and honourable decorations which are the Most Exalted Order of the White Elephant and the Most Noble Order of the Crown of Thailand. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Travel Industry degree from ISDP in 1992. He then obtained his Master's Degree majoring in European Studies from Chulalongkorn University.

Panel Discussion

Host



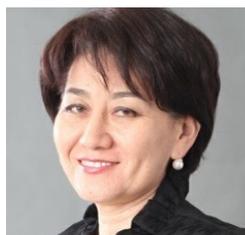
Ms. Bulgan Bayasgalant
Chairperson, CALD Youth
Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Ms. Bulgan Bayasgalant currently serves as Chairperson of CALD Youth and President of the Youth Wing of the Civil Will Green Party (CWGP) of Mongolia. Prior to her election in the CALD Youth, where she also served as Secretary General, she had worked as the Foreign Relations Officer at the Civil Will Party (CWP), successfully completing the mission of bringing landlocked Mongolia's third-force liberal party to the Asian liberals' network.

Ms. Bayasgalant also held positions in the Parliament of Mongolia and in the Ministry of Environment and Green Development of Mongolia, manifesting that the ideology of liberalism and green development has always been a priority in her career. She had also run for the city council elections in the year 2012 as the youngest amongst all candidates.

Ms. Bayasgalant has a degree in International Relations, Political Science and Business Administration from American University in Bulgaria and Butler University, Indiana, USA respectively.

Panelists



Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren
Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia



Dr. Monthip Sriratana – Tabucanon
Member, CALD Climate Change Committee
Former Member of Parliament, Thailand
Democrat Party of Thailand

Dr. Monthip Sriratana - Tabucanon is a former Member of Parliament of Thailand as part of the Democrat Party's (DP) Party-List. She previously held key positions at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand (MNRE) including the posts of Principal Inspector General, Director General of the Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP), Deputy Permanent Secretary, and Director General of the Pollution Control Department. Until recently, she served as Senior Adviser to the Senate and House of Representatives Commissions on Natural Resources and Environment, Office of the Parliament of Thailand. She is also a Director of Climate Change Research Strategy Center, National Research Council of Thailand.

She was involved in the negotiation process as member of the delegation of Thailand at the Conference of the Parties (COP19, COP20 and COP 21). She made a presentation at the side event of COP19 on National Strategy on Climate Change in Thailand. She served on the Boards of the following organizations: Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), Sweden ; Institute of Global Environment Strategies (IGES), Japan ; United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), Japan ; United Nations University (UNU) Institute of Water, Environment and Health, Canada ; and several international organizations including as Regional Councilor for South and East Asia of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

She obtained her Bachelors degree in Chemistry from Mahidol University, Masters degree in Environmental Technology and Management from the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), and Doctorate in Urban Engineering from The University of Tokyo. She was conferred the Honorary Doctor of Philosophy degree from Prince of Songkhla University. In addition, she took advanced executive programs from Yale University, Harvard University, and Northwestern University, USA.

**Climate Change Dotmocracy Session
(Internal Planning Among CALD members)**

Moderator



Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

CALD-LI Consultative Meeting

Speakers



Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell

President, Liberal International
Liberal Party of Andorra

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 of 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.



Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

CALD-ALDE Party Network Workshop

Workshop Facilitator



Mr. Andrew Burgess
Political Adviser, ALDE Party

Mr. Andrew Burgess is a Political Adviser for the ALDE Party since 2013 and is currently responsible for monitoring, reporting, and analysing as well as managing the ALDE Party activities and contacts in the United Kingdom, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Ireland, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Russia, and Serbia. With a keen interest in Asia, he is also the ALDE Party liaison officer for CALD.

Mr. Burgess is a graduate of European Politics from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Science Po) Paris and King's College London, and holds a double-honours degree in French and Journalism from the University of Sheffield.

5 November 2016, Saturday

CALD Executive Committee Meeting / CALD Women's Caucus Luncheon Session / Visit to Chitralada Palace or Golden Palace / CALD Handover Dinner

CALD Executive Committee Meeting

Presiding Officer



Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren
Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

CALD Women's Caucus Luncheon Session

Presiding Officer



Hon. Mu Sochua, MP

Chairperson, CALD Women's Caucus
Cambodia National Rescue Party

Hon. Mu Sochua is currently Chairperson of the CALD Women's Caucus. After 18 years in exile, she returned to Cambodia in 1989. In 1998, she was elected to the Cambodian National Assembly. She ran for a parliamentary seat in the North West of Cambodia (the most devastated region after the war), and won. In that same year, she became Minister of Women and a Veterans' affairs, as one of only 2 women to join the cabinet.

During her 6 years as Minister of Women's Affairs, Hon. Mu campaigned widely for gender justice throughout Cambodia's remote villages to end violence against women and halt the exploitation of female workers. To achieve these goals, she helped to draft the country's law against domestic violence, negotiated an international agreement with Thailand to curtail human trafficking in Southeast Asia, and launched a campaign to engage NGOs, law enforcement officials, and rural women in a national dialogue. During her mandate, she campaigned widely with civil society and NGOs to encourage women at the grassroots to run as candidates for commune elections, the first of their kind in the history of Cambodia. 25,000 women became candidates and over 9% were elected in 2002.

Hon. Mu declined a ministerial post in the new government of 2004, joining the opposition party instead, to fight corruption and government oppression against democracy and human rights. She became an MP for the party as well as a Member of its Steering Committee. Additionally, elected in 2009 as the SRP's official Women's Wing leader, she has continued the battle, furthering the SRP's core "bottom-up" approach by seeking out urban and rural women to target their specific needs and develop their political potential.

CALD Handover Dinner

Host



Ms. Bulgan Bayasgalant
Chairperson, CALD Youth
Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Ratification of the Election of Democrat Party as CALD Chair-Party



Dr. Oyun Sanjaasuren
Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Chairperson, Global Water Partnership
Chairperson, Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Acceptance Speech



Hon. Abhisit Vejjajiva
Incoming Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand

Hon. Abhisit Vejjajiva is the former Prime Minister of Thailand, from December 2008 - August 2011. Since 2005, he has been leader to the Democrat Party of Thailand. He also served as the leader of the opposition of the House of Representatives from 2005 - 2006

and in 2008.

Hon. Abhisit was first honours in his class in Oxford University in the United Kingdom where he studied Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE), and later earned his Master's Degree in Economics.

Opening Session

Session Chair



Hon. Kiat Sittheeamorn

Deputy Leader, Foreign Affairs and Economics
Democrat Party of Thailand

Hon. Kiat Sittheeamorn, received B.S. in Engineering from Chulalongkorn University, graduated in Business Management from Harvard Business School and M.A. in International Affairs from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

Before his current position, Hon. Kiat served as the President of Thailand Trade Representative (TTR), acting as the special envoy of the Prime Minister on international trade and investment for Thailand. TTR is also responsible for developing strategies, negotiations and implementation of international agreements as well as an Advisor to the House and Senate Committees in the areas of foreign affairs, trade, investment and other economic issues.

Prior to his political career, he served as the Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) of Thailand National Committee, a Director of the Thai Chamber of Commerce and the Deputy Secretary-General of the Board of Trade of Thailand. He played a crucial role in proposing policies and strategies to various governmental organizations related to trade and investment. He was also appointed as Thailand's representative in the East Asia Vision Group to map out new architecture between ASEAN and China, Japan and Republic of Korea. In addition, he has had extensive work experiences in many countries in Asia, Europe and Middle East.

He has written many articles on trade and investment strategies and published the books entitled "As FTA Catches You" and "Government Budget Reform". He has been a guest lecturer at several leading academic institutions and business fora.

Opening Speeches



Dr. Juli Minoves – Triquell
President, Liberal International
Liberal Party of Andorra



Mr. Siegfried Herzog
Regional Director, Friedrich Naumann Foundation
Southeast and East Asia Office

Mr. Siegfried Herzog is the Regional Director of Southeast and East Asia for the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) in Bangkok, Thailand. 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 grassroots development in Bangladesh. Before going to the 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.

Keynote Address



Hon. Abhisit Vejjajiva
Incoming Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand

Session 1: What every liberal ought to know about the global rise of illiberalism

Session Chair



Dr. Ratchada Dhnadirek

Former Member of Parliament, Thailand
Executive Committee Member, Democrat Party, Thailand

Dr. Rachada Dhnadirek is currently an Executive Committee Member of the Democrat Party (DP) of Thailand. She was elected to the House of Representatives as Bangkok’s Representative and served from 2007-2013. In her second term as a Member of the Parliament (MP), she was nominated as Vice Chairperson of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, during her first term as an MP, she was the Deputy Spokesperson of the Shadow Cabinet and the Director of Democrat Party Youth Center.

Additionally, she has been actively involved in promoting significant advocacies like enhancing people’s political participation, empowering women, campaigning for cervical cancer protection, and educating people on personal finance management.

Before entering politics, she already obtained two master’s degrees from the Nottingham University and Glasgow University UK, and a PhD in International Business from Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) Thailand. She also served as an Assistant Professor in Public Administration at the Mahidol University Thailand.

Speakers

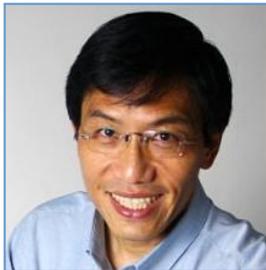


Hon. Josephine “Nene” Sato, MP

Member, Philippine House of Representatives
Secretary General, Liberal Party of the Philippines

Hon. Nene Sato is currently the Secretary General of the Liberal Party of the Philippines and a member of the House of Representatives, representing the province of Occidental Mindoro. In 1988, Hon. Sato was elected as Vice Governor of Occidental Mindoro until 1992. After her term as vice governor, she was elected as governor for three consecutive terms (1992–1995, 1995–1998, 1998–2001). She then served her first term as congresswoman at the House of Representatives from 2001–2004 as she was barred by law to run for a fourth consecutive term. After her first term as congresswoman, she again served for three consecutive terms as governor of her province (2004–2007, 2007–2010, 2010–2013). After her sixth term as governor, she was again elected as congresswoman of Occidental Mindoro.

She attended St. Theresa's College where she attained a BA major in Political Science in 1973 where she was included at her college's dean's list. She also attended University of the Philippines where she graduated as a Bachelor of Laws and top 14 among her graduating batch in 1978. In 1986, she accomplished a program on Instructions of Lawyers-International Law and Taxation at Harvard University School of Law and in 1987 she completed her Urban Studies and Planning at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

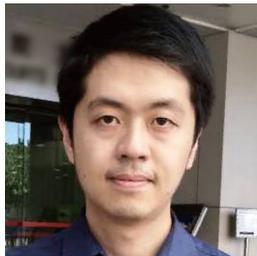


Dr. Chee Soon Juan

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 (PAP) – 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. Dr. Chee was a Research Associate at the Monash Asia Institute (1997); a Human Rights Fellow at the University of Chicago (2001); a Reagan-Fascell Fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy (2004); and a visiting fellow of the Sydney Democracy Network (2014).

He is also recipient of the Defender of Democracy Award (2003) awarded by the Parliamentarians for Global Action; and the Prize for Freedom (2011) by the Liberal International. He was also awarded the Hellman/Hammett Writers Grant by Human Rights Watch (2003).



Hon. Ted Hui Chi-fung, MP

Legislative Councilor, Hong Kong
Democratic Party, Hong Kong

Hon. Ted Hui Chi-fung was recently elected in the 2016 Legislative Council elections in Hong Kong last September. Prior to this, he was a member of the Central and Western District Council. Hon. Hui is a representative of the Young Democrats and previously worked for the Democratic Party of Hong Kong (DPHK) as a Policy Research Officer. He studied both in Canada and in Hong Kong, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Laws in 2006.

He was also a candidate for both the District Council Elections and Legislative Council Elections in 2007 and 2008, respectively. As a public servant, he fosters activism in national human rights affairs. Currently, he is also the Vice Convenor of the China Concern Group of his Party.

Session 2: Trends you need to understand about liberalism in Asia

Session Chair



Hon. Mardi Seng
Senator
Cambodian National Rescue Party

Speakers



Asst. Prof. Dr. Punchada Sirivunnabood
Lecturer, Mahidol University, Thailand

Dr. Puchada Sirivunnabood is a lecturer at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Mahidol University in Thailand. Previously, she attended the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta, Indonesia as a Research Fellow for the 2014 Indonesian Elections. She was also a visiting instructor at the International College of Rangsit University in Bangkok, Thailand, a Consultant and Academic Adviser for Advance Political and Electoral Development Program at the Elections Commission in Thailand, a former Instructor at the Political Science Department in Northern Illinois University, USA, and an Academic Consultant for Election Commission of Thailand, Fredrich Naumann Stiftung, Southeast Asian Office, Bangkok, Thailand, among others.

She finished her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science at the Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand, earned a Master's Degree in Comparative Politics at Ohio University and later received her PhD in Political Science at the Northern Illinois University, USA.



Mr. Hanjaya Setiawan
Secretary of Government Affairs Department
Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle

Mr. Hanjaya Setiawan is currently the Secretary of Government Affairs Department, Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle. He previously served the party as Head of the International Affairs Department of the Central Leadership Board. He also served as the chairperson of the foreign affairs division of the party's youth wing where he has been an active member since 2006.

Mr. Setiawan has also been involved in the Indonesia Young Politician Forum, Mega for President Team (Presidential Election 2004), Professional Society for Democracy, and Institute for Peace and Justice

He graduated from Trisakti University where he majored in Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering.



Ms. Ya-wei Chou

Associate Researcher, Department of International Affairs
Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan

Ms. Ya-wei Chou is an Associate Researcher in the Department of International Affairs of the Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan. She has been the organizer of Taiwan election observation missions for CALD and Liberal International in 2014 and 2016, and helps to facilitate DPP's participation to CALD and Liberal International events. She also focuses on policy research in Taiwanese youth international participation, climate change, and digital diplomacy.

She received her Master's Degree in International Relations from National Taiwan University.

Session 3: The most common mistakes that liberals everywhere make (Fish Bowl Conversation)

Moderators



Dr. Pimrapaath "Mary" Dusadeeisariyakul
Programme Manager, Thailand
Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom

Dr. Pimrapaath is currently a Programme Manager in Thailand Project of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. She joined the foundation in April 2004 as a Programme Manager in Malaysia Project and later moved to Thailand Project in 2011 until at present. Dr. Pimrapaath obtained her doctorate degree in International Relations in 1999 from the University of Aberdeen in the United Kingdom and obtained her master degree in International Politics in 1993 from the University of Aberystwyth in the United Kingdom. Her main study is on South Asian security and non-nuclear proliferation.



Mr. Celito Arlegue
Executive Director
Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Mr. Celito Arlegue is the Executive Director of CALD, where he also previously served as Program Officer from 2001 to 2002, and for certain projects in 2003 and 2004. In-between his stint in CALD, he also taught political science, social science, and economics courses in a number of schools in the Philippines such as the University of the Philippines, the University of Asia and the Pacific, San Beda College and De la Salle University. Mr. Arlegue currently serves as Senior Lecturer in the International Studies Department of Miriam College and in the College of St. Benilde. He obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees in the University of the Philippines, where he has also finished the course work for Ph.D. in Political Science.

Session 4: How to make liberal parties win again (World Café)

Session Chair



Hon. Kasit Piromya

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

Hon. Kasit Piromya began his political career as the 3rd Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1968 and later in 1979 went on to become the 1st 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 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 Democrat Party (DP), and PAD Movement from 2006-1008. He was also a DP Party-List Candidate in 2006 and Democrat Shadow Deputy Prime Minister in 2008.

Hon. Piromya completed his tertiary education at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. He pursued further studies in International Affairs at Georgetown School of Foreign Service in the United States, and as well as in International Relations at the Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands.

Report of the World Café Table Hosts



Ms. Jayanthi Devi Balaguru

Vice Chairperson, CALD Women's Caucus
Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia

Ms. Jayanthi Devi Balaguru is the Vice Chairperson of the CALD Women's Caucus. She is a lawyer, and an active member of Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia. Among her posts as an elected member of the Central Committee of the party are secretary general of the Women's Wing (Wanita), vice chair of the Central Law and Human Rights Bureau and chair of the Federal Territories State Women's Wing. She is an advocate for a fair and just society who believes that each voice needs to be heard and rights should be respected. Ms. Balaguru regularly conducts programs on women empowerment.



Hon. Sin Chung Kai

Former Member of Parliament, Hong Kong
Deputy Chairperson, Democratic Party, Hong Kong
CALD Individual Member

Hon. Chung-Kai Sin was an elected Legislative Councilor of Hong Kong serving a four-year term since October 2012 until September 2016. Since 2006, he has been the deputy chairperson of the Democratic Party of Hong Kong (DPHK). He has also served as a member of the Central Committee of the DPHK 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. Hon. Sin 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 had 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.

Hon. Sin earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Hong Kong in 1982, and his Master's degree in Business Administration from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1997.



Dr. Ratchada Dhnadirek

Former Member of Parliament, Thailand
Executive Committee Member, Democrat Party, Thailand

Closing Session

Session Chair



Mr. Monsor Nyamdavaa

Vice President, Civil Will Green Youth Association
Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Mr. Monsor Nyamdavaa is the Vice President of Civil Will Green Youth Association and Member of CWGP's National Committee. He holds a degree in Software Engineering from the Mongolian University of Science and Technology, CSMS and studied Real Estate Financing in

Euromoney.

Closing Keynote Address



Hon. Florencio "Butch" Abad

Former Secretary (Minister), Department of Budget and Management, Philippines
Former CALD Chairperson
Former President, Liberal Party of the Philippines

Hon. Butch Abad previously served as the Secretary (Minister) of the Department of Budget and Management of the Republic of the Philippines. He also served the Liberal Party as the National Campaign Manager and worked in the transition team of then President-elect Noynoy Aquino. He was a member of the House of Representatives elected in 1987 to represent the Lone District of Batanes. He was re-elected in 1995, 1998 and 2001. He became president of the Liberal Party of the Philippines from 1999 to 2004 and chairperson of the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats in 1999.

He served as Secretary (Minister) of Agrarian Reform during the first Aquino administration and served as Secretary of Education under the Arroyo administration. His stint as Education Secretary was cut short in 2005 when he resigned from his post due to the electoral fraud controversy charged against President Arroyo.

Hon. Abad finished his Bachelor of Science in Business Management, and Bachelor of Laws at the Ateneo de Manila University and passed the Bar Examination in 1985. A fellow of the Edward Mason Program in Public Policy and Management at the Kennedy School of Government in Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Hon. Abad also holds a Masters in Public Administration degree.

Closing Speeches



Dr. Chee Soon Juan
Secretary General, Singapore Democratic Party
Former CALD Chairperson



Hon. Abhisit Vejjajiva
Incoming Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand

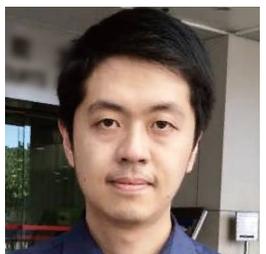
Dinner and CALD Youth Climate Change Forum

Welcome Remarks and Session Chair



Ms. Bulgan Bayasgalant
Chairperson, CALD Youth
Civil Will Green Party, Mongolia

Panel Discussion



Hon. Ted Hui Chi-fung, MP
Legislative Councilor, Hong Kong
Democratic Party, Hong Kong



Ms. Ya-wei Chou

Associate Researcher, Department of International Affairs
Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan



Mr. Pakapol Keeratiparadorn

Research Analyst
Democrat Party, Thailand

Mr. Pakapol Keeratiparadorn is an Analyst of Research and Development for the Democrat Party (DP) of Thailand. He was a Lecturer in Computer Application for Psychology II (Computer Statistics) (Intermedia Statistics) Psychology at the Chulalongkorn University. Prior to this, he was a Teaching Assistant for the Dean of Psychology in the same university. Mr. Pakapol received his Bachelor's Degree in Social Research of Sociology and Anthropology from Thammasat University and is currently taking his Masters in Social Psychology from Chulalongkorn University.

11TH CALD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Liberalism *VS* ILLIBERALISM

WHICH SIDE DOES ASIA BELONG?

3-7 NOVEMBER 2016 | BANGKOK, THAILAND

 Council of
Asian Liberals
and Democrats

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Opening Session

- It is essential for liberals around the globe to contribute to the new Liberal Manifesto to address and counter the rising threats of authoritarianism, populism, and terrorism.
- The moral component in liberalism is vital. Liberals should not be transformed into crisis managers because liberals can create a philosophy that encompasses not just freedom in the economy, but also poverty reduction and social justice.
- While the world faces fear because of demagogues, liberals must continue to work together because a win-win solution is possible. Liberals must not resort to zero-sum games. Liberals have the capacity to make systems and politics more resilient against crisis.
- Liberal has indeed won the talk, but not the walk. Liberals must recognize the reality that people want emotional responses and that they care less about winning arguments. The framing of policies must still be based on liberal and democratic principles and values, but must be applied according to how the policies will improve people's livelihoods.
- It is vital to communicate to the people that the authoritarians and populists have never offered policies that led to lasting success. Furthermore, the liberals must communicate what they have achieved.

Session I: What every liberal ought to know about the global rise of illiberalism

- Illiberalism is a state lacking in liberal ideas, a system where elections take place but where liberties such as press freedom, right to free speech, an independent judiciary, among others are non-existent. It contributes to injustice, inefficiency, inequality, short-term vision, and corruption.

- In reality, the people are inclined to support a government that offers new and refreshing words and plans of action even at the expense of rights and rule of law.
- The people had too much hope in liberalism and liberals have yet to unlock sustainable solutions. The challenge at this critical point of time is to make democracy work – to deepen democracy and to make them relevant in the daily lives of our people. Civil rights, life, liberty, respect for the rule of law, the very essence of what liberals fight for, are non-negotiable.
- As liberal ideas focus on human rights and the decency of humanity, neoliberalism focuses on economic practices to achieve maximum market efficiency even at the cost of democratic gains.
- Free trade without freedom, is equal to exploitation and there would be consequences which would render globalization unsustainable. Liberals must not allow human rights to always be sacrificed at the altar of trade. People must come before profits, rights before riches.

Session II: Trends you need to understand about Liberalism in Asia

- Liberalism is in decline in Asia Pacific because of the massive limitation of press freedom, the intimidation of political opposition, the absence of freedom of expression, and the occurrence of political instability.
- A country's high economic growth does not necessarily translate to a stable political environment.
- Liberalism is not a popular word in Indonesia, but its principles continue to guide the country from authoritarianism, terrorism, and intolerance.
- Taiwan fulfills liberal ideals through the DPP government's initiatives on LGBTI rights, immigrant rights, and free environment for innovation-based economy.

World Café Session: How to make liberal parties win again

- To make liberals win again, they need to instill liberal values in the grassroots level and enhance personal relationships between the candidate and the voter through constant communication.
- In communicating with the voters, it is important to speak the people's language and focus on the people's issues. Stay with the people, not above them.
- CALD can set up a knowledge management system to document the success stories and challenges of member parties. It is recommended for CALD to also

establish its own think tank to be able to communicate and connect to more people from all sectors.

Closing Session

- It is essential to communicate the reform achievements of a government in order to inform the people that promises are kept while in public service. Patiently and consistently engaging the people every step of the way will help create a space for spirited and positive action.
- CALD, in preparation for its 25th year anniversary, must reposition itself and focus on where it wants to go. CALD must broaden its perspectives and bring in more people, more voices to gain more gravitas and be a potent political force.
- CALD should have an internal consultation to talk about the next priorities and strategies as liberal democrats in the region. Member parties are encouraged to follow a reporting system to assess the value of the work done and to setup a centralized CALD communication channel for international officers on social media to continue the cooperation and the sharing of policy issues as well as of political trends.

11TH CALD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Liberalism *VS* ILLIBERALISM

WHICH SIDE DOES ASIA BELONG?

3-7 NOVEMBER 2016 | BANGKOK, THAILAND

 Council of
Asian Liberals
and Democrats

CONFERENCE

Opening Session



Hon. Kiat Sittheeamorn, secretary general of the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD) and deputy leader for Foreign Affairs and Economics of the Democrat Party (DP) of Thailand chaired the opening session. He reiterated the

important points previously raised on the threats to liberalism: authoritarianism, populism, and terrorism. “Are liberals now better off or worst off?”, he asked. For most liberals, the rise of populism was a vague image ten years ago, but now, Sittheamorn said full-fledged populism is operating in government programs and policies. Terrorism opened up unconventional warfare because there is no border and no identities involved. With Asia being a diverse region, should liberals address the threats regionally or according to countries with different contexts?

Juli Minoves – Triquell

*President, Liberal International
Liberal Party of Andorra*



Juli Minoves-Triquell, president of the Liberal International (LI) from the Liberal Party of Andorra, spoke about LI’s ongoing preparation and consultations for the Liberal Manifesto 2017. The original Manifesto, drafted 70 years ago in Oxford by a group of liberal visionaries, helped the liberals who went through the dark ages of Cold War and other events that were inimical to the interests of mankind. While the Oxford Manifesto is still valid today, Minoves said that people face a lot of challenges that continue to threaten democracy and liberalism. The new LI Manifesto will try to address and counter the rising

threats of authoritarianism, populism, and terrorism - that is why it is very important for liberals around the world to contribute more ideas into it.

Minoves-Triquell also shared insights and responses from the liberal gathering that transpired in Oxford University in 2014. His predecessor, John Lord Alderdice, said liberalism means both freedom and liberality or the generosity of spirit. Generosity of spirit complements freedom. Minoves-Triquell explained that this is that same as what Abhisit Vejjajiva, former Prime Minister of Thailand and incoming CALD Chairperson, said with regard to market. There is a need to bring back the market to the people. Market does not only benefit itself, but others as well. The moral component in liberalism is vital, he said.

Another of Minoves-Triquell’s predecessor, Hans van Balen, said the freedom and human rights are inseparable. Human right is a central issue of LI, that is why it has a dedicated Human Rights Committee that addresses human rights in general and the sub-committee on women, particularly violence against women. Professor Ingemund Hagg, a Patron of LI, considers the aspect of human rights essential to the work of liberals. Hagg highlighted that it should be seen as a victory that human rights are widely regarded as rights of the individual. Minoves-Triquell explained that respect for human rights is precisely what the Oxford Manifesto is pushing for. It also important to note that the Oxford Manifesto was drafted in 1947, a year before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted.

Minoves-Triquell reminded the plenary that poverty reduction and the spread of social justice are core elements of the liberal message other than the market. “The centrality of market is illiberal,” he emphasized. He added that liberals are against the idea of transforming citizens into consumers. Liberals should not be transformed into crisis managers because liberals are people who create a philosophy that encompasses not just freedom in the economy, but also poverty reduction and social justice. Liberals are the people that give value to ethics in policy matters. Lastly, Minoves-Triquell encouraged everyone to continue participating in the international community because that’s how liberals grow stronger together. He invited the delegates to attend the next LI Congress in May 2017 in Andorra, a country that has a long tradition of parliamentary democracy and 700 years of uninterrupted peace.



Siegfried Herzog

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

Siegfried Herzog, regional director for Southeast and East Asia of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF), first thanked the organizers and the host party for organizing the event. He also extended, on behalf of the FNF, his condolences to the people of Thailand for the passing of the King. He said it was a great privilege and a very moving experience to witness in the Royal Palace the overwhelming love of the Thai people for the King.



He shared a funny yet quite telling post he found online and it said “Dear Americans, go ahead vote for the guy with the loud voice who hates minorities, threatens to imprison his opponents, doesn’t care at all about democracy, and claims he alone can solve everything. What could possibly go wrong? Good luck. – The people of Germany #BeenThereDoneThat” He said this says a lot about the issue of liberalism and illiberalism and this has been with us for a long time. He explained the rise of demagogues in Greece who led to wreck and ruin. The same fear of demagogues was present when the founder of the American Republic debated on their constitution. This goes the same in Europe where such phenomenon did not end well.

Herzog compared the effects of appealing to emotions and appealing to rationality. He said that appeal to emotion always trumps rationality and that the most powerful appeal is to the sense of identity such as national, religious, political, cultural, linguistic, etc. And a person who manages to influence people because of the identity can easily fire up passion, thus losing reason. This is most reflective on immigration issues in Europe and America. In Sri Lanka, Rajapakse’s move against minorities created unrest. In the Philippines, the war against drugs was used by President Duterte to tell the community that they are in danger and that only a strong man can fix the problem.



The world's financial crisis, Herzog explained, deeply shattered the belief and the trust of the people in the system. After a financial crisis, there is always a period of grave unrest in society and this was very evident during the French Revolution that was preceded by a great financial crisis in 1786, the 1923 hyperinflation crisis in Germany, the Asia crisis of 1997 that unsettled Thai democracy and the trust of the people, the Lehman crisis of 2008, and the Euro crisis of 2016. While there were periods of turmoil, liberals have seen positive developments in other aspects. Myanmar, for example, has opened up for significant political and financial reforms and managed a peaceful transition to a modern democracy without any major upheaval. Taiwan elected a female President as well and this is a very significant milestone in history. Herzog added that open societies have lifted many out of mass poverty, particularly in Asia. "People would prefer to live in open societies like Taiwan rather than in closed societies like North Korea where your life is threatened", he said.

The good news is there is always a room for cooperation, Herzog emphasized. By working together, a win-win solution is possible. "We don't have to resort to zero-sum games." While people have the natural tendency to always focus on the gloomy and bad things because they are threatening, Herzog said that, "We have to spend more time making our systems and our politics more resilient against crisis."

Liberals have to offer the right things to the people. "The state of liberalism in Asia is not as gloomy as we sometimes feel. I'm hopeful that some of these challenges are temporary, that they [liberals] will overcome," Herzog concluded.

Keynote Address

Abhisit Vejjajiva

Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Former Prime Minister, Thailand

Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand



Abhisit Vejjajiva, former prime minister of Thailand and the new chairperson of CALD, discussed the issues confronting liberals particularly in Asia with respect to principles, values, work and responding to the needs of the people. He shared insightful stories that opened a whole new perspective of what liberals should do. The story of the liberal experience vis-a-vis its antithesis, illiberalism, can be explored by assessing the current situation and by revisiting history to see what have liberals achieved and failed from. Herzog mentioned in his earlier presentation that the 1997

financial crisis disrupted the trust of the people in the system; Vejjajiva added that the financial crisis also destroyed the establishment of authoritarianism (case of Indonesia) or embarked upon a reformist constitution (case of Thailand). Vejjajiva also pointed out that while there are regional variations, the previous global trends indicate that there are more similarities and parallels as well. Vejjajiva said, “For me if Asia does not currently belong in the liberal camp, we have to make Asia belong to the liberal camp.” However, to do that, liberals must step back and reassess.

Vejjajiva straightforwardly claimed that liberalism has, indeed, won the talk, but it has not won the walk and liberals have to make sure that the whole world walks the talk. He presented two stories that provide a glimpse of how the people view political leaders and their actions.

He recalled the time when Tony Blaire was campaigning and a lady came up to him complaining that her tax credit has not been given to her on time. Blaire explained that before the labor government, there was no tax credit at all and now that the labor government is on the helm, she will definitely get hers. The lady responded, “That is why I voted for you last time. Now go get my tax credits.” Vejjajiva explained that liberals have made a lot of progress, but “voters care more about the future than the past and present and if they feel their future needs are not being met, the things we have achieved are meaningless to them.”



Another story was during Vajjajiva’s campaign. He served under Chuan Leekpai’s government after the financial crisis and they had to implement “difficult austerity programs” that brought Thailand back to stability. During the campaigning after the crisis, a lady approached him and said, “We’re not voting for you.” Vejjajiva, being a good liberal and democrat, invited the lady to sit down and hear her grievances. He explained why the austerity measures were important and how it would prepare her for a better future. After explaining, the lady said, “You know, you’re right. You’re very rational that is why we hate you. We’re not voting for you.”

Vejjajiva explained that while liberals are rational, people want emotional responses. They don’t care about liberals winning arguments. This is very important because liberals must recognize this reality in order to know how to move forward, he added.

To make further progress, Vejjajiva said liberals have to tap into the root causes of illiberalism: authoritarianism, populism, terrorism, among others. It is also vital to inform the younger generations of the progress that liberals have achieved. Moreover, it is important to convince people that they are secure in the environment they live in. The younger generation lives in an age dominated by information technology and new media

so they “want results, they want speed, and they see liberal and democratic values often don’t deliver.” Vejjajiva cited that the current Thai Prime Minister is very popular now because the people think he can deliver stability and order. The people do not care about the process and the means. What matters for the people is he delivers results, and delivers it quickly, and this is something they feel they cannot get in a liberal democratic system.

These issues are truly a reality check for liberals. Vejjajiva offered initial suggestions to the plenary on how to address these challenges. He said: 1) “We ourselves have to walk our talk;” 2) Make sure the people feel that liberals are relevant and liberals respond to the citizen’s needs; 3) The framing of policies must still be based on liberal and democratic principles and values, but must be applied according to how the policies will improve people’s livelihoods; 4) Point out to the people that the authoritarians and populists have never offered policies that have led to lasting success; 5) Regain the competitive edge and be part of the change; and 6) Continue sharing experiences and use them to learn and to communicate to people concrete hopes that liberals and democrats can deliver.

Session I: What every liberal ought to know about the global rise of illiberalism



Ratchada Dhnadirek, former Member of Parliament and Executive Committee Member of the DP Thailand, chaired the session. She said it’s sad to think that liberalism is actually losing its popularity, but it’s encouraging that as members of CALD, “we agree that liberalism and democracy should not be separate”, even though the separation of the two is becoming more apparent and worrisome. Illiberalism contributes to injustice, inefficiency, inequality, short-term vision, and corruption. Dhnadirek said they have experienced illiberalism through the populist policies of Thaksin and Yingluck. They used this approach as instruments to gain political support, disregarding the fact that the policies lead to long-term burden for the country. While Thaksin’s leadership was scary, Yingluck’s was worst. She executed tax rebate on first time car buyers and implements a disastrous rice subsidy scheme that led to \$8.5 million loss to the country. While these policies appealed to the poor farmers, these policies “turned Thailand into the largest rice buyers by buying 20 million tons of rice.” Nevertheless, Yingluck won by a landslide because the voters wanted something tangible that they could feel in their pockets. Dhnadirek said, “We all had our shares of fighting illiberal governments. It’s good that we share experiences to know ho to address them.”



Josephine Sato

*Member, Philippine House of Representatives
Secretary General, Liberal Party of the Philippines*

Josephine Sato, Member of Philippine House of Representatives, serves as the Secretary General of the Liberal Party of the Philippines. She tackled the current experience of the Philippines under the rule of a populist leader who, despite disregarding human rights, enjoys the high popular support of the people.

In May 2016 Mar Roxas, the presidential candidate LP Philippines, lost to Rodrigo Duterte, a mayor from Mindanao who ran under the campaign slogan “Change is Coming,” which was translated as a change that will be felt by every Filipino. Duterte offered to directly solve illegal drugs, corruption, insurgency, poverty, and peace and order. He made the voters believe that he is one of them, that he knows their frustrations as well as their hopes and aspirations. Sato said, “He mesmerized the Filipinos that he is strong-willed, no-nonsense leader, willing to work around the rules, and would even push the limits of the law to deliver the promises he made to the people.” However, “red flags” are now starting to come out due to the current administration’s “tendency to cross the line in terms of respect for individual rights and civil liberties.” The United Nations, the USA, and European Union have already raised concerns on the number of deaths in the war against illegal drugs. “From July 1 – Oct 25, 2016 at least 4,715 have been killed in connection with the campaign against illegal

drugs. Of this number, 3,001 were killed by unknown assailants and 1,714 others died in police operations.” Sato shared that it pains her to see the courageous people who fought against Marcos currently keeping silent amidst extra judicial killings happening in our country now.

Fareed Zakaria, journalist and author, predicted the likes of Duterte to eventually come about. In his article, “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy” published in 1997, Zakaria discussed the rise of popular autocrats with little or no regard for the rule of law and civil liberties. “Governments may be elected in free and fair election, he wrote, and yet violate their citizens’ basic rights...60% of the world’s countries are electoral democracies, but majority of these democracies fail to provide equal protection under the law for their citizens.” Sato explained that illiberalism “comes at a time when there is a heated discourse on how liberal democratic regimes have become inadequate to take on the very state of politics of our time.” The people had too much hope in liberalism and liberals have yet to “unlock sustainable solutions” to these dilemmas. The populace is inclined to support a government that offers new and refreshing words and plan of action even at the expense of rights and rule of law.



As a liberal, Sato said she stands firm in the belief that a meaningful sustainable growth and development can be achieved on the recognition of rights, social inclusion and active people participation. The challenge, at this critical point of time, is to make democracy work – to deepen democracy and to make them relevant in the daily lives of our people. It is important to continue to empower the people and the communities and encourage them to participate in various political platforms.

Sato emphasized that hope is in every person and every person can reverse the destructive tide which is drowning the populace into believing that popular autocracy and illiberalism are the fastest way of bringing about the change that they need. Civil rights, life, liberty, respect for the rule of law, the very essence of what liberals fight for, are non-negotiable, she concluded.

Chee Soon Juan

*Secretary General, Singapore Democratic Party
Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats*

Chee Soon Juan, secretary general of the Singapore Democratic Party and former chairperson of CALD, discussed liberalism through the vantage point of neoliberalism rather than illiberalism. He also shared his thoughts on the leaders who subscribed to neoliberalism and the impact it created on human rights.

Chee explained that illiberalism is a state lacking in liberal ideas, a system where elections take place but where freedoms such as press freedom, right to free speech, an independent judiciary, among others are non-existent. Neoliberalism on the other

hand is much less distinct from liberalism, but no less important. The term refers to the “economic practice of achieving maximum market efficiency through a combination of minimal taxes and business regulations, privatization of public services, non-interference of trade unions, acceptance of inequality, the embrace of the false perception that the rich attain the wealth only through merit, and the belief that the wealth of the top eventually trickles down.”



Friedrich von Hayek, one of neoliberalism’s original proponents suggested that market freedoms, if economic push comes to political shove, should supplant democratic ones. Hayek added that “My personal preference leans toward a liberal free market dictatorship rather than a democratic government devoid of liberalism.” Chee recalled that Hayek’s worldview caught the attention of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Regan who both put this philosophy in practice, which meant “enacting huge tax cuts for those at the top marginalizing trade unions, privatizing public services, and deregulating financial systems.”

The policies of the past, influenced by neoliberalism, had unfortunate results and effects. Chee noted the ballooning global income divide, out-of-control global debt and a financial crisis that nearly pulled the global economy into oblivion, were all part of the global backlash. The rise of Donald Trump, the corporate elite, Brexit, among others can

all be traced to a large extent to the discontent that neoliberalism and globalization had through free trade agreements, Chee further explained.



Chee added that the “Hayek-Thatcher-Regan orthodox” caught the eye of Lee Kwan Yew, who once commented that “Hayek expressed with clarity and authority what I long felt but was not able to express.” Lee took Singapore to a “neoliberal adventure,” which constitutes a widely successful economy because of free trade, but left Singaporean workers behind. Singapore is the most expensive city in the world, but it has no minimum wage law. Chee said that the elderly poor are left to wash toilets and collect and sell cardboard boxes just to survive. “Though all this, to those of us who love democracy and dream of living in freedom gets steamrolled by the autocrats in Singapore and those who come to trade with us.”

Free trade without freedom, Chee explained, is equal to exploitation and there would be consequences which would render globalization unsustainable. Chee called on the liberals and democrats to remain as guardians and soldiers of political freedom and to deepen the line that separates liberalism from neoliberalism. “We cannot allow human rights to always be sacrificed at the altar of trade. People must come before profits, rights before riches. We must ensure that we guard against liberals from becoming, inadvertently, neoliberals. For one brings hope and decency to humanity while the other threatens human progress.”

Ted Hui Chi-fung

*Legislative Councilor, Hong Kong
Democratic Party, Hong Kong*

Ted Hui, one of the newly elected legislative councilor from the Democratic Party of Hong Kong and a member of CALD Youth, presented the state of illiberalism in Hong Kong mainly due to the authoritarian grip of China over its internal affairs. Hui discussed how liberalism and democratic ideals are constantly challenged in Hong Kong and why people feel their freedoms have hit rock bottom.



Hui narrated the story of Kevin Lau, a respected journalist who was brutally attacked in broad daylight by two men and was left in critical condition. This incident angered the public because the attackers refused to reveal who ordered the attack. Another incident was a series of disappearances of book publishers and sellers who, after being found again, recalled that they were brought to China and were forced to sign a document promising not to contact their families and lawyers. These incidents caused grave public concern because it severely threatened freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and personal safety, which are all promised to be upheld in the Basic Law, Hong Kong’s constitutional document. What is

more disturbing, according to Hui, is that these incidents have connections to China and its tightening control over Hong Kong.



Under the leadership of Leung Chun-ying, Hong Kong's current Chief Executive, Hong Kong has become more divided than ever. Hui narrated that he has been accused of interfering with institutional autonomy when liberal academics promotion was rejected at the University of Hong Kong. Also, the world-renowned Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), HK's anti-graft agency, had a controversial personnel reshuffle this year when a highly respected investigator was terminated because the investigator heads Leung's corruption case. There have been calls for Leung's resignation, who currently has 39% public support rating.

Hui also explained the democratic contradictions in Hong Kong as seen through the legislature. The pro-democracy forces currently have 19 seats in the Parliament and most are young, progressive advocates of reform. While this is considered as a victory, the majority still belongs to the pro-establishment forces because half of the seats in Parliament are appointed by China.

In conclusion, Hui said China needs to respect the "one country, two-system" principle. If Beijing continues to interfere, even the newly elected young democrats cannot do anything. It is too early to tell if the new Parliament will have significant strides, but it has not been a good start, Hui pointed out.

OPEN FORUM

On radicalism



Mu Sochua, Member of Parliament from the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), asked Hui about how DPHK is handling radical members of the party. Being the largest democratic force in Hong Kong, Hui said the DPHK represents a wide political spectrum.

There are conservatives and radical ones, young and old in the party. Nevertheless, the party continues to transform and adjust to the new generation. Hui said many veteran leaders retired to give way to new faces, and with continuing Internal reforms, the party is able to provide the younger generation the platform and opportunity to contest in the elections.

On making liberalism reliable

A member of the DP Thailand asked the panel about the public's often negative perception of liberalism. Sato said the best way to strengthen liberalism and democracy is to make them relevant to the everyday lives of the people. The rise of illiberalism stems from the fact that the people feel that liberalism has failed them. Complaints on poverty and social exclusion are still prevalent. The challenge, Sato explained, is to educate the people that respect for human rights, freedom of individuals, is the way to a better future. Chee added that the process of democracy may alarm people who want peace and security, and have a business-as-usual mentality, because change is a constant in a democracy. People protest to call for alternatives and to constructively point out inordinate freedoms.



In the recent Singapore elections, Chee related that Lee Kwan Yew died and suddenly there was a huge outpouring of emotions for him, and this helped the PAP in its campaign. He explained that it is hard to introduce reform in Singapore when decade after decade, people are tuned in to one political view, telling the public that if they would not mess with the system, they can get rich. Chee reiterated his belief that democratic reform would happen in Singapore. "It's not if, but when it happens," he emphasized. But it would take liberals to push for change no matter how bleak the situation is.

The Catholic Church and Philippine President Duterte



Piromya asked about what the church and other democratic forces are doing given that a lot are being killed in the Philippines.

Sato said the church is not silent, but the intensity of the fervor to what is happening now is not as high as before, during the Marcos dictatorship. In the fight against Marcos, the church was at the forefront calling on the people to go to the streets and defend democracy. Sato said that kind of active call from the church is not yet seen at this time, but she said that this would build up and would change the development of the country.

On the polarized groups in Hong Kong

Piromya asked Hui about the possible methods to address the polarized society in Hong Kong having pro and anti-Beijing sentiments. Hui said that the split is stirred by Beijing and unless fairer mechanism on public affairs are in place, it would be hard to solve situation. He said the democratic forces would need to fight for reforms in the legislature with the power of the civil society.

Literacy and education in Singapore

Piromya noted that Singapore is 100% literate. He asked how this impacts on the demand for freedom in the city-state. Chee explained that being literate is different from being educated – being educated means a person is equipped with the skills of critical independent thinking. Chee said that the Singapore education system does not harness creativity, competing ideas and innovation. Students are only drilled into textbooks, that is why the way forward is political reform.

Session II: Trends you need to understand about Liberalism in Asia

Mardi Seng, senator from the Cambodia National Rescue Party, chaired the second session, which focused on the trends of liberalism in Asia.



Punchada Sirivunnabood

Lecturer, Mahidol University, Thailand



Punchada Sirivunnabood, is a lecturer in the faculty of Social Science and Humanities of Mahidol University in Thailand. She focused her presentation on the economic and political aspect of liberalism and explained why liberalism in the Asia Pacific is declining. Sirivunnabood noted that in the political sphere, liberalism is manifested in a set of policies that elevate the promotion and protection of the freedom of people while in the economic sphere, liberalism is reflected in free market, when government have limitations in interventions. According to the

Economic Freedom Network, which ranks liberalism in the market all over the world, Hong Kong and Singapore are on top respectively for more than 20 years now. Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam also ranked high. Sirivunnabood said that Asian countries have ranked high in terms of economic liberalism, however, with regard to political liberalism, it's another story.

According to Freedom House, in 1972, only 8 countries in Asia were ranked as free country, 13 ranked as partly free country, and 11 ranked as not free. In 2005, 18 were ranked as free country, 10 country as partly free, and 11 as not free. In 2015, only 16 were ranked as free country, 14 partly free, and 9 not free. Sirivunnabood said people expected Asia to have more freedom in the last thirty years, but the numbers show otherwise. Freedom and liberalism in East European and Middle East countries have also declined over the years.

Based on her research from Freedom House and the Democratic Index, Sirivunnabood deduced four reasons why liberalism in the Asia Pacific is in decline. First, the existence of massive limitation of press freedom as seen in Hong Kong and Myanmar where high rates of violence against journalists take place. Second, there is intimidation of political opposition. South Korea's president was trying to pass a regulation to oppose a political rival. The Malaysian government tries to keep its political opponent in jail especially during elections. In Cambodia, election results were delayed due to the repression demonstrated by the ruling party against the opposition. Third, the absence of freedom of expression as experienced in Sri Lanka where online posts are hampered and Singapore where constructive criticisms are silenced. Lastly, the occurrence of political instability mirrored the current situation of Thailand, which is headed by a military government.

She noted that Seymour Martin Lipset, in his 1960's book Political Man, argued that the more economic growth a nation has, the greater the chances it will sustain democracy. Sirivunnabood, however, observed that this is not the case in Asia. She agreed with Chee's statement that "we cannot have free trade without the freedoms of the people." Sirivunnabood said that it is imperative to cultivate the young people, the most powerful civic group, in order for them to learn and understand liberalism.

Hanjaya Setiawan

*Secretary of Government Affairs Department
Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle*

Hanjaya Setiawan is the secretary of the Government Affairs Department of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle. He previously served as the head of the party's International Affairs Department of the Central Leadership Board. Setiawan discussed the achievements of the Jokowi government and also shared some insights on liberalism based on the Indonesian perspective. While the word liberalism does not sit well in Indonesia, Setiawan said his country is a free society and still nurtures the principles of liberalism. And these principles are reflected in the three main focus of the Jokowi government: infrastructure, human development, and economic deregulation.



Setiawan talked about the nine priority agenda (Nawacita) of the Jokowi government that mainly reflects nationalism, but incorporated liberal values as well. Among the highlights of the agenda are: to develop an effective and trusted democratic government, to increase productivity and competitiveness, and to strengthen the spirit of “unity in diversity.” This agenda is what Jokowi promised in his campaign. In the area of foreign affairs Jokowi committed to: 1) prioritize Indonesia’s identity as an archipelagic state; 2) increase global role through middle power diplomacy and ensure the protection of Indonesian migrant workers as well as promote multilateral cooperation in the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, G20 and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation; 3) expand engagements in the Indo-Pacific region to strengthen Asian cooperation and push for maritime cooperation; and 4) formulate and implement foreign policies based on public participation by reorganizing the foreign ministry and promoting specialization among diplomats in the field of laws of the seas and strategic research.



Jokowi’s major achievements include stopping fuel subsidy, developing infrastructure particularly in East Indonesia, developing policies on marine, ocean and fisheries, tax amnesty, simplifying license, permit and regulatory procedures, improving the efficiency in import and export, and public services and obligations. Stopping fuel subsidy has not been done before by any leader on Indonesia. Setiawan said there were no protests from the public when Jokowi stopped fuel subsidy because they trust their president. The Jokowi government continues to work hard for the people of Indonesia. Though liberalism is not popular in the country, Setiawan, noted that it continues to guide Indonesia in a lot of areas. The threat of liberalism comes from authoritarian governments, terrorism, and the increase of intolerance, all of which Indonesia is firmly standing up against.

Ya-wei Chou

*Associate Researcher, Department of International Affairs
Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan*

Ya-wei Chou, associate researcher in the International Affairs Department of the Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan, presented the three areas in the Tsai government that fulfill the value of liberalism, LGBTI rights, immigrant rights, and free environment for innovation-based economy.



In August 2016, the DPP government appointed Audrey Tang who is the youngest minister in Taiwan and the first transgender minister in the world. Tang established her tech company when she was 19 year old and was instrumental in the live broadcasting of the Sunflower Movement. Her task in the government is to improve government strategy in digital economy and digital innovation and to advocate open government. Chou said, in Taiwan, they recognize a person's talent regardless of his/her gender identity. The DPP legislators also proposed the amendment of the Civil Code to legitimize same-sex marriage where 51 of the 113 cross-party legislators have signed the proposal. It's still a work in progress, but this is already a monumental initiative in Taiwan. Lin Ching-yi, a DPP legislator and Liberal International Human Rights Committee member, recently chaired the press conference on the amendment of the Civil Code on the week of the Taiwan Pride Parade. This proposal was not the first initiative organized by the DPP.

In 2006 Bi-khim Hsiao, former chair of the DPP International Affairs Department and secretary general of CALD, filed the bill on same-sex marriage when she was in the Legislative Yuan. Currently, the DPP also extended rights of "spouses" and/or "family" to DPP staff who have registered as a couple in their city governments. The rights include familial care leave, marriage leave, maternity/paternity leave, bereavement leave and allowance, death compensation, among others.

In terms of the progress on immigrants rights, the amendment, initiated by DPP legislators, to abolish abusive regulations on immigrant workers was recently passed in the Legislative Yuan. This kind of action is part of the central elements of the New Southbound Policy, one of President Tsai Ing-wen's agenda in foreign policy, which aims to have closer relations with Southeast Asian countries. The DPP believes that in order to harness cooperation with Southeast Asia, the DPP needs to first take care of the immigrant workers in Taiwan. The DPP legislators, led by Bi-khim Hsiao, also drafted the Refugee Bill, which has already passed the second reading in the Legislative Yuan. According to the draft, foreigners or stateless persons can apply for refugee status if they are forced to leave their countries due to religion, political beliefs, race, war and disaster.



Lastly, Chou presented how Taiwan established a free environment for innovation-based new economy where young people are able to freely work on their ideas. The DPP government is also working on how to invite, and keep the foreign talent in Taiwan. Chou explained that the National Development Council started reform strategies on visa, work, residence, finance, tax, insurance, and living environment to attract foreign talents to Taiwan. Chou also noted that the DPP government would amend the current Company Act, which was established based on the perspective of large-scale manufacturing companies. By amending the Act, Taiwan would open up to small and medium-size enterprises as well as to start-up companies with flexible regulations.

Chou said that these initiatives are not only doing good, internally, for Taiwan, but they help connect Taiwan more to the world stage.

OPEN FORUM

On Taiwan's successful democratization process

Piromya asked Chou about how Taiwan became a modern democratic society and why is it successful in its democratization process. Chou said that the threats from China contributed a bit to the growth of democracy because the Taiwanese realized that “every second counts when there are 1,200 missiles pointed at them.” Taiwan knows how important democracy is and they work hard to strengthen it. Chou added how good Taiwanese are in information technology and they use this as a vehicle to improve democratic governance. Having a pool of talented people on IT is also an advantage to the economy of Taiwan.

On liberals in power vis-a-vis ASEAN members and policies

Sochua asked Sirivunnabood why the liberal parties in power failed in transforming policies of ASEAN. Sirivunnabood believes that only two countries in ASEAN are democracies: the Philippines and Indonesia. She explained that it is really difficult to make changes in the region because of the ASEAN value of non-interference, which is the most significant factor that prevents ASEAN in getting involved with other countries' affairs. There are no regional or common instruments being utilized to influence a country's internal policies, she said.



Chee added a note on liberal leaders in power such as President Aquino, President Chen Shui Bian, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who were able to speak up for liberalism, but retreated from that when they visited Singapore. They praised the Singapore system. Chee said that liberals have to ask the tough questions of why the Singaporean government controls the media or why the civil society continues to be suppressed.

The bigger challenges for liberals



Vejjajiva explained the difference between Taiwan pushing for progressive policies and Indonesia having different priorities. He said that the approval rating of the Indonesian leader is quite good while the Taiwan leader is having problems. This answers the question about advancing liberal values. In most countries in Asia, no liberal regimes have enjoyed continuity. Vejjajiva narrated that he contested in the last elections as a Prime Minister with a 60% approval rating, but still he lost. He explained that to the people, the past is past and when they get better offers from competitors, they forget about the past government even if that government made significant strides in reforms and development. The Aquino administration is a good example of this case. He said the challenge is how to sustain electoral success for continuity in order to sustain the good policies and programs in governance. The bigger challenge, he added, is to know what the Chinese model is going to do to the future of liberal democracy. Chinese economic thinking is gaining an edge over the Western thinking on economic development. It seems to connect more with people. It seems to have greater sympathy in the goal of social justice. Vejjajiva underscored that China is trying to make trade and investment work for the people. In the last decade, he said that most of the people who have been lifted from poverty are from China. It is imperative to think of the issues that matter to ordinary people and that is a challenge liberals are up against.



World Café Session: How to make liberal parties win again

The session was chaired by Kasit Piromya, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and former Members of Parliament. Piromya shared three important points on what they are trying to do in terms of the national reform in Thailand. First is to have internal political reform to make parties stronger. Second is to provide a nationwide civil and political education for everyone from kindergarten and up. Third is to provide new rules on transparency and accountability with regard to the government budget. He said it is important to discuss this topic to come up with ideas so liberals could move forward and achieve election victories while keeping the principles and values intact.



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.

The table hosts were Jayanthi Devi Balaguru, Vice Chairperson of the CALD Women's Caucus from the Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia, Sin Chung-kai, CALD individual

member and deputy chairperson of the Democratic Party of Hong Kong, and Ratchada Dhnadirek, former Member of Parliament from the Democrat Party of Thailand.

Balaguru hosted the table that talked about “How can liberals broaden their popular appeal and remain true to their liberal values?” The participants said personal relationship between the candidate and the voter has to be enhanced through party principles and the maturity of the voters. It is imperative to instill liberal values in the grassroots level and respond to the voter’s needs with responsibility. She added that political parties need to reduce the internal communications gap within the party between the staff, the members, and the leadership. Communication is key in connecting to the voters be it through publicity and/or social media. Some participants said that liberals are losing their popular appeal so it is vital to be more progressive and allow new faces - the new generation to project what liberals believe.



Sin hosted the table that focused on “How can liberals counter illiberalism and populism?” He classified their group’s output through principles, communication, and tools. The participants suggested to stand firm on their principles, but also to try to rethink the strategies to address the concerns of the people. Sin said, politics is long-term and in order to connect to the people, education is always a solution. Educate and empower to understand the value of liberalism. In terms of communication, it is important to speak the people’s language and focus on their issues. Remember to stay with the people, not above them. Go to the grassroots and talk about the issues relevant to their daily lives. And with the tools to counteract illiberalism and populism, like-

mind organization should work and act together to push initiatives. Parties should also explore being better “populists” than the populists by offering direct, concrete and tangible benefits to the voters. Reimagining the profiles of candidates can also help change voter perspectives.

Dhnairek hosted the table that discussed “How can liberals help each other in confronting current challenges?” The participants in her group offered two strategies. First is to enhance the spirit of CALD as a family. Second is to set up a knowledge management system that could compile the success stories and even the failure of CALD members. Dhnairek said if CALD becomes a family, it could do a lot of things because it is powerful. By being a family, members can protect each other and can take part in the same vision and purpose. And to promote CALD as a family, Dhnairek said parties should designate international officers to link us together. Moreover, CALD could establish a think tank to facilitate the knowledge management system. Again, the group suggested to always think of the best channel of communication to engage more people (journalists, youth, academe, non-liberal sectors) and make them connected to liberal network. More importantly, Dhnairek said commitment is key. She said, “We have to be committed as liberals and acknowledge that fight illiberalism alone, is hard.”

Closing Session

Monsor Nyamdavaa, Vice President of the Civil Will Youth Association, facilitated the closing session with the keynote address delivered by Florencio “Butch” Abad, former Secretary (Minister) of the Department of Budget and Management of the Philippines, former CALD Chairperson, and former president of the Liberal Party of the Philippines. Abad is one of the founders of CALD who conceptualized the idea of having an alliance of liberal parties that would develop and promote the liberal agenda in Asia.



Closing Keynote Address

Florencio “Butch” Abad

*Former Secretary (Minister), Department of Budget and Management, Philippines
Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Former President, Liberal Party of the Philippines*

Abad first and foremost extended, on behalf of the Liberal Party of the Philippines (LP), deep sympathies and condolences to the Democrat Party and the people of Thailand for the passing away of King Bhumibol Adulyadej. He also acknowledged Vejjajiva for investing time in all sessions during the entire conference.

Abad narrated and analyzed what happened to the LP during the Aquino administration

leading to the recent elections where Rodrigo Duterte won. According to Abad, “how is it possible, in a short period of time, for an administration to transform a country that was once ridiculed as the “Sick Man” of Asia to become its fastest growing economy in the region and Asia’s bright spot, and lose the opportunity to cement these gains of the past six years in just one day?” Over the past six years, the Aquino administration dramatically transformed the Philippines by keeping its campaign promise. They fight corruption and made the big fish accountable to the people, reformed the public financial management system that minimized inefficiency and kept the deficit within 2%, and enhanced investments in social protection, basic education, public health, and infrastructure. According to Abad, they transformed the economy to become the fastest growing in the region, and raised our risk profile to investment grade status, which was the first time it ever happened to the Philippines. The country also received 25 positive credit actions, with no negative, over the past five years. “A feat no country could match,” Abad noted.



Unemployment was at its lowest level in 10 years, poverty incidence was at its lowest level in 18 years, and self-rated poverty was brought down to its lowest level in 33 years. President Aquino ended his term on June 30, 2016 with the highest trust and approval that no president before him had attained from the beginning of his term up to the very end of his term. However, despite all these achievements, Abad wondered why the LP lost in the May 2016 election. “To be very honest, as a political party, we have not yet figured out what hit us,” Abad added.

Abad explained some of the internal factors that he thinks contributed to the election defeat. He noted that these reasons require deeper and collective reflection among liberals across the globe. First, the failure to communicate the gains of the administration over the past six years. Due to the success of the government programs across sectors and across regions of the country, they thought that the reforms would already explain themselves. “I think the more important is engage — sitting down and talking about how they feel about these changes.” The LP assumed that the good ratings of the Aquino administration were enough indication that the people appreciated the significant changes throughout the six years. There was a push back from ideological, partisan, and vested interest groups that exploited the social media to launch a campaign for distrust in government, politics and the status quo. Again, “These disgruntled groups — the Marcoses, the Arroyos, and the Estradas, the communists — all came together, however tactically, in one big push under the banner of President Duterte.”

Second, while the Aquino administration focused on the more pressing problems of the country — poverty, debt, peace, social conflicts, and climate change, Abad said they overlooked and paid scant attention to everyday middle class’ concerns such as the worsening traffic jam, slow and expensive Internet connection, and erratic mobile phone service, among others. Incidentally, “The growth of the middle class has been

accelerated by the huge influx of OFW remittances from 10 million Filipinos living abroad and BPO revenues from services being outsourced to the Philippines, the dollar incomes from which constitutes 17% of our GDP.”

Third, the persistent problem of inequality. Abad explained that their reforms on good governance and anti-corruption have lifted the lives of all sectors of society. However, a very few elite still have benefited much more from these and were seen flaunting on television and social media. The impact of which is that the poor instantly forget about all their gains and end up being disappointed, resentful and angry. Abad said, if they were given the chance to continue serving, they would have established the momentum and laid a firm foundation to progressively close this gap in the medium and long term.

These internal factors are not enough to explain the LP’s 2016 debacle. External factors, which they did not anticipate according to Abad, played a major role as well in framing the social and political terrain. They failed to grasp, for example, the fear, uncertainty and insecurity that the people feel about the rapid changes happening globally as a consequence of globalization, the Internet, and social media, coupled with the dissatisfaction in their own conditions. They have translated these into anger and resentment against the establishment wherein LP’s campaign messaging of continuity or “Ituloy and Daand Matuwid” failed to address. Unfortunately, the LP only realized this near the end of the campaign. “This mental frame, this collective psyche created a fertile ground for the rise of political demagogues who promise strong, uncompromising, anti-establishment, devil-may-care leadership, who put forward simplistic solutions — the root of our problems is drugs — to very complex socio-economic and political problems. It is in this context, the political equivalent of a perfect storm, that brought the punisher, the tough-talking, the cursing, irreverent Rodrigo Duterte to the Philippine presidency,” Abad explained.

Abad said, in the process of reforming societies, it is vital to communicate with and patiently engage the people every step of the way, explaining to them the gains achieved and that the country’s problems cannot be solved overnight. In the world of social media, it is important to find the spaces for spirited and positive action and take advantage of the fact that there is innovation in social media. “There’s time yet to influence the discourse. All we need to do is take some brave and intelligent risks, and to keep exploring new ways to reach out to our people.” Abad emphasized that, “It is not enough that our societies today enjoy the formal attributes of democracy, like free, peaceful, and periodic elections, vibrant media, checks and balances in government, a working legislature, among others. I think that it is most crucial now for us to give substance to our imperfect democracy by ensuring that every citizen has a stake in it...Ultimately, it is the people themselves whom we must never lose sight of...Reaching out is a constant necessity, because that is how we can best deliver the message of hope and freedom that liberalism has always borne.”

Closing Speeches

Chee Soon Juan

*Secretary General, Singapore Democratic Party
Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats*



Chee gave a very straightforward message about the trajectory of CALD. Chee reminded everyone that CALD is about to celebrate its 25th anniversary and that it has come a long way. Even fellow opposition parties in Singapore look at CALD with envy and cannot find any other organization in the region with a common ideology and a sense of solidarity in the region. Moreover, SDP has benefited tremendously from CALD. But CALD must move forward from just convening its members where they pat each other on the back and share their concerns. Also, why do liberal parties keep losing if the ideology is so appealing? Chee explained that the whole concept of liberalism has not taken root and is not deep enough in the region.

CALD should take a step further to the next level. It has to know where it is headed in the next 25 years and pursue it like a bulldog that would not let go and at the same time be able to entrench the liberal values in the region. CALD can broaden its vistas and look outside the liberal parties. As Abad earlier mentioned, reform is very hard to do both internally and externally. It's important for others to help liberals with the reform process. It is essential to bring in more people, more voices, and make CALD gain more gravitas so people will pay attention when it issues a resolution or a press statement. Chee said, "If we are able to get to the point that people cannot ignore CALD, that's the time we can register ourselves as a potent political force."

Chee extended his deep gratitude to FNF for always helping CALD and thanked the CALD secretariat for organizing the conference. Lastly, he extended and expressed his condolences to the people of Thailand for the demise of their beloved king.

Abhisit Vejjajiva

*Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats
Former Prime Minister, Thailand
Leader, Democrat Party, Thailand*

Vejjajiva thanked his staff and the CALD secretariat for all the preparations and extended his gratitude as well to the partners, to FNF, LI, and ALDE. He said his active participation in the past three days in the conference was deliberate because of the current situation in the region that remains a genuine cause for concern. He was hoping that during the entire conference, CALD members realize that "we cannot go on business-as-usual."

For the next two years, whether it's the 50th anniversary of ASEAN or the 25th anniversary of CALD, Vejjajiva said, "We really do need to reposition ourselves and take this to the next level. The discussions of the last three days for me have given a lot of thought and encouragement. We've had a very honest and candid assessment of where we have gone wrong." He added that nobody is losing any kind of enthusiasm to advance the liberal and democratic cause and this should be the basis of CALD's work.

Vejjajiva shared three ideas that he wants to put into action immediately. The most important is to come up with a format where all our member parties will have an internal consultation to think about the priorities and strategies liberal democrats in the region and make an important input not just on the LI Manifesto, but also on how CALD members might improve their respective work. Secondly, there has to be a reporting system. Anybody taking part in the CALD events, they have to report back to their parties and the parties have to report back to CALD. In this way, we know the exact value of all the work that we do, Vejjajiva explained. Thirdly, all member parties must appoint international officers and set up a group on social media where they can communicate on a regular basis and update each other on what has been happening in their respective countries. In this manner, there is a continuing contribution to better understand each other. It's also time for CALD to have a think tank or at least a researcher on public policy issues and political trends.



Vejjajiva also expressed his appreciation to CALD members for flying to Thailand and staying with the DP at this very difficult time. He thanked everyone for their condolences. He said he appreciates the time that CALD spent at the Grand Palace to visit the king and pay their respects and to also witness the love that the Thai people have shown to the king. Vejjajiva explained that the expression of love reflects the appreciation and gratitude of the people to public service – a public service made by a monarch rather than a politician – 70 years of devotion, 70 years of good governance, 70 years of people-centered development. "That's what we have to look up to as we go about carrying our duties as public servants."

CALD 11th General Assembly Conference Report

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11TH CALD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Liberalism *VS* ILLIBERALISM

WHICH SIDE DOES ASIA BELONG?

3-7 NOVEMBER 2016 | BANGKOK, THAILAND

 Council of
Asian Liberals
and Democrats

CONFERENCE RESULTS

- Facilitated the handover of CALD and CALD Women's Caucus leadership
- Approved the membership application of Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB) or Nation Awakening Party of Indonesia as full member party of CALD
- Approved the CALD Charter revisions
- Finalized the list of 2017 CALD programs
- Approved CALD Resolution No.5 S.2016 on the exile of Sam Rainsy
- Identified the priority areas of the Democrat Party of Thailand as the new CALD Chair
- Consolidated CALD contributions to the draft Liberal International (LI) Manifesto



Official Conference Group Photo



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CALD Chair

Kiat Sittheeamorn
CALD Secretary General

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