



**9<sup>th</sup> CALD Communications Workshop**  
***Theme: Dealing with the Media: Common Rules, Different Contexts***  
**& Commune Election Observation Mission**  
**1-5 June 2017 / Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

**CONCEPT NOTE**

The more I observe the main effects of a free press, the more convinced am I that, in the modern world, freedom of the press is the principal and, so to say, the constitutive element in freedom.

~Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859)  
French sociologist and political theorist

*Abstract:*

The media, the so-called Fourth Estate by Scottish philosopher Thomas Carlyle, plays a crucial role in shaping the balance of power between the government and the governed. In a democratic context, the media can provide the people with the necessary information to counter the misuse and abuse of governmental authority. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that freedom of the press has always been a hallmark of democratic governance and, as how Alexis de Tocqueville put it, “the constitutive element in freedom.”

In an ideal democratic setting, the media is expected to operate freely and fairly in fulfilling its societal function. The reality, however, suggests that the media, even in mature democracies, can be manipulated or corrupted by the government and other vested interests. In non-democratic countries, the media can be nothing but government mouthpieces and instruments of indoctrination.

Given these limitations of the (traditional) media, some hailed the rise of social media as alternative source of information. While there is some truth to the claim that social media has indeed democratize information, the widespread use of social media at present also comes with its own sets of problems. The prominence of “fake news”, “nuts and bolts” and “keyboard warriors” in the social media discourse today has somehow

institutionalized misinformation, and this has profound implications on governance and societal relations.

Considering the different contexts where media operate, not to mention the changing social media milieu, are there common rules that should guide political parties in their engagement with media practitioners and the general public? How should they adopt their strategies in order to overcome the constraints in their respective political contexts? How can they communicate better, using traditional and social media, in an era of “post-truth” politics?

These are the general questions that will be addressed in the 9th CALD Communications Workshop that will be held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 1-5 June 2017. Eight workshops were previously organized under CALD’s communications workshop series. The details of these past workshops are as follows:

No	Year	Venue	Theme
1 <sup>st</sup>	2003	Manila, Philippines	Political Communication for Liberal and Democratic Parties in Asia: Developing a Communication Strategy for CALD
2 <sup>nd</sup>	2004	Phnom Penh, Cambodia	The Media in Electoral Campaigns
3 <sup>rd</sup>	2005	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	Political Parties and the Internet
4 <sup>th</sup>	2006	Taipei, Taiwan	Political Communication in the Digital Age
5 <sup>th</sup>	2007	Manila, Philippines	Political Campaign Communications for Asian Liberal and Democratic Parties
6 <sup>th</sup>	2009	Hong Kong, SAR	Strengthening Political Communication and Campaigns: Asian Democracies in the Age of Web 2.0
7 <sup>th</sup>	2012	Siem Reap, Cambodia	Strategic Political Communication for Youth Candidates
8 <sup>th</sup>	2015	Manila, Philippines	Political Communication, Elections and Governance

For its 9<sup>th</sup> installment, the series adopts the theme “Dealing with the Media: Common Rules, Different Contexts”. The specific objectives are:

- To train the participants on the fundamental rules of handling the media which are applicable across contexts;
- To share country experiences on the nature of the media, the issues and problems that emanate from it, and how they can be addressed;

- To discuss the increasing use of deception in social media and how it can be detected and responded to;
- To provide the participants with a general understanding and appreciation of the Cambodian political system, electoral framework and political party dynamics; and
- To demonstrate support and solidarity with the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) as it contests crucial commune elections.

*Target Group:*

The workshop aims to gather 20-25 participants from CALD member-parties who are in-charge of media relations, political communication, party administration, or election campaign. An overall facilitator will be in-charge of running the entire workshop, although resource persons and/or participants may also be asked to present in specific sessions.

*Workshop Facilitator:*

Mr. Jan Mikael de Lara Co served as Assistant Secretary for Presidential Communications, Development and Strategic Planning under the administration of President Benigno S. Aquino III (2010-2016). He was Deputy of Strategic Communications, Head of Speechwriters Group, and Head of the Presidential Office. He has led or participated in various multiagency working groups to support the administration's communications thrust, and managed both internal and external public communications efforts across a wide array of issues and sectors.



His poetry and translations have also garnered numerous accolades, among them four Palanca\* awards, two Maningning Miclat\*\* awards, and two nominations for the National Book Award. He currently heads the corporate communications division for a major player in the Philippine renewable energy industry, while also volunteering his skills

to achieve public sector reform, uphold human rights, and elevate the level of discourse in the country.

*\*Palanca Awards are literary awards in the Philippines which is considered as the country's "Pulitzer Prize" in terms of prestige.*

*\*\*Maningning Miclat Awards are literary and visual arts awards in the Philippines named in honor of a published author, multilingual poet, and prize-winning artist and painter, Maningning Miclat.*

## PROGRAMME

**Thursday, 1 June 2017**

*Arrival in Phnom Penh / Welcome Dinner*

Variable

Arrival in Phnom Penh

Check-in at the hotel of international delegates

**Sunway Hotel Phnom Penh**

No. 1, Street 92, Sangkat Wat Phnom, P.O Box 633,

Tel: +855 23 430 33 / 77 55 203

Fax: +855 23 430 339

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18:30 – 19:00

Assembly at the hotel lobby and leave for dinner venue

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### **Welcome Dinner**

*Hosted by the Cambodia National Rescue Party*

Venue: Bopha Phnom Penh Titanic Restaurant

Sisowath Quay, Phnom Penh

Cambodia

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19:30 – 19:40

*Welcome Address*

**Hon. Son Chhay, MP**

Cambodia National Rescue Party

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19:40 – 21:00

Dinner

**Friday, 2 June 2017**

*Forum on Cambodian Elections / Campaign Observation*

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**Undemocratic Elections and Democratic Agenda:  
Can Less-than-Democratic Elections Advance Cambodian Democratization?**

Venue: Mekong I, Mezzanine Floor, Sunway Hotel

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08:30 – 09:00                      Registration

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09:00 – 12:00                      *Session Chair*

**Hon. Mardi Seng**  
Senator, Sam Rainsy Party

*Panel Discussion*

*Current Political and Electoral Context*

**Mr. Khim Sophanna**  
Program Manager  
Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Cambodia Office

*Constraints and Strategies of Opposition Parties*

**Hon. Son Chhay, MP**  
Cambodia National Rescue Party

*2017 Commune and 2018 Parliamentary Elections*

**Mr. Yoeurng Sotheara**  
Legal & Monitoring Officer  
Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia

*Contesting Less-than-Democratic Elections during Martial  
Law: The Philippine Experience*

**Mr. Lambert Ramirez**  
Former Executive Director  
National Institute for Policy Studies, Philippines

*Open Forum*

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12:00 – 13:30

Lunch  
Venue: Sun Café, Ground Floor, Sunway Hotel

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13:30 – 14:00	Assembly at the hotel lobby and leave for campaign observation
14:30 – 19:00	Observation of Last Campaign Day for Commune Elections
19:30 – 21:30	Dinner-Cruise (Ravy Boat Cruise)
21:30	Return to the hotel

**Saturday, 3 June 2017**

*9<sup>th</sup> CALD Communication Workshop Day 1 / Free Night*

**9<sup>th</sup> CALD Political Communication Workshop Day 1**

Venue: Mekong I, Mezzanine Floor, Sunway Hotel

08:30	Registration
09:00 – 09:30	<p><i>Opening Session</i></p> <p><i>Session Chair</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Son Chhay, MP</b> Cambodia National Rescue Party</p> <p><i>Welcome Remarks</i></p> <p><b>Hon. Kiat Sittheeamorn</b> Secretary General, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats Deputy Leader, Democrat Party of Thailand</p> <p><b>Mr. Siegfried Herzog</b></p>

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

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09:30 – 11:00

*Fellow's Introductions (Activity)*  
*Expectation Setting*  
*Overview of the Workshop: Objectives and Process*

**Mr. Jan Mikael DL Co**

Workshop Facilitator  
Former Assistant Secretary  
Presidential Communications  
Development and Strategic Planning  
Office of the President of the Philippines

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11:00 – 11:30

Coffee / Tea Break

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11:30 – 13:00

*Session I: Strategic Political Communications: An Overview*

In this session, the facilitator will present the context of doing political communications today; the value of approaching communications from a strategic perspective; the importance of establishing and adhering to a brand; and concepts in coming up with a brand. A branding exercise and open forum will follow.

*Resource Person*

*Best Practices in Communication: The Case of Liberal International*

**Mr. William Townsend**

Communication and Political Projects Adviser  
Liberal International

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13:00 – 14:15

Lunch  
Venue: Sun Café, Ground Floor, Sunway Hotel

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14:15 – 14:40

Branding Exercise Presentation

14:50 – 16:50

*Session II: Message Crafting: Issues Identification +  
Message House Construction*

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The session will focus on message crafting: identifying the issue, crafting the message and constructing a message house. The facilitator will provide an input on these topics followed by an open forum. The session will end with an exercise: Building the Message House.

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16:50 - 17:00

Coffee / Tea Break

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17:00 – 18:00

*Session III: Message Crafting: Tactical Responses*

This session deals specifically with message crafting, particularly tactical response in communication. The facilitator will share knowledge on construction of responses in a structured, accessible and impactful manner. An open forum and exercise on Redactive Debate will follow soon after the lecture. The facilitator, together with an assistant facilitator, will then wrap-up and summarize all the key learnings from the exercises and expand the discussion to other topics covered during the day. The session will end with a special message of Cambodian opposition leader Sam Rainsy to the participants.

*Assistant Facilitator*

**Mr. Lambert Ramirez**

Former Executive Director  
National Institute for Policy Studies, Philippines

*Special Video/Skype Message to the Participants*

**Hon. Sam Rainsy**

Former President, Cambodia National Rescue Party  
Former Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

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18:00

End of Workshop Day 1

Free Night

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**Sunday, 4 June 2017**

*9<sup>th</sup> CALD Communication Workshop Day 2 / Election Day Observation / Farewell Dinner*

**9<sup>th</sup> CALD Political Communication Workshop Day 2**

Venue: Mekong I, Mezzanine Floor, Sunway Hotel

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08:30 Registration

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09:00 – 09:10 *Recap*

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09:10 – 10:30 *Session IV: Political Communications in the Age of Impatience*

In this session, facilitator will present context, historical background and case studies on the complexities of communicating in the current global milieu; recognizing and counteracting hostile and inorganic communications, particularly in social media building movements; strategies for message deployment; and the imperatives that should guide liberal communicators as they navigate in our age. There will be an open forum followed by the final review of key learnings for the entire length of the workshop.

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10:30 – 11:00 Coffee / Tea Break

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11:00 – 12:00 *Closing Session*

Session Chair

**Mr. Lambert Ramirez**

Former Executive Director

National Institute for Policy Studies, Philippines

Workshop Evaluation

Awarding of Certificates

*Closing Remarks*

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**Hon. Kem Sokha, MP (tbc)**  
President, Cambodia National Rescue Party

**Hon. Kiat Sittheeamorn**  
Secretary General, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats  
Deputy Leader, Democrat Party of Thailand

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12:00 – 13:30                      Lunch  
Venue: Sun Café, Ground Floor, Sunway Hotel

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13:30 – 14:00                      Assembly at the hotel lobby and leave for observation of  
commune election day activities

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14:00 – 18:00                      Observation of Voting and Vote Tabulation  
*CNRP HQ and/or COMFREL (tbc)*

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19:00 - 20:00                      Debriefing Session  
  
*Facilitator*  
  
**Mr. Lambert Ramirez**  
Former Executive Director  
National Institute for Policy Studies, Philippines

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20:00 – 21:30                      Farewell Dinner  
Venue: (tbc)

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**Monday, 5 June 2017**  
*Departure*

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Departure