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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Manila, Philippines</td>
<td>Political Communication for Liberal and Democratic Parties in Asia: Developing a Communication Strategy for CALD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Phnom Penh, Cambodia</td>
<td>The Media in Electoral Campaigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia</td>
<td>Political Parties and the Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Taipei, Taiwan</td>
<td>Political Communication in the Digital Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Manila, Philippines</td>
<td>Political Campaign Communications for Asian Liberal and Democratic Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Hong Kong, SAR</td>
<td>Strengthening Political Communication and Campaigns: Asian Democracies in the Age of Web 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Siem Reap, Cambodia</td>
<td>Strategic Political Communication for Youth Candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Manila, Philippines</td>
<td>Political Communication, Elections and Governance</td>
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</tbody>
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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 Philippine President Benigno S. Aquino III (2010-2016). He was Deputy of Strategic Communications, Head of Speechwriters Group, and Head of the Correspondence Office. Under his leadership, the administration’s communications thrust, and managed both quick-response and strategic 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.
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

18:30 – 19:00
Assembly at the hotel lobby and leave for dinner venue

Welcome Dinner
Hosted by the Cambodia National Rescue Party
Venue: Bopha Phnom Penh Titanic Restaurant
Sisowath Quay, Phnom Penh
Cambodia

19:30 – 19:40
Welcome Address

Hon. Son Chhay, MP
Cambodia National Rescue Party

19:40 – 21:00
Dinner

Friday, 2 June 2017
Forum on Cambodian Elections / Campaign Observation
Undemocratic Elections and Democratic Agenda:
Can Less-than-Democratic Elections Advance Cambodian Democratization?
Venue: Mekong I, Mezzanine Floor, Sunway Hotel

08:30 – 09:00 Registration

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

12:00 – 13:30 Lunch
Venue: Sun Café, Ground Floor, Sunway Hotel
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
9th CALD Communication Workshop Day 1 / Free Night

9th CALD Political Communication Workshop Day 1
Venue: Mekong I, Mezzanine Floor, Sunway Hotel

08:30  Registration

09:00 – 09:30  Opening Session

Session Chair

Hon. Son Chhay, MP
Cambodia National Rescue Party

Welcome Remarks

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</table>
| 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                              |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Coffee / Tea Break                                                       |
| 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                                                    |
| 13:00 – 14:15 | Lunch                                                                    |
|             | Venue: Sun Café, Ground Floor, Sunway Hotel                             |
| 14:15 – 14:40 | Branding Exercise Presentation                                           |
| 14:50 – 16:50 | **Session II: Message Crafting: Issues Identification + Message House    |
|             | Construction**                                                           |
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.

16:50 - 17:00  
Coffee / Tea Break

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 Dabate 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

18:00  
End of Workshop Day 1

Free Night
### 9th CALD Political Communication Workshop Day 2

**Venue:** Mekong I, Mezzanine Floor, Sunway Hotel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08:30</td>
<td>Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 09:10</td>
<td>Recap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:10 – 10:30</td>
<td><em>Session IV: Political Communications in the Age of Impatience</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11:00</td>
<td>Coffee / Tea Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 – 12:00</td>
<td><em>Closing Session</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Recap

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.

#### Closing Session

**Session Chair**

**Mr. Lambert Ramirez**

Former Executive Director

National Institute for Policy Studies, Philippines

Workshop Evaluation

Awarding of Certificates

*Closing Remarks*
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

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

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

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

19:00 - 20:00
Debriefing Session

Facilitator

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

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

Monday, 5 June 2017
Departure

Variable  Departure