

# Workshop on The Role of Civil Liberties in Civil Society Activism for Social Justice in South East Asia

**10 December 2012**

**Monday**

**Lee Sheridan Conference Room**

**Organised by:**



**NUS**  
National University  
of Singapore

Centre for Asian Legal Studies  
Faculty of Law

**Supported by:**



Konrad  
Adenauer  
Stiftung

50 YEARS OF WORLDWIDE COOPERATION

## **The Role of Civil Liberties in Civil Society Activism for Social Justice in South East Asia**

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### **Background Narrative**

This workshop on the subject of 'Civil Society Activism for Social Justice in South East Asia' is organised by the Centre for Asian Legal Studies (CALs) at NUS Faculty of Law in conjunction with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. The purpose of this workshop is to compare civil society experiences across SE Asia in the context of challenges to activism and how they can be overcome. In relation to these challenges the emphasis will be on civil liberties and freedom of expression and association. We hope to be informed about these issues in a comparative context in a way that will be of great assistance to civil society organisations and activists as they find ways of furthering their advocacy for socio-economic justice for marginalised groups. The findings will also be extremely useful for several of CALs' research and outreach programmes: on civil society in Myanmar; on migration issues; on minorities; on the non-profit sector, legal aid and access to justice; and on land grabs. We think the comparative knowledge gleaned will be very helpful also when fed back to local civil-society constituencies in Myanmar and other countries in the region.

The plan is as follows. There will be 8 participants from Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines and Cambodia; they will be people working on different aspects of social justice (for example, women's rights, land grabs and peasants' issues, environmental issues, migrant workers and other vulnerable groups). The workshop's main session will be held in the morning of 10 December, and will be linked to another workshop CALs is hosting 10-11 December, organised by Dr Lynette Chua and our Director, Andrew Harding, on the subject of socio-legal research in SE Asia. This latter workshop will involve scholars from several different parts of the world, thought-leaders in socio-legal studies, and socio-legal researchers from SE Asia. Participants in the civil society workshop will contribute their experiences in a series of short presentations and discussions. They will be joined by some leading participants in the socio-legal workshop, in particular Professor Frank Munger of State University of New York, who is a leader in this field. The socio-legal workshop will then begin after lunch on 10 December and continue through 11 December. The civil society activists will join the socio-legal workshop and a session will be devoted to discussing the synthesised findings of the civil society workshop. This will add enormous value to the exercise, as these findings will be subject to comment from experts with broad experience of the issues across Asia and beyond. We expect that civil-society participants will benefit greatly from the socio-legal workshop discussion, and will be able to participate meaningfully in that. We expect they will also have ideas as to how research at CALs can support civil-society activism in Asia. Notes will be taken during these events and a report will be compiled by CALs.

**Workshop on The Role of Civil Liberties in Civil Society  
Activism for Social Justice in South East Asia  
10 December 2012**

**Lee Sheridan Conference Room @ Eu Tong Sen Building,**

**Sunday, 9 December 2012**

**6.30pm - 9.30pm**      **Welcome Dinner (by invitation only)**  
*North Border Bar & Grill*  
*2 Rochester Park Singapore 139213*

**Monday, 10 December 2012 (Day 1)**

**8.00am – 8.30am**      **Registration & Administration**  
*(Lee Sheridan Conference Room's foyer, Eu Tong Seng Building, Faculty of Law)*

**8.30am – 8.45am**      **Welcome and Opening Remarks**  
**Professor Andrew Harding**  
Director, Centre for Asian Legal Studies  
**Judge Marc Spitzkat**  
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

**Panel 1**

**Chair: Teresita Cruz Del Rosario**

**Facilitator: Frank Munger**

**8.45am – 9.45am**      **Speakers: (15 minutes for each presentation)**

**Zeya Thu (Myanmar)**

*Deputy Chief Editor, Living Color Media & the Voice Weekly Journal*

**Phyu Yamin Myat (Myanmar)**

*Faculty & Project Director, Myanmar Egress & Managing Director,  
Myanmar Development Partners*

**Hla Myat Tun (Myanmar)**

*LGBT Rights Programme Officer, Human Rights Education Institute of  
Burma & Formerly Programme Officer, International Center for  
Transitional Justice*

**Tossapon Sompong (Thailand)**

*Office of Political Development Council of Thailand*

**9.45am – 10.30am**      **Q & A session**

**10.30am – 10.45am**      **Tea Break**

## **Panel 2**

**Chair: Teresita Cruz Del Rosario**

**Facilitator: Frank Munger**

**10.45am – 11.45am** **Speakers:** *(15 minutes for each presentation)*

**Haziqah Nasirah (Malaysia)**

*Project Assistant, Loyarburok*

**Marlon J Manuel (Philippines)**

*Land rights lawyer*

**Mora Sar (Cambodia)**

*President of the Cambodian Food and Service Workers Federation of Cambodia & Member of the Cross Sector Core Group in Cambodia*

**Alex Au Waiping (Singapore)**

*Yawning Bread, author, activist, blogger*

**11.45 am – 12.00pm** **Q & A session**

**End of Workshop**

**12.00pm – 1.00pm** **Welcome Lunch hosted by Centre for Asian Legal Studies**

*Staff Lounge, Block B*

**1.00pm – 1.30pm** **Registration for Workshop on Socio-legal Research on Southeast Asia: Themes, Directions and Challenges.**

*(Lee Sheridan Conference Room's foyer, Eu Tong Seng Building, Faculty of Law)*

### **Please Note:**

For details on the rest of the programming, please refer to the workshop program for **Socio-legal Research on Southeast Asia: Themes, Directions and Challenges** (*Annex B*).

Activist participants of this event will join in the latter workshop's plenary sessions and have a separate breakout session chaired by Teresita Cruz Del Rosario where breakout sessions are indicated.