



# Network for Social Democracy in Asia 2021 in numbers

**4** youth training modules 

**21** Academy Alumni Activities 

**1** Regional Youth Convention 

**2** Executive Courses 

**3** Journal Issues 

**8** webinars 

**8** political statements 

**616589** reached social media users 

**1500+** participants 

**17** podcasts 

**130** Resource Persons and Writers 



## Network for Social Democracy in Asia

# 2021 Annual Report

### **Despite the challenging 2021, SocDem Asia marched on!**

We continued the discussions and exchanges on important issues with 8 global webinars this year that centered on the social democratic responses to these twin crises: the pandemic and the democratic rollback across the globe. The webinars were capped off with sharing of lessons from the recent social democratic victory in Germany. You can watch the webinars on our [Youtube channel](#).

The Academy of Progressive Politics (SocDem APP) is now on its 2nd year of delivering distance learning for second-line leaders through the Political Management Training for Young Progressives (PMT) and continuing learning for party executives and workers under the Executive Courses (EC). Twenty-seven (27) young leaders, from 8 countries, successfully completed this year's PMT culminating in a *Power Breakfast* with Thailand Progressive Movement Leader Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit. Meanwhile, PMT Alumni from the past 7 batches organized echoing sessions in 4 countries and 3 regional webinars. Sixteen (16) partner youth and student wings were convened in partnership with the International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY) to strengthen our regional youth formation. Here are the [resolutions](#) passed during their hybrid convention.

The SocDem APP digital course information can be accessed [here](#).

Our Communications Unit worked overtime to deliver 3 maiden issues of *Praxis: The Journal of Asian Social Democracy*, 17 [podcast](#) episodes, and [social media](#) materials breaching a reach of more than 600,000 in our various channels.

We expressed solidarity with our member parties' struggles and joined jubilantly in our victories this year. Read our latest releases [here](#).

Overall 2021 has been tough but we have overcome! Wishing you all a hopeful new year from your SocDem Asia family!

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## SocDem Discourse / Webinar Series

### March 12, 2021 | Feminist Politics



In celebration of Women's Month, SocDem Asia organized a dialogue with feminist leaders to reflect on the political challenges faced by the feminist movement today: women leadership in governance and barriers to community development and political participation. This conversation about Feminist Politics examines still the existing unequal power and property relations among women and men and an exchange about critical spaces and opportunities to close the gender gaps within political organizations and in the public sphere. [Watch here.](#)

### April 7, 2021 | Vaccine Politics and Defeating the Virus: A Health Check



On World Health Day, a year after the first lockdowns brought about by the pandemic, SocDem Asia hosted the webinar Vaccine Politics and Defeating the COVID19 Virus with speakers from Europe and Asia to discuss the key lessons from national vaccination strategies; responses to challenges like vaccine hesitancy and inequitable access to vaccines; and the national, regional and/or global instruments that need to be strengthened moving forward. [Watch here.](#)

### May 22, 2021 | Progressive Policymaking: Making Inclusive Public Policies at the National and Regional Level



This webinar was intended for new and aspiring policy makers, elected local and national parliamentarians from Socdem Asia member parties. It is designed to support capacity building for the fast growing membership of the Socdem Asia Parliamentarians Caucus, particularly in the topic of inclusive policy making.

## SocDem Discourse / Webinar Series

### June 30, 2021 | Resilient Democracies



New forms of control have emerged in authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes with political elites learning to adjust themselves as democratic facades embedded in neoliberalism. The withdrawal of the state and the privatization of public goods have led to diminishing social inequalities and less social cohesion even before the pandemic. Together with the Progressive Alliance, SocDem Asia hosted the Asia leg of debate among progressives in the region in reconfiguring democratic structures and putting forward the agenda of resilience in democracies to engage political actors worldwide. Watch [here](#).

### August 23, 2021 | Social Democracy for our Times



SocDem Asia convened political leaders and members of parliaments in the region to collectively analyze the political, social and ecological crises that brought about and exacerbate the impact of the pandemic. This dialogue is also platform to take stock of the achievements of Asia's social democrats in fighting for democratization and equitable development in the region and a venue to highlight needed bold reforms to address the multiple crises our peoples face today. Watch [here](#).

### October 13, 2021 | Forging a New Social Contract



Following up on the social democratic agenda development post-pandemic dialogues, SocDem Asia together with the Progressive Alliance through this webinar draws attention to the social costs and impact of the Covid-19 at the global scale, the disparities between responses in the Global North and Global South, and the strategies whereby progressive solutions can be viable in partnership with the working people and the marginalized. Watch [here](#).

## SocDem Discourse / Webinar Series

### October 15, 2021 | New Politics for Today's Crises?



In this webinar, SocDem Asia political campaigners examine “Transformative Realism” a set of strategies in building broad societal platforms for alternatives to the status quo. With multiple crises revealed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the huge task for a just and green recovery requires countering polarizing politics and winning over social majorities. We attempt to answer with seasoned strategists the question: How do we go through systemic upheavals and make transformation viable?

Watch [here](#).

### November 2, 2021 | The Federal Election in Germany: An Election Analysis



In the last few years, the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) was all but written off by political pundits as another casualty of social democracy’s demise. However, in the last few days into the election, the SPD and its Chancellor-Candidate’s, Olaf Scholz, trust rating shot up. On election day, SPD came out as the largest political party and in the lead to form the next coalition government.

SocDem Asia looks into the SPD recent election victory in the German Federal Election to draw lessons on how it managed to win back trust and confidence from its voters, how it’s future programme and strategy brought about victory, and how it plans to use its mandate to govern Germany out of the pandemic’s multiple crisis.

Watch [here](#).

# SocDem Asia Academy of Progressive Politics

## Political Management Training for Young Progressives

### June | Social Democratic Ideology

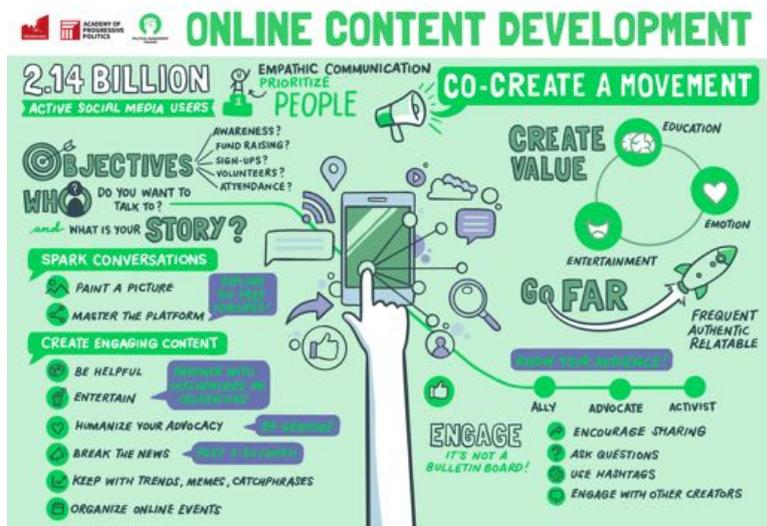


This module was an Introduction to Social Democracy: how the progressive worldview evolved, how it has driven the transformation of societies, and the guiding principles of social democratic thinking and political action.

Our resource persons were: Thomas Meyer, author of the Theory of Social Democracy; Chow Kon Yeow, the Chief Minister of Penang State; Risa

Hontiveros, Philippine Senator; Undraa Agvaanluvsan, former Mongolian MP; Alexandre Padilha, Federal Deputy of São Paulo; Marie Chris Cabreros, SocDem Asia Network Coordinator; and Francis Isaac, Editor-in-Chief of SocDem Asia Praksis.

### July | Political Communications



This module delved into understanding communications work as an essential part of political work. Participants were introduced to the process of developing a communications strategy, crafting an effective political brand, crafting an effective advocacy campaign.

Our resource persons were: Fernando A. Austria, Jr.,

lecturer of Broadcast Arts and Studies in the University of the Philippines; Gibby Gorres, communications consultant for the Asian Development Bank; and Elisha Winckel, Liaison Officer on Climate Change of the Youth and Environment Europe.



# SocDem Asia Academy of Progressive Politics

## Political Management Training for Young Progressives

October 9, 2021 | Graduation



Twenty-seven young progressives from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand, and Timor-Leste graduated from the Political Management Training for Young Progressives last October 9, 2021.

Our keynote speaker was Mr. Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit, Founder of the Progressive Movement Thailand and Former Member of Parliament under the Future Forward Party. He shared his insights on the politics of today, service amid shrinking democratic space, and solidarity in times of crisis.

# SocDem Asia Academy of Progressive Politics Executive Courses

## March | Feminism



In the whole month of March, the Executive Course on Feminism aided policy advisors, political educators, and advocates in understanding key concepts on Feminist analysis, critique, vision, and political struggles; learning ways on how to integrate feminist practice in constructing ideal societies and in leading and managing organizations and; exchanging with peers and experts practical and innovative tools in feminist education and advocacy.

More than 60 participants graduated from this program.

## September | Polling and Data Management (Online Course Materials)



This course is designed to aid party campaigners and strategists to understand the value and processes of a scientific campaign based on data and research; appreciate the use of opposition research in the preparation and conduct of a campaign; consult and engage expert practitioners on the subject; and develop knowledge on analyzing public pulse and voting behaviors as part of strategy development.

## SocDem Asia Academy of Progressive Politics Alumni Program

### July to September | Echoing in India, Malaysia, Philippines and Timor Leste



We have built a platform to continue supporting other trans-national sharing and partnerships among our Alumni through the SocDem APP Alumni Program. The country echoing sessions are activities aimed at sharing key learnings from the courses learned at the different courses of SocDem APP. These are local activities that bridge the regional courses to broader constituencies of changemakers at the state or local level. It fosters collaboration among alumni in each country and also facilitates continuity of engagement among alumni across countries.

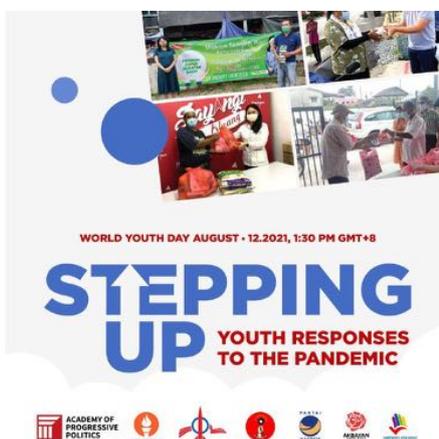
### August 8, 2021 | Countering Authoritarianism 1: Narratives and Outreach



How do progressives safeguard democracy and human rights in the time of the pandemic? How can we fight authoritarianism and create better pathways while engaging as many people as we can, especially the young? SocDem Asia offers young changemakers in Asia a venue to discuss and learn strategies to combat authoritarianism with the hope of contributing to developing alternative discourse, broadening democratic constituencies, and innovating ways of executing progressive campaigns.

Watch [here](#).

### August 12, 2021 | Stepping Up: Youth Responses to the Pandemic



We asked youth leaders on World Youth Day to share their perspectives and experiences with fellow young progressives on raising awareness on key policy alternatives, building communities of support, and assisting fellow youth and other sectors in coping with the pandemic. With Asia having a young population, the voices of the next generation of politicians, community organizers and changemakers are important in shaping the new normal.

Watch [here](#).

# SocDem Asia Academy of Progressive Politics Alumni Program

## September 24, 2021 | Countering Authoritarianism 2: Alliances and Action



We follow up on young people’s exchange in fighting authoritarianism this time focusing on constituency building and campaigning. The discussion identifies methods, rhetoric and policies employed by authoritarian or right-wing populists and tactics to counter these through creative campaigns that capture young people’s interest and bridge polarization. Examples from progressive youth organizations from different countries in fighting back authoritarian tendencies at the local, state or federal level are presented.

## December 4, 2021 | Regional Youth Convention

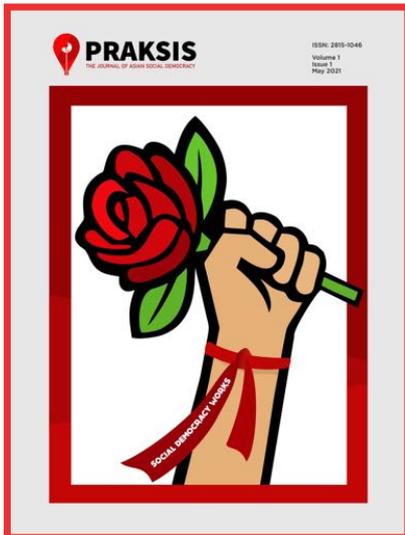


In partnership with the International Union of Socialist Youth, we gathered the different youth-wings and SocDem APP alumni to strengthen the regional youth formation among center-left young activists. This hybrid convention opens a platform for exchange and development of ideas for cross-country collaboration and solidarity in the region and beyond.

Read the passed resolutions.

## Communications

### Praksis: The Journal of Asian Social Democracy

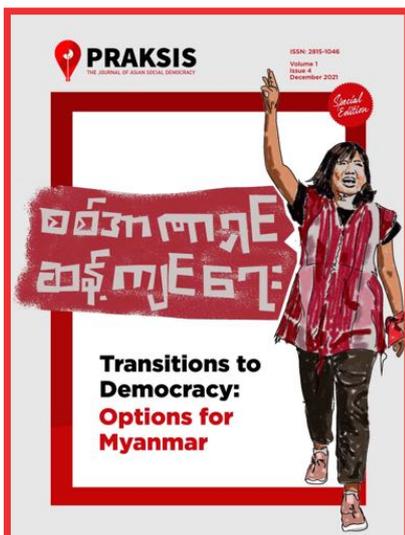


#### ***Social Democracy Works: Responding to the Challenges of Our Time***

The appearance of our maiden edition coincides with International Workers' Day in honor of the labor movement from which social democracy traces its origin. We offer this first issue of PRAKSIS, aware of the dangers of the present, while remaining firmly hopeful for the future.

In this first edition, PRAKSIS seeks to define what Asian social democracy is through a combination of progressive theory and social democratic action.

Read [here](#).

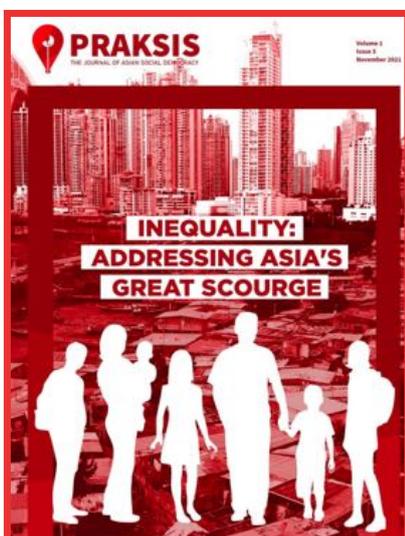


#### ***Transitions to Democracy: Options for Myanmar***

This issue of PRAKSIS, "Transitions to Democracy: Options for Myanmar," is the second of a two-part special edition on the ongoing civic uprising in Myanmar. The first part was released in August to commemorate the 8888 Uprising.

The second part pools together activists, journalists and academics from across the globe to reflect on various aspects of democratization in a bid to make sense of the situation in Myanmar and help the country find a suitable path toward democracy.

Read [here](#).



#### ***Inequality: Addressing Asia's Great Scourge***

COVID-19 has already wiped out 140 million jobs in 2020. Eighty-nine million more people in Asia-Pacific slid into poverty due to the economic disruptions caused by the pandemic. A section of society that seems unaffected is the billionaire class--which managed to increase their wealth by US\$3.8 trillion in the last year alone. Are there pathways for alternatives and collective action?

The latest issue of Praksis feature think pieces from India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Germany where contributors have outlined actions as build path towards a more just and equitable future. Read [here](#).

## Communications

### Podcasts



#### **January 18 | EP 9: The Rise of Populism and Prospects for Democratic Renewal**

We talked with Joshua Kurlantzick, a senior fellow for Southeast Asia for the Council on Foreign Relations to discuss the rise of populism across the globe and the conditions that have precipitated its rise in many countries. We also discuss the characteristics of today's populist leaders and the parallels their movement and political projects have with previous illiberal and autocratic movements, and the prospects for the future especially with the current pandemic and the urgent task of democrats in defeating populism. Listen [here](#).



#### **February 9 | EP 10: The Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy: Europe's Magnitsky Act**

We talked with Evin Incir, Member of the European Parliament (MEP), for a discussion on the Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy. The Action Plan is a human rights sanctions mechanism that targets human rights violators anywhere in the world by banning them entry into European Union member states, freezing their assets, and prohibiting them from accessing funds from Europe. This mechanism has been called Europe's version of the Magnitsky Act a United States law that puts travel bans and sanctions on violators of human rights passed in 2012. Listen [here](#).



#### **February 28 | EP 11: The Indian Farmers' Protest Movement**

We talked with Angkita Dutta, Vice President, Indian Youth Congress. Indian farmers have now been protesting for over 6 months since August of last year against three farm laws passed by Parliament in September of 2020. Instead of dissipating, the farmers and their organizations have stepped up their campaign while support within and outside the country is mounting. The farm laws have been condemned as granting huge concessions for corporations to determine prices of agricultural goods to the detriment of farmers. Modi and the BJP have defended the laws as creating a free market for farmers to sell their goods. Listen [here](#).

## Communications

### Podcasts



#### **March 6 | EP 12: Updates on Myanmar Anti Coup Protests**

Since February 1, when the Myanmar military overthrew the newly elected government, massive street protests have erupted in cities across the country. These have taken on a civil disobedience character to force the military out of power. Despite their peaceful nature, the military has used violence to stop the protests with March 3 being the bloodiest with 38 protesters killed. We speak with Sai Sam Phon Seng, international secretary of the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) to discuss the ongoing protests in his country, where it is headed, and how people outside the country can show their support for this democratic and popular movement. Listen [here](#).



#### **March 31 | EP 13: Women's Empowerment and Socialism**

We talk with Filipina feminist Sabrina Gacad. She is an Assistant Professor at the University of the Philippines Department of Women and Development Studies and co-founder of the Lunas Collective. We talk about issues of women's empowerment and liberation and the intersection of the struggle for women's rights with other struggles such as fighting for economic justice and equality. We also discuss how Patriarchy functions to oppress not just women but also men. Listen [here](#).



#### **April 10 | EP 14: A Conversation on Mental Health Policies in the Time of A Pandemic**

We talk with Lim Yi Wei, state assemblyman for Kampung Tunku in Selangor, Malaysia and a mental health advocate, and Alyannah Lagasca, the National Chairperson of Youth for Mental Health Coalition, Inc, a youth-led, non-government, volunteer organization whose main goal is to fight the stigma on mental health in the Philippines. We discuss issues surrounding Mental Health advocacy and policy, challenges they face from policy-makers and government leaders all in the current context of global pandemic. Listen [here](#).

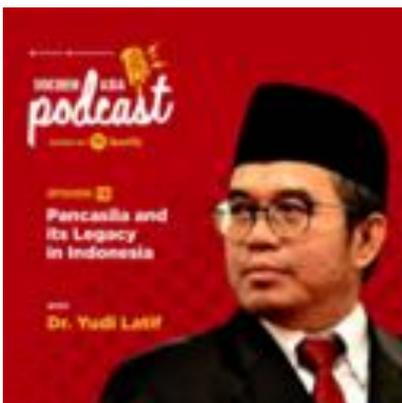
## Communications

### Podcasts



#### **May 15 | EP 15: Party, Union, and Mass Movement Relations: Social Democratic Party of Denmark**

We published a PMT Podcast episode we created in 2020. On this episode, we talk with Kasper Sand Kjær, a Member of Parliament for the Social Democratic Party of Denmark and a longtime member of the party and the progressive movement having started with the youth movement. We discuss the importance of having a strong relationship with mass movement and civil society such as the youth, workers, and women's sectors for social democratic parties. We also talk about the importance of Unions especially in the context of the Danish social democratic movement. Listen [here](#).



#### **June 1 | EP 16: Pancasila and its legacy in Indonesia**

On this episode, we talk with Yudi Latif, renowned Muslim scholar and former head of the National Agency for the Enculturation of Pancasila (Badan Pembinaan Ideologi Pancasila), formerly on the Presidential Working Unit for the Enculturation of Pancasila (UKP-PIP) in 2017. We talk about the background leading into the creation of Pancasila as a philosophy that binds Indonesian society amid its diversity. We also discuss its relation to the development of the modern Indonesian nation and state as well as its ties to social democracy and progressive thought. Listen [here](#).



#### **June 25 | EP 17: Transfeminism in Asia**

In this episode we talk with Dr. Chamindra Weerawardhana, a human rights activist, political and international affairs analyst, academic, and educator to discuss issues about transfeminism, gender identity, sexuality, and intersectionality especially from the perspective of communities in the Global South. We also talk about existing issues regarding inclusion and acceptance of transgendered persons especially in the context of the broader feminist movement. Listen [here](#).

## Communications

### Podcasts



#### **July 16 | EP 18: Industry 4.0 and the Ramifications on Asian Societies and Economies**

We have a talk with Sabina Dewan, Executive Director of Just Jobs Network about the Fourth Industrial Revolution or also known as "Industry 4.0" about what that means for societies, economies and workers in Asia. We also talk about the impacts of advancement in technologies on our education system, governments, workers' rights, and also on issues of privacy. Listen [here](#).



#### **August 31 | EP 19: Updates on Malaysia's Political Situation and the New Government**

We have a talk with Teo Nie Ching, Former Deputy Minister of Education, Member of Parliament and the International Secretary of the Democratic Action Party of Malaysia. We discuss the background leading up to the collapse of the government of former Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin and the appointment of his successor, Ismail Sabri Yakob. We talk about the dynamics within the ruling coalition and the Pakatan Harapan as well as the political crisis in the context of an economic crisis and health crisis due to the COVID pandemic. Listen [here](#).



#### **September 8 | EP 20: BP Koirala and Social Democracy in Nepal**

We talked with Dr. Minendra Rijal, a former Minister of Communication and member of the Central Working Committee of the Nepali Congress (NC) to talk about the legacy of B.P. Koirala and how he was also inspired by Koirala's principles.

B.P. Koirala who led the NC, served as the country's first democratically elected Prime Minister after leading the movement to end the authoritarian rule of the Rana regime. His name and memory continues to inspire Nepalis to continue his struggle for social democracy in the country. Listen [here](#).

## Communications

### Podcasts



#### **September 11 | EP 21: A Look Back at America's War on Terror and its impact on Asia**

On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the terror attack on the World Trade Center in New York, Afghanistan sees the Taliban now back in power. We are joined by Richard Heydarian, a geopolitical analyst, academic, columnist and author, to take a look back at the legacy of America's War on Terror and how the policies set by the United States and its allies continue to affect us today. We also discuss how the world, especially Asia Pacific has been shaped and is to be shaped by the legacy of the War on Terror. Listen [here](#).



#### **October 8 | EP 22: Thailand's social democratic experiences, past and present**

We are joined by Dr. Sustarum Thammabosadee, Assistant Associate Professor in International Relations, Thammasat University. We discuss Thailand's turbulent political history and social democracy's role in shaping democratic institutions from the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in the 30s to the current fight to end the military's control over politics and the reform of the monarchy. We also talk about the political and military elite's role in suppressing leftwing ideas and how such opposition from powerful forces affects current moves by social democrats. Listen [here](#).



#### **November | EP 23: Aftermath of the Japanese Elections: Context and Prospects**

We talk with academic of Japanese history Sven Saaler to discuss the historical context of Japan's political parties to better understand how the right Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has maintained a strong grip over the country's politics and why opposition parties especially those from the center-left or progressive segments of Japanese politics have largely failed to undermine the LDP's hegemony. We also try to understand how Japan's progressives can make a bid to win power in the country. Listen [here](#).

## Communications

### Podcasts



#### **December 10 | EP 24: International Criminal Court and the Quest for Justice**

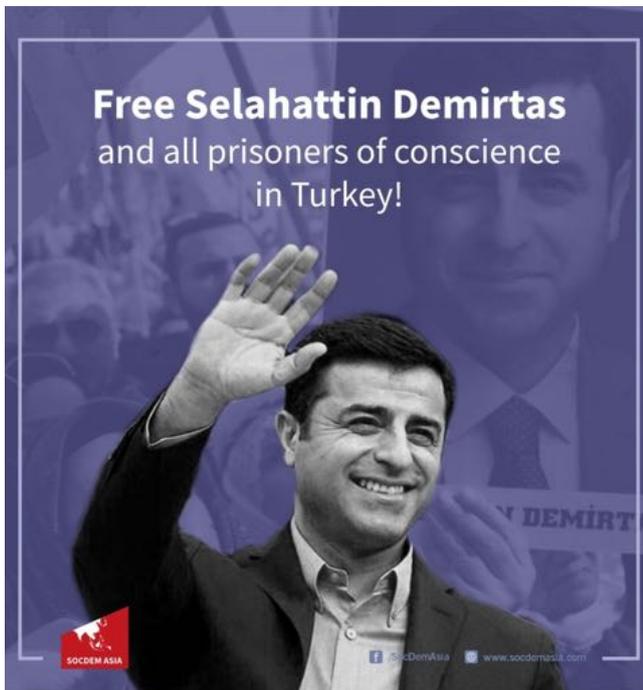
We talk with lawyer and transitional justice advocate Ruben Carranza to discuss the functions, scope of the International Criminal Court or ICC. We talk about the challenges that victims and survivors face in relation to availing of the processes for seeking justice in the ICC as well as the limitations the court faces in exacting accountability. We also discuss the various criticisms of the ICC itself and how the quest transitional justice goes beyond the framework of the court. Listen [here](#).



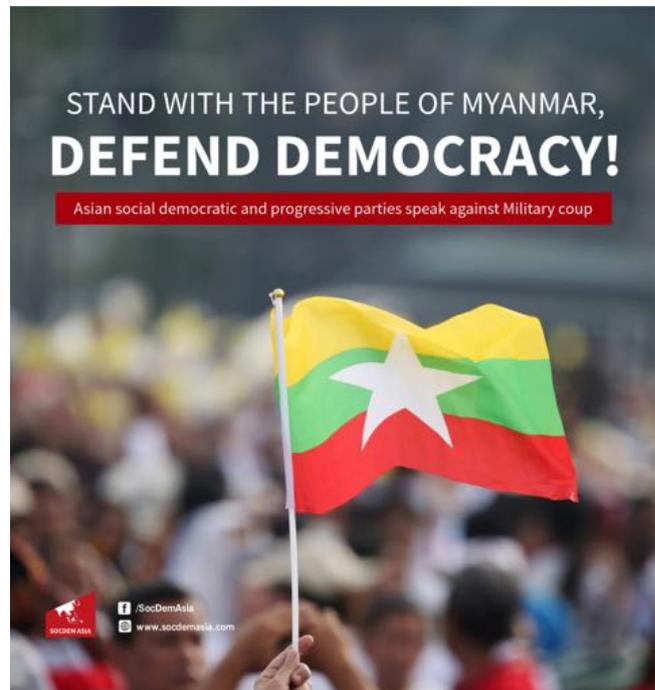
#### **December 20 | EP 25: On the Global State of Democracy Report and Asian Democracies**

On this last episode for 2021, we talk with Leena Rikkilä Tamang, Director for the Asia-Pacific of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) on the current state of Asian democracies and some key observations from the Global State of Democracy Report. We also discuss countries in the region that are able to strengthen democratic institutions and promote greater citizen's participation and try to answer the question: Is there a place for regional or international cooperation in promoting democratization? Listen [here](#).

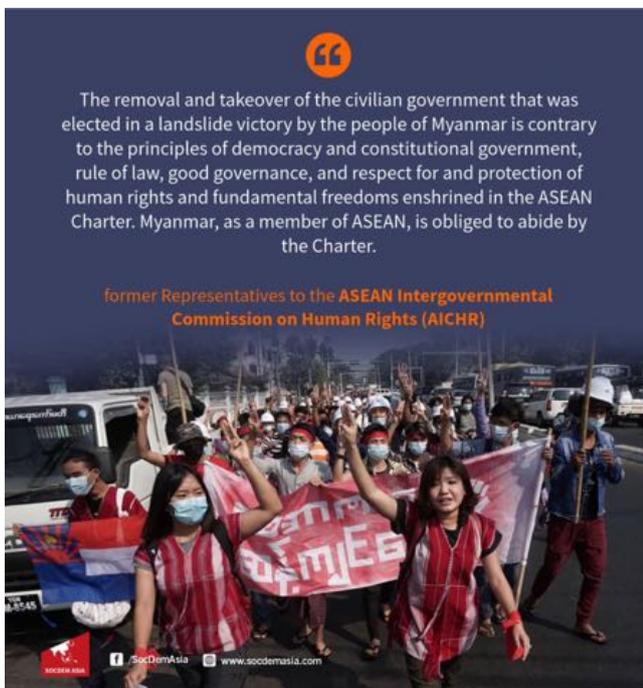
## Communications Statements



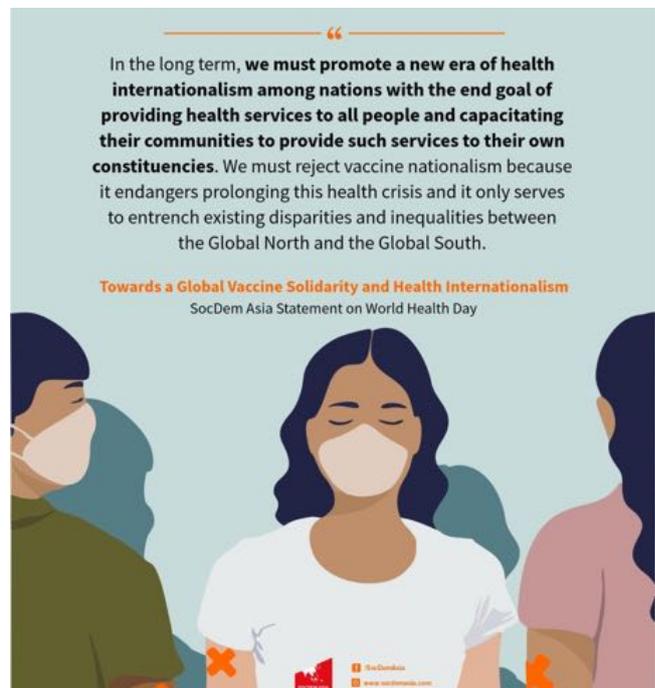
Statement of solidarity with Selahattin Demirtas and the People's Democratic Party in Turkey.



Statement on the military coup in Myanmar

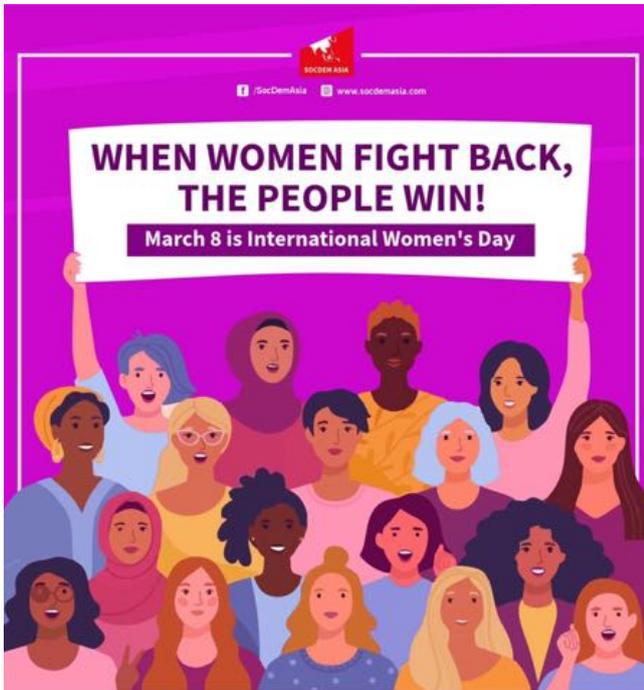


Statement of former Representatives to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights on the Myanmar military coup



Statement on World Health Day

# Communications Statements



International Women's Day Commemoration



## International Workers' Day

SocDem Asia salutes the working peoples of the world. A new **just and democratic order** will be built on their collective toil and shared hope for the future.



International Workers' Day Commemoration

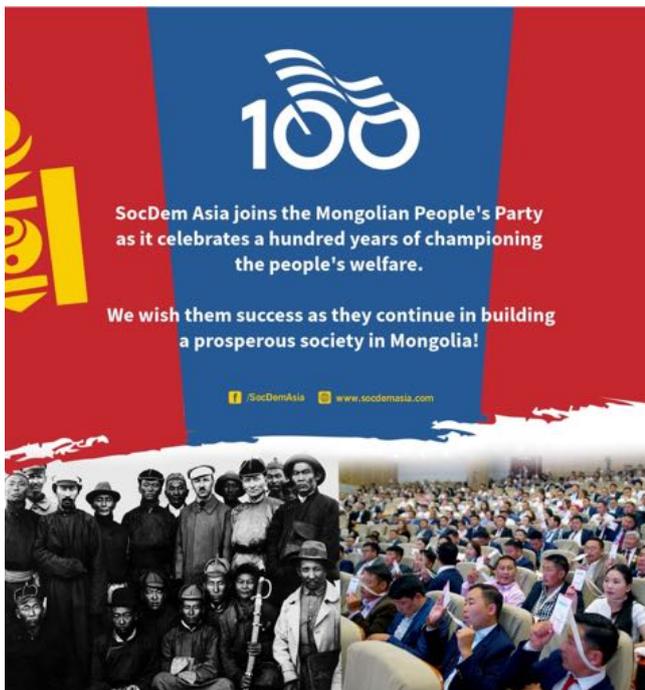


Statement of solidarity with the Malaysia Lawan Movement

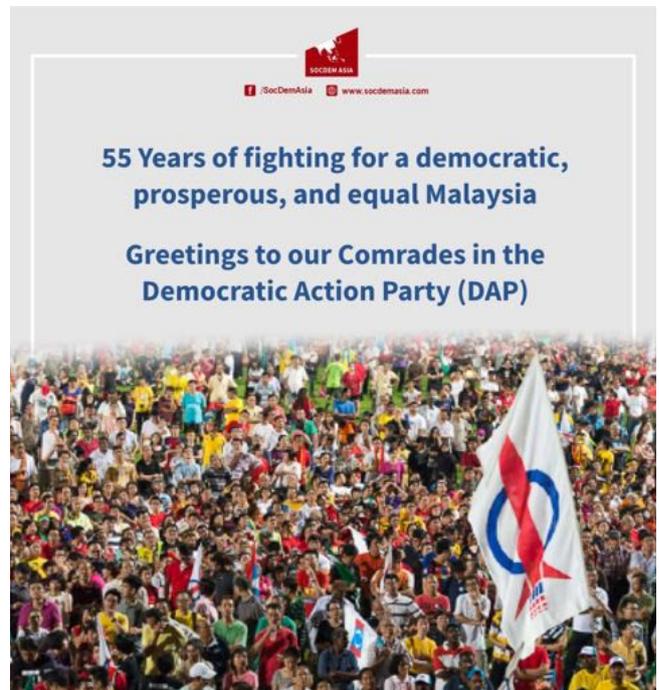


International Day of Democracy Commemoration

## Communications Congratulatory Messages



Mongolian People's Party Centennial



55th Anniversary of the Democratic Action Party Malaysia



PMT Alumna Ei Thinzar Maung's appointment to the National Unity Government of Myanmar.

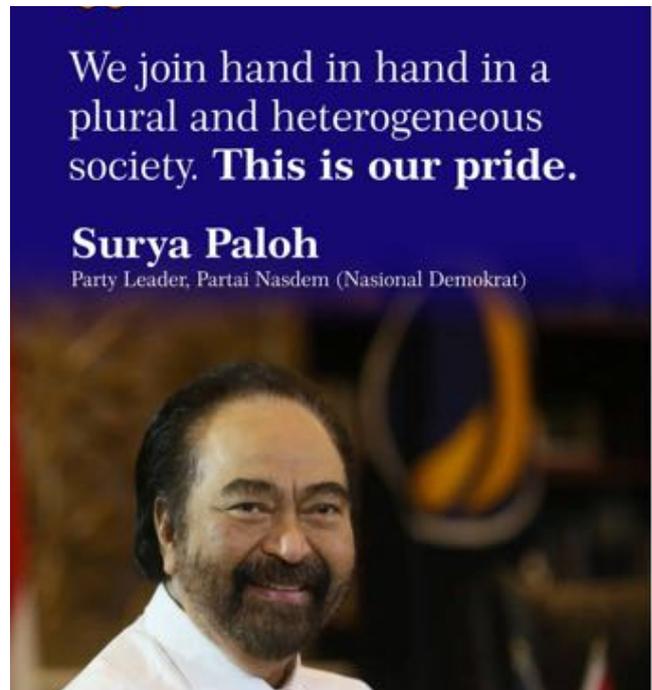


Election victory of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and the Nepali Congress

## Communications Congratulatory Messages



Inclusion of Ei Thinzar Maung to the Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People of 2021



10th Anniversary of Partai NasDem Indonesia



Election victory of the German Social Democratic Party.



On the appointment of Chancellor Olaf Scholz and the new SPD-led government of Germany.

In the past, forces strove to push us apart.  
As we enter a new year, let us build back our  
movement to pull us together.

## A Hopeful New Year from SocDem Asia



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