



Business and Human Rights Training for Parliamentary and Political Party Representatives

28–30 November 2022
Bangkok, Thailand

Overview

Southeast Asia has been moving at a snail's pace in adopting National Action Plans (NAPs) on Business and Human Rights (BHR). This follows the endorsement of the 'Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights' by the Human Rights Council of the United Nations in 2011. NAPs are an essential component in thickening the human rights regime at the national level and in ensuring that the operations of business enterprises respect and protect fundamental human rights. While there was some uptake, notably in Thailand, ongoing efforts towards the adoption of NAPS across the region has stalled despite the best efforts of civil society. Challenges include the lack of participatory, inclusive and transparent processes of NAPs development. Parliamentarians are noticeably absent from these processes. The latter are needed to overcome the current nebulous commitments to human rights norms and standards contained in the NAPS and the equivocal commitment to enforcement of human rights norms by both governments and business organisations. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2020, side-lined the NAPs agenda. Pursuant to the co-publication of 'Business and Human Rights in Southeast Asia: Developing National Action Plans' by Asia Centre and Friedrich Naumann Foundation (East and Southeast Asia) in 2021, a follow-on Business and Human Rights Regional Training aims to foster greater awareness, involvement and scrutiny of NAPs by parliamentarians. The latter have a key role to play in protecting fundamental rights and must ensure, notably through scrutiny in parliamentary committees, that NAPs conform to the human rights duties and standards that states already have committed to in international law and that business enterprises uphold their responsibilities enumerated in the UNGPs and domestic law. The Regional Training also aims to forge closer networks between parliamentary networks, Chambers of Commerce, civil society organisations and business enterprises.

Objectives

- Undertake training on BHR to facilitate the development of NAPs based on the UNGPs
- Assist parliamentarians and political leaders to develop policies to implement the UNGPs on BHR.
- Foster a regional network of organisations working on BHR.

Date: 28-30 November 2022

Venue: Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand