Draft Statement for
the Special Video Conference on COVID-19 Pandemic (1)
(22 May 2019)

As of May 21, 2020

We, members of the ICAPP Standing Committee, held the Special Video Conference on 'the Impact of the COVID-19 and the Role of Asian Political Parties' on 22 May 2020, presenting a united stance against the common threat. The ICAPP Standing Committee Members shared the view that, while we are embracing the postponing or rescheduling of several important ICAPP meetings such as the meetings of the Standing Committee, the ICAPP has a political duty to respond, by holding a special video conference, to this unprecedented challenge.

We discussed our actions and continued commitment to cooperation and coordination to combat the pandemic at the conference initiated by Hon. Jose de Venecia, Founding Chairman of the ICAPP and Hon. Park Ro-byug, Secretary General of the ICAPP. Nineteen members of the ICAPP Standing Committee and the President of the COPPPAL participated in this special video conference, reaching a mutual understanding and common position.

1. We noted with grave concern that COVID-19 poses a huge global threat and has caused grave human suffering and we shared the view that we need to engage in even closer joint efforts to fight the pandemic and to counter the serious negative repercussions on a whole range of human activities. We reached a common understanding as follows.

   (a) We recognized each member's national measures undertaken to effectively fight against and control the spread of COVID-19, and committed to continue all necessary measures to protect people and to contain the highly contagious disease.

   (b) We agreed to seek to provide intensive testing, tracing and treatment of target groups of people in seriously affected areas in order to contain the pandemic and facilitate rapid diagnostic measures.

(c) We acknowledged the importance of promoting a high level of public trust and civic engagement regarding widespread voluntary self-quarantine and other preventive measures, such as "social distancing," to slow and contain the spread of the outbreak.

(d) We emphasized our strong commitment to working together to improve and upgrade national health systems to ensure that they deliver equitable health outcomes, based on a comprehensive approach.

2. We therefore agreed to work together for urgent national actions for regional and global cooperation to counter and contain COVID-19 and bring the pandemic to an end. Furthermore, we reaffirmed our strong commitment to embrace and abide by the following recommendations in the fight against the disease.

   (a) We are committed to continue to encourage our governments and political parties to devise and support effective programs to combat the pandemic as a national health strategy.

   (b) We reaffirm the need to further strengthen international cooperation through the exchange of best practices aimed at building the capacity of public health systems. Moreover, we emphasized the importance of providing financial support and cooperation to develop and produce affordable, safe, effective and high-quality vaccines and medicines for their global use and equitable access as soon as possible.

   (c) We emphasize the role of political parties in facilitating cooperation for sharing information and lessons learned through implementing various measures to address any potential outbreak of the pandemic. And we recognized that this is important even after reaching a manageable level of the outbreak of cases.

3. We also reached a common understanding regarding using all available policy tools to minimize the economic and social damage from the pandemic and to coordinate to restore global growth, maintain market

stability and strengthen the resilience of the global economy and global governance in health and economy as follows.

(a) We will support the active role of political parties in discussing and supporting vigorous measures to promote recovery in our economies, protect workers and businesses, particularly small and medium sized enterprises, and shield vulnerable groups of people through all available resources.

(b) We will encourage each other to coordinate and update regional and global responses in the fields of health, trade, investment, finance and the movement of labor as recommended by the WHO, the IMF, the World Bank, the ILO, the UN and other international economic organizations.

(c) We will cooperate to promote international trade and make common efforts to avoid unnecessary interference with international exchanges such as of goods, services or people.

(d) We are committed to ensuring the smooth flow of medical supplies, agricultural products and other services across borders and minimizing the disruption of global supply chains.

(e) We welcome the commitment expressed by the G20 Leaders in their summit statement of March 2020 for united actions against the pandemic.

4. We acknowledged the need to continue to hold special conferences on this disease until such time as it is well contained and there is a return to normal daily life.

5. We conveyed sincere appreciation for the efficient and timely arrangements made by the ICAPP Secretariat for the successful holding of the Special Video Conference on the Impact of COVID-19 and the Role of the Asian Political Parties.

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